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FOOTBALL

Head football coach steps down

By CADE KENNEDY
Sports Editor

After eight years and seven seasons, Matt Walter resigned as the head coach of the Northwestern football team Nov. 16.

Walter had a record of 23-54 during his time at Northwestern. The Rangers finished with one win this season. The 1-10 record gave the Rangers their worst season since 1975, when Northwestern also went 1-10.

With the search for a new head coach underway, the Rangers will have their third head coach since joining the NCAA in 2012. Few other details about the search were provided.

Walter declined to comment for this story.

Walter started his coaching career in 2001, when he became the assistant strength and conditioning coach for the Rangers after playing for Northwestern.

He was a member of the team that won the NAIA National

See WALTER, Page 12



Former Northwestern head football coach Matt Walter, third from right, stands on the sidelines during the Rangers' game against Southwestern Oklahoma State University on Nov. 12. Walter resigned as head coach on Nov. 16 following the Rangers' 1-10 season, the worst since 1975. The search process for a new coach is underway, university officials said.

Photo by J.D. Eddy

SHOP SMALL: HIGHLIGHTING CHALLENGES OF SMALL BUSINESSES: PART 3

Lessons learned: Small biz owners overcome hurdles

By BENJAMIN KIEWER
Senior Reporter

After a long day, Jeramie Bradford flips on the lights to the Northwest MMA studio and thinks back to how he started the business in a 20-foot by 20-foot room – and by accident.

Local business owners like Bradford have a variety of reasons for starting a business, but

many say they have faced challenges, found encouragement and learned lessons in the process.

When starting Northwest MMA, Bradford asked questions on Facebook to find people who wanted to learn mixed martial arts. However, he had so many people asking him to train them and their children that he decided to make a school for mixed martial arts.

See BUSINESS, Page 2



Shop \$mall

A Northwestern News series about how small businesses stay alive and thrive in rural Oklahoma.

Photo by Benjamin Kiewer
Pictured at left, Chubby Dave's owner Robyn Landis prepares potatoes Sept. 27. Small business owners like Landis say owning a small business is a learning lesson.

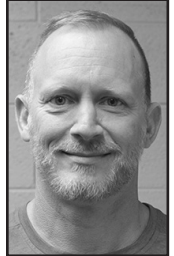
NEWS

BUSINESS: Owners say to keep it simple at start

Continued from Page 1

"I've been training MMA and actually fought [competitively] for a while in the years past," Bradford said. "I've always been in an area where there were schools you could go and train. After moving up here, I really wanted to get back into training, and so honestly, it happened by mistake."

Bradford started Northwest MMA in December 2021. Around two years earlier, he started Northwest Nutrition.



Bradford

He opened Northwest Nutrition with his wife, Timmori Bradford, to give the Alva community tasty and healthy options for teas and smoothies.

"We are both big into health and fitness," Bradford said. "There are other clubs like ours throughout the country, and we had been going to a few others outside of town. We knew that Alva didn't have anything like this."

Another local business that started up in Alva to serve drinks was the Vanilla Bean, which started as a coffee shop in a trailer.

Teresa Earnest, owner of the Vanilla Bean, said she used to work in pharmaceutical sales and took coffee to the doctors. After she moved to Alva, she wanted something to do. She didn't see a coffee shop anywhere, so she opened one.



Earnest

"I'd go to Oklahoma City and go have brunch with my daughters," Earnest said. "I was like, 'This is what I want to do.'"

The Vanilla Bean is now in a permanent building and serves food and coffee.

Another small restaurant that opened in Alva is Chubby Dave's.

Robyn Landis said she owned a little café in Kansas during the early 2000s and always loved to be in the kitchen cooking, so she opened the Chubby Dave's restaurant in Alva this year. Chubby Dave's primarily serves sandwiches, and it also has a salad bar.

CHALLENGES WITH STAFFING, PLANNING

Landis said she struggled to hire and keep employees. Some employees would accept the job offer, but they would never show up to work. But that wasn't the only staffing problem.

"Around the second week we were open, I had one of my employees end up sick, and by the next week, they were all sick," Landis said. "So, we went through another couple of weeks with being closed [then] open for a couple of days [then] closed again. It was a struggle."

Starting the Vanilla Bean offered its own hurdles.

Earnest said she did not know a lot about the restaurant world except her experience from being a waitress while she attended college. One of the challenges was not knowing all that was entailed in running a restaurant.

"There is so much to think about: taxes, employee taxes, so much stuff you don't even really think about," she said. "When you [say], 'Oh, I'm just going to open a little coffee shop,' well, good luck to you, because there is a lot to do."



Photos by Jordan Green

ABOVE: Northwest Nutrition, 1016 College Blvd., employees Jisse Hagemeyer and Dailee Danielson pose for a photo Tuesday.

BELOW: A vintage truck is a sign for the Vanilla Bean coffee shop and restaurant, 319 Oklahoma Blvd., as shown Monday.



Northwest Nutrition was a new type of drink shop for Alva. Such establishments are not new to Oklahoma, but they are new to this part of Oklahoma, Bradford said.

Reaching college students wasn't a challenge because many of them were from areas with the same type of businesses, but local community members weren't, so getting name recognition took work, he said. So did finding a location near the college that could also attract community members.

Northwest Nutrition opened in December 2019 on College Boulevard directly across from the Northwestern campus. The Bradfords endured the pandemic almost immediately after opening the business' doors.

"We didn't plan that [opening] well," Bradford said. "Not only did we open the week of finals when all the college kids were going to be going home at the end of the week, but as soon as they came back for the next year, they went home for spring break and never came back because of COVID-19."

"So, our first year in business, we had to

try to grow through COVID. So that was a big, unexpected challenge."

FINDING ENCOURAGEMENT

In an interview with Forbes Magazine, Stephanie Wells, owner of website developer Formidable Forms, said it is difficult for business owners to push out negative self-talk and convince themselves to take the leap on something. But she is glad she ignored self-doubt and made her own path, she said.

Finding encouragement is essential to getting a business off the ground, small business owners said.

Bradford said the community's support was a strong source of encouragement to him. Even through the pandemic, the business grew while a lot of companies closed their doors.

Earnest echoed those sentiments.

"When I started and I would look out [the window] and there was a line [of customers] clear to the street and wrapped around, I thought it might work," Earnest said.

'EVERY DAY IS DIFFERENT'

Jeremy Zeller, the Woods County economic development executive director, said the Oklahoma Department of Commerce has a step-by-step guide for new businesses owners on its website, www.okcommerce.gov.

Business owners should first conduct thorough research.

"For example, I have been looking into creating my own food truck," Zeller said. "The first stages of what I'm doing is pulling data and statistics [about other food trucks]."

Earnest advises business owners to keep their business plans simple at the start. When the Vanilla Bean opened, all it sold was coffee, helping keep startup costs low. She also said business owners should anticipate fluctuation.

"Every day is different," Earnest said. "I've never had a Friday the same or a Tuesday the same. Sometimes, we'll be slammed on a Tuesday, and the next Tuesday, we won't be."

Public visibility is important to a business, and Bradford said he used this knowledge to grow Northwest Nutrition.

Because university students went home during the pandemic, the Bradfords were forced to get outside their shop and into the Alva community, Bradford said.

They offered free sample teas to let the community know Northwest Nutrition was open and where it was located. Once they did this, sales numbers started to rise consistently.

"I think too many businesses sit back and don't branch out like that," Bradford said. "They just wait for people to come to them instead of going to the people."

After facing the challenge of hiring and keeping employees, Landis shared what advice she would give to anyone starting a business.

"Focus," Landis said. "Focus on your end result, and hang in there. There's a lot of struggles along the way, and you've just got to push through them."

NEWS



Photos by Colby Dalton

Members of the Delta Zeta sorority painted kind messages on rocks and spread them around campus on Nov. 18. Students carried the rocks around campus using boxes and placed the rocks in different spots.

Showing kindness

Kindness Day for Northwestern unites community

By DYLAN WHITELEY
Senior Reporter

Northwestern students, faculty and staff celebrated kindness day Nov. 18.

On Kindness Day, different classes and organizations at Northwestern had an emphasis on doing kind things for other people. Businesses and groups around Alva participated as well. Acts of kindness took place all over northwest Oklahoma, including the two other Northwestern campus locations in Enid and Woodward.

More than 50 service projects took place around the three campus locations, which is about 20 more acts than what took place last year. Some were simple little acts to brighten someone else's day. Others were larger projects and events that affected more than just one person.

Valarie Case, assistant director of university relations, served as the coordinator for Kindness Day. This was the university's second year participating in the holiday.

"Hopefully it gets people thinking more about how it made them feel to be kind that day, and think that we should be doing this more than just this one day," Case said.

Students might have seen colorful rocks with a positive message on them that Delta Zeta sorority members made and put around campus.

Some members of the Student Government Association put together a snack basket for the IT department. Members of the IT department returned the favor when they gifted SGA a plant.

Northwestern freshman Kayli



Campus Cabinet volunteer Abigale Williams, left, talks with student Dailyn Huett after giving him laundry detergent in the Student Center.

Stewart made a batch of cookies and gave them to staff members.

"I wanted to show them that we cared and how thankful we are that they are a part of our lives," Stewart said. "It felt good that something small like that made a huge difference to them."

The Fellowship of Christian Athletes took donuts to first responders, nursing home residents and workers, healthcare workers and other places around town.

FCA president Jillian Bouse said it was a good way to give attention to those who might not always get it.

"I think it's a great opportunity to reach people in the community that often don't get the recognition and thanks for what they do," Bouse said. "They were surprised and very appreciative of it."

Northwestern junior Jadyn Budig was involved with multiple different acts of kindness. One project was "Operation Gratitude," where students and staff members could write letters to military members and first responders.

Another project was "Heroes in Scrubs," which the Medical Sciences Club hosted in the Science Building. The project taught elementary students about the

medical field.

Budig said she wanted to do something she saw a need for and was passionate about. She said she is happy about how the projects turned out.

"Starting a positive chain reaction through these projects made me feel accomplished," Budig said. "There is so much we can do simply by taking the time to help people."

Students in the Baptist Collegiate Ministries participated in Operation Christmas Child, where boxes were filled with hygiene products, school supplies and clothes and sent overseas to people in need.

The BCM put together 64 boxes to send out. Saydy Graybill, who participated in filling the boxes, has been doing it for years.

"After making the boxes, I always feel joyful to have the opportunity to make a child's Christmas," Graybill said.

Although many people made food or bought items for others, Case said being kind is something simple that doesn't have to involve buying anything.

"Being kind to others does not cost a dime," Case said. "I think the world right now needs a little more kindness in it."

What's up?

THURSDAY

The Northwestern Medical Sciences Club will meet Thursday from 5 to 9 p.m. in the Science Amphitheater. The club is meant to provide Northwestern students who are interested in the medical field an opportunity to become better informed, promote activities related to the medical field and secure intellectual stimulation in the field.

The Jazz Ensemble Concert will occur Thursday from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Herod Hall Auditorium. The concert is free and open to the public. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

SATURDAY

Northwestern will host the Holiday Gala Saturday in the Herod Hall Auditorium from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. The Northwestern band and choirs will have a combined concert at the gala. The event is free and open to the public. The university's tree lighting ceremony will follow the concert.

SUNDAY

The Northwestern Division of Education pinning ceremony will occur from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. for graduating education majors in the Student Center Ranger Room.

A reception with cookies and punch immediately following commencement will occur in the Student Center. The reception will occur from 5 to 6:30 p.m.

MONDAY

Northwestern will host a holiday tuba concert Monday in the Herod Hall Auditorium from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. It is a festive concert for any tuba and euphonium players throughout northwest Oklahoma. The event is free to attend and open to the public. Rehearsal will occur from 3 to 5 p.m.

NEXT WEEK

Final exams begin. Check schedules by visiting <https://www.nwosu.edu/finals-schedule>.

The semester ends Dec. 9.

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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



Photo above by Colby Dalton; photo below provided

ABOVE: A house adorned with Christmas lights is shown in Alva on Sunday. The author believes that Christmas is a time of year for growth and to give back the love you receive. BELOW: The author, second from left, poses for a family portrait after opening presents on Christmas Day in 2018.

Christmas is a time for love

By **J.D. EDDY**
Editorial Editor

Around this special time of year, right after Thanksgiving, we are still thankful for everyone and everything we have in our vicinity. Now it is the season of giving.

As we all enter into Christmas break, we should take some time to reflect on what makes this holiday so special.

College students have an appreciation for a one-month break between the spring and fall semesters, but there is a more special meaning behind it. That meaning is spending time with your family, giving your time to others if that's something you want to do or even establishing things you want to do after New Year's.

I will be staying in Alva to work until Christmas, but I will spend as much time with my family as I can.

One thing that is bad about being a student is that the break always throws me off my schedule. I do my homework on a certain day, work on certain days and take pictures when I have time. There is always a bit of an adjustment period when I come back from Christmas. This year, that may not be the case. I will be working almost every day, working out and studying for the classes I have in the spring. If this is the case for you, then find something that can keep you ac-



tive throughout the break. Try to come up with a New Year's resolution to follow; you could make it something simple like going to the gym more.

This is also the time of year for spiritual stuff. Something you can do more of is attend church. Now, I am not telling you to become religious; I'm saying it's an option. There is something mesmerizing about Christmas: the nativity scenes, the Christmas day masses and the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

People tend to show that side

more around this time, but being religious is different from being spiritual.

Being religious, you are just going through the motions, showing up just because it is a pattern and not because you want to strengthen your faith in God; you only think you need to be there. Being spiritual means you are strong in your faith, solidifying this bond with Jesus, spreading the Gospel, spreading happiness, spreading faith among the people in the world. The difference shows, but if you do not want

to do this or just don't, believe that's fine. It's up to you to find happiness. Being strong in what you believe in is what makes you human. We have free will for a reason.

I enjoy this time of year, but this year is the only year our entire family is not together. My brother moved to Montana a few months ago, so I will not see him or my sister-in-law. Sure it's tough, but I'm grateful they are still in my life no matter how far away. That is the point of this article, to show that there are amazing things in your life. I may be rehashing an old point from my Thanksgiving article, but the point stands. The difference now is you can give back while showing your appreciation through something more than material means. It's time to show you're grateful now and that you appreciate the people closest to you.

I hope that everyone has a Merry Christmas. No matter what you are doing, find some happiness in it. There are people who care about you, whether they choose to show it or not. Just know there is someone thinking good thoughts about you.

If you want to express some of your experiences during this break, write a letter to the Northwestern News when the break is over. I would love to hear about some of your times and would be more than happy to put them on my page.

Merry Christmas!

OPINION

How to pass our nation's greatest test

JORDAN GREEN SAYS



JORDAN GREEN

Two years after the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Albert Einstein was concerned. In a 1947 letter to a U.S. congressman, Einstein warned of the danger that could come

from the rapid development and accessibility of weapons of mass destruction.

“The gulf between East and West which men of good will have worked to close is widening daily,” Einstein wrote. “Some people believe that no reconciliation is possible and that another World War must decide the issue.”

Here we are, 75 years later, in a similar situation. The United States faces nuclear threats from enemy nations. Yet even more concerning is the fact that the same kind of division Einstein saw growing between the eastern and western world is festering right here at home, largely along political lines.

People have shattered friendships, careers and their families through bitter political squabbles that devolved into personal attacks. Countless people have, in effect, chosen the “nuclear option” in their relationships and lives.

Amid the fear and turmoil, Einstein offered a word of hope. In the same letter to the congressman, he said: “Such a time in history breeds defeatism and despair. But there are those among us who believe that man has within him the capacity to meet and overcome even the great tests of our times.

“What we must not lose, or we lose all, is our willingness to seek the truth and our courage to



File photo

The American flag waves in downtown Alva in 2019. The author believes that restoring civility and humanity to political debate is necessary.

act upon the truth. If we maintain these, we cannot despair.”

That piece of wisdom must be one of the greatest and yet most underappreciated quotes of the 20th century. I think we can learn from it — if we’re willing to.

Abraham Lincoln suggested that America would be destroyed not by an outside force, but by division from within our nation. Whether his statement becomes prophetic is up to us. Our tongues, as we read in the book of Proverbs, hold “the power of life and death.” Our words do matter, and how we use and say them matters more.

Civil political debate is a vital part of our constitutional republic (it is not a democracy). But for years, people have tended to yell at each other and label others on

social media more than they have chosen to speak politely face-to-face about their disagreements.

This problem, if we don’t get a handle on it, could spell the doom we fear. But the solution, while (unfortunately) unpleasant for most, is to restore to our conversations not only civility, but also humanity.

In simpler terms: No matter our stances, we are all humans, and we should keep this in mind before we jump down someone’s throat.

I have my own political persuasions. I have friends who embrace those persuasions and friends who abhor them. If we can debate, we debate. If we can’t, we don’t.

We avoid unnecessary and unfruitful discussions. But when we

can debate and discuss, we listen to each other, pause and think about what the other has to say before responding, and then reply with an acknowledgement and respect of the other person before stating our beliefs.

We might not always walk away from our conversations with changed minds, but we do walk away with refreshed minds — renewed by the truth that we are all humans with different outlooks on issues. And we have the courage to listen, think and speak respectfully.

Our nation has embraced truth before, and it’s time for us to embrace it again. Think back to the incredibly brave men who fought tyranny to establish this nation, the freest and greatest in the world. They abided in truth

— that all human life is valuable and worthy of freedom — and had the courage to act upon it by establishing a nation where these values would prosper. It wasn’t perfect, and it never will be.

Today, our nation’s greatest test is whether we will believe the truth that we’re all humans and whether we’ll have the courage to treat all people accordingly. That doesn’t mean we should allow everything people are advocating today — by no means. Allowing everything some people in this nation want would be disastrous acceptance of lies. We must seek and embrace truth in this sense as well — and have the courage to enact it.

We have a test to pass. Einstein said we’ve done it before. Will you believe we can do it again?

MENTAL HEALTH

Learn to prevent drug overdoses

By **CHLOE KUNNEMANN**
Guest Columnist

Opioid and substance abuse prevention is critical. Overdoses typically arise because of the use and mixing of drugs such as cocaine, methamphetamine and fentanyl, to name a few. Risks of accidental overdoses can also be caused following a drug-free period or medical conditions. Recognizing the symptoms of an overdose can aid in preventing accidental deaths. Possible indications of an overdose include drowsiness, loss of consciousness, shallow breathing, a limp body, choking or gurgling sounds, pinpoint pupils, pale blue or chilly skin, lips and/or nails. If an opioid overdose is suspected, dial 911 and, if available, administer Narcan. CPR can also be a lifesaving tool and should administered until the individual starts to breathe again.

If you or someone you know needs to talk

to someone, dial 988, a helpline for immediate crisis and non-emergency assistance for mental health and substance use issues. For serious medical problems or any imminent, life-threatening situation, dial 911.

STIMULANT PREVENTION

Stimulants increase psychophysiological arousal, and stimulant users often deplete themselves. Stimulants can be abused to boost weight loss and also by college students to keep up with school responsibilities, leading in stimulant use disorders. It has been scientifically proven that the TIP treatment is successful in treating stimulant use disorders. TIP, also known as treatment improvement protocols, can assist in guiding therapists through a manual that can be altered according to the specific needs of each individual. These manuals help ensure the success of a patient’s treatment, based on research. Changes

in lifestyle will also be promoted to help control the dependency; this can be accomplished by establishing a new social network.

“For any imminent, life-threatening situation, dial 911.”
— *Chloe Kunnemann*

If you or someone you know needs to talk to someone, dial 988, a helpline for immediate crisis and non-emergency assistance for mental health and substance use issues.

For serious medical problems or any imminent, life-threatening situation, dial 911.

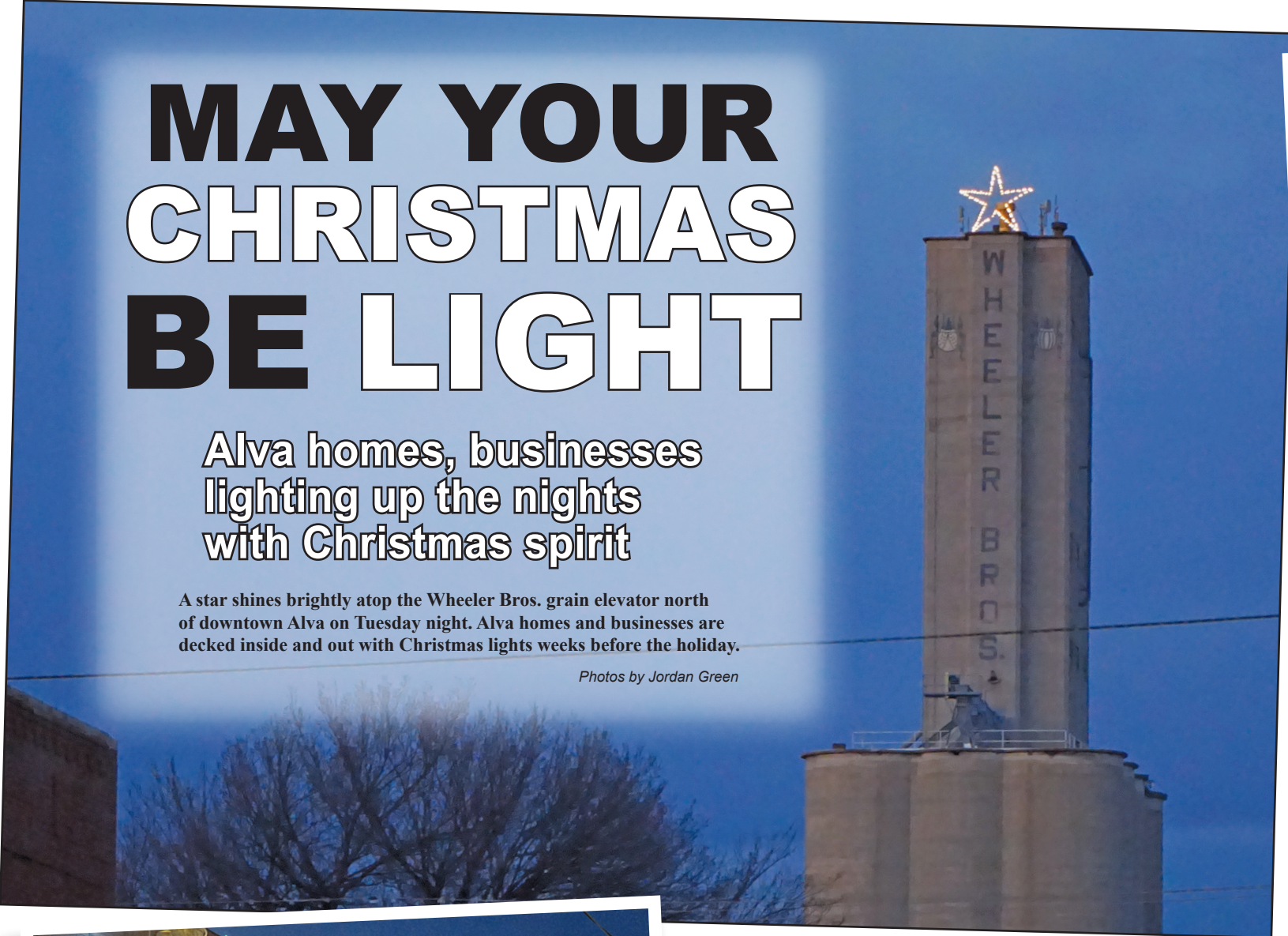
Northwestern student Chloe Kunnemann wrote this column on behalf of the Northwestern Counseling and Career Services office.

MAY YOUR CHRISTMAS BE LIGHT

Alva homes, businesses lighting up the nights with Christmas spirit

A star shines brightly atop the Wheeler Bros. grain elevator north of downtown Alva on Tuesday night. Alva homes and businesses are decked inside and out with Christmas lights weeks before the holiday.

Photos by Jordan Green



ABOVE: Christmas lights adorn the front of the Daisy Village boutique on Flynn Street in downtown Alva on Tuesday.

ABOVE RIGHT: The Grinch stares down customers at the Lazy Coyote on College Street in downtown Alva on Tuesday.

RIGHT: Green and red lights paint the front of an office on Flynn Street in downtown Alva on Tuesday.

TOP: A Christmas nativity scene lights up the yard of the First United Methodist Church on College Street on Tuesday night.

ABOVE: The lighted front yard of a home near downtown Alva is shown Tuesday night.

TOP RIGHT: A lighted nativity scene illuminates the yard of Jeff Elliott at Fifth and High streets on Tuesday night. Elliott has one of the most extensive Christmas displays in Alva. He and his family spend about five days each year setting the display up, he said.

MIDDLE RIGHT: A truck and Christmas tree display lights up the walkway to the Lazy Coyote in downtown Alva on Tuesday night.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Elliott's front yard features faith, football and more, as shown Tuesday night.

FEATURE



Photo provided

Trisyn Kalawaia is shown competing in a steer wrestling competition. A native of Hilo, Hawaii, Kalawaia is a junior at Northwestern majoring in agricultural business.

'I'm living the dream'

Hawaiian rodeo team member finds new love for rodeo at Northwestern — and Oklahoma is where he'll stay

By JACOB ERVIN
Student Reporter

Every weekday, Trisyn Kalawaia finishes his classes and gets ready to go practice wrestling, but his opponents always have two more legs than he does.

Kalawaia is a steer wrestler on the Northwestern rodeo team from Hilo, Hawaii.

Kalawaia is a junior at Northwestern, majoring in agricultural business.

He transferred to Northwestern this year after spending two years at Central Arizona College.

COMING TO NORTHWESTERN

He said his primary reason for transferring to Northwestern was the coaching staff and the school's commitment to steer wrestling.

"I was always told growing up to surround yourself with who you want to be like," Kalawaia said. "Here, there are so many people that are good at it and will push you to be better."

Kalawaia was particularly interested in being coached by Stockton Graves, the head coach for Northwestern rodeo.

Graves was the Central Plains region champion steer wrestler twice and has qualified for the National Finals Rodeo eight times in steer wrestling.

Kalawaia began steer wrestling in ninth grade.

He said he initially did not like the sport and wanted to team rope instead, but was inspired to continue trying by his friend Cody Cabral, who qualified for the NFR in 2016.

HOME AWAY FROM HOME

While Hawaii may seem like paradise to most people in Oklahoma, Kalawaia said he actually prefers life here.

"As soon as I'm home for five days, I'm like, 'Alright, I'm ready to go back,'" Kalawaia said. "Back home, I would do the same thing every day — work and practice. I couldn't do anything or go to many rodeos. Now that I'm up here, I'm living the dream. I come up here, and I've been doing what I wanted to do since I was small."

"Now that I'm up here, I'm living the dream. I come up here, and I've been doing what I wanted to do since I was small."
— Trisyn Kalawaia

In his free time, Kalawaia works as a farrier, a person who shoes horses and ensures horses are walking correctly.

He explained that his father was a farrier, so he had no choice but to learn growing up. But it has become something he truly enjoys, he said.

After graduating, Kalawaia said he would like to remain in Oklahoma to continue competing in rodeo and eventually accomplish his dream of competing in the NFR.



Photo by Colby Dalton

Kalawaia leads his horse around the Northwestern rodeo facility.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Northwestern to host holiday concerts

By **CHANCE LOVE**
Student Reporter

Northwestern's bands and choirs are performing in the Holiday Gala at 7 p.m. Saturday in Herod Hall.

The combined concert is free and open to the public.

This event aims to bring in the holidays with cheer, with Christmas being right around the corner.

"The Holiday Gala is a concert featuring the Northwestern Oklahoma State University choirs and bands to celebrate the season and the tree lighting by the university president that happens immediately afterwards," said Dr. Karsten Longhurt, director of choral music.

Some music that will be performed during the concert is "I Saw Three Ships," "Coventry Carol," a Puerto Rican carol; and the Austrian carol "Still, Still, Still" with hand chimes.

"A variety of traditional and non-traditional holiday works, including those from other cultures, will be featured," Longhurt said. "The Holiday Gala is free, has lots of music variety and features our outstanding performance ensembles."

Northwestern is also having a jazz ensemble fall concert featuring the students in the Northwestern jazz ensemble at 7 p.m. Thursday in Herod Hall.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Admission is free, and the event is open to the public.



File photo

The University Singers perform during a holiday concert last year. This year's Holiday Gala will be Saturday.

ALBUM REVIEW

'Her Loss' shows artist's strengths

By **GAVIN MENDOZA**
News Editor

Drake and 21 Savage released what in my opinion should be, without much debate, considered the album of the year.

The album, "Her Loss," was a collaboration album that featured both Drake and 21 Savage.

The album is a total of 16 songs and runs one hour with Drake having three solo songs and 21 Savage having one.

After my first time listening to the album, I would have rated it a solid eight out of 10.

Since then, I have continued to listen and now I would place the album at a nine out of 10.

The album is nearly perfect in my opinion and contains the best aspects of what both Drake and 21 Savage have to offer.

Lyrical, both Drake and 21 Savage show how good of rappers they are.

I think the beats and the beat switches were the best part of the album.

In the songs "Rich Flex," "Major Distribution" and "Hours in Silence," the beats switch at different parts of the songs, and it shows the versatility of both rappers.

I do not think the album has any flaws, so it is hard for me to say there is the worst part of it.

I say this but still cannot give the album a perfect score because it is not my favorite album of all time.

My favorite songs on the album right now are "Privileged Rappers," "Spin Bout U," "Broke Boys," "Hours in Silence" and "Circo Loco."

These songs are the best in

my opinion at showing Drake and 21 Savage as rappers, but also as versatile artists.

In my opinion, this is Drake's best album since his "More Life" album, which was released in 2017.

"I feel like Drake has cemented his legacy as one of the greatest rappers of all time, if he had not already."
— Gavin Mendoza

I was a big fan of "Certified Lover Boy," the album he released in 2021, but I was not as much of a fan of the album released this past summer.

Honestly, never mind. Both of these albums received a lot of hate, but after this latest album, I feel like Drake has cemented his legacy as one of the greatest rappers of all time, if he had not already.

21 Savage was able to show how good of a rapper he is, regardless of if he is a feature on a song or if he is by himself.

The knock on 21 Savage is often about him only being good as a featured artist, especially with artists like Drake.

In the songs "Spin Bout U," "Broke Boys" and "Rich Flex," I feel like he shows he can compete with anyone in the rap game.

Both Drake and 21 Savage played to their advantages in this album, and it paid off in the long run. The album will age like fine wine.

BOOK REVIEW

Vintage vampire novel sets baseline for TV show

CAITLIN'S CRITIQUES



CAITLIN HOFEN

"Interview with the Vampire" was published in 1976 by novelist Anne Rice as her debut work.

She went on to expand the story to 12 novels collectively known as "The Vampire Chronicles," and the spin-off series "New Tales of the Vampires."

"Interview with the Vampire" is the told by Louis de Pointe du Lac as he recounts his life story to a young reporter.

Louis started as a plantation owner south of New Orleans in 1791. Upset over the death of his brother, Louis begs the vampire Lestat to kill him.

Instead, Lestat turns Louis into a vampire, and the two run the plantation.

When the plantation slaves start to suspect their true nature, Louis and Lestat set the plantation on fire and flee to New Orleans.

During a moment of weakness, Louis almost kills a child when he sucks her blood.

Scared Louis will leave him, Lestat turns the girl into a vampire and names her Claudia, their 5-year-old daughter.

The trio live together peacefully until Claudia starts to realize she is a grown woman trapped in a child's body.

I surprisingly enjoyed this book, as I'm not really one for horror novels.

The changing emotions Louis expressed throughout the novel were powerful and believable.

The other characters were dynamic, and I can't wait to finish the second novel, which is told from Lestat's point of view and tells more of his story.

"I would recommend this book to any vampire lover or someone who enjoys gothic literature."
— Caitlin Hofen

The pace of the novel itself was a bit slow at times with unnecessary details taking precedence.

However, there was enough mystery left in the story that I wanted to see it through to the end, and it convinced me to start the second book in the series.

The more graphic scenes

weren't overly explicit but still painted a clear picture.

The story is told from the first-person perspective of Louis, so one could call into question the reliability of his retelling.

He portrays vampires as predators with no heart for their victims.

I can't say I didn't see the end of the novel coming, but I really appreciate how Rice sets up the next book in the ending to this story.

I would recommend this book to any vampire lover or someone who enjoys gothic literature.

A movie was released in 1994 with same name and uses similar details from the novel.

In October 2022, a television show named after the novel was also released on various streaming platforms, and it seems to be loosely based on the characters and events from the original "Interview with the Vampire."

I look forward to watching the show and comparing it to the written storyline.

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SPORTS

MEN'S BASKETBALL



Photos provided

Malik Parsons looks to pass the ball during Northwestern's game against Harding on Feb. 19 at Percefull Fieldhouse. The Rangers are 3-0 this season with wins over Midwestern State, Manhattan Christian, and Cameron. The next game for the Rangers is on Thursday, when Northwestern takes on the Tigers of East Central at 7:30 p.m.

Rangers roll to 3-0 start



Malik Parsons prepares to shoot a free throw during a Northwestern home game. Parsons leads the Rangers in scoring by averaging 25 points per game. The Rangers currently have a record of 3-0.

By CADE KENNEDY
Sports Editor

The Northwestern men's basketball team defeated Manhattan Christian and Cameron to improve their record to 3-0.

On Nov. 22, the Rangers took on the Thunder of Manhattan Christian inside Percefull Fieldhouse in the first home game of the season for Northwestern.

The Rangers had success shooting the ball in the first half, as Northwestern had a shooting percentage of 51% with a 45-29 lead going into the half.

The lead continued to grow for the Rangers, as the Thunder could not keep up with the avalanche of points produced by Northwestern. When the clock reached zero, the Rangers had broken triple digits in a 103-54 victory.

Both Malik Parsons and Jason Douglas-Stanley led the Rangers in scoring with 19 points. Brian Free and Chance Love also reached double digits, with Free scoring 18 and Love scoring 17.

Both Douglas-Stanley and Love came off the bench for Northwestern and made up 36 of Northwestern's 49 bench points. Love led the Rangers in rebounds with 11, while Parsons dished out seven assists in addition to five rebounds.

On Saturday, the Rangers played the Aggies of Cameron, which is the second team the Rangers have played from the Lone Star Conference this season.

The first half quickly turned into a game of runs, as both the Aggies and the Rangers scored in bunches before entering dry spells.

Only six minutes into the game, Cameron already built up a 22-12 lead, but the Rangers rallied for the next five minutes to regain the lead. After an explosive first half, Cameron had a 41-38 lead over Northwestern.

When the second half started, the Rangers and Aggies continued to battle for the lead, with each side trying to establish momentum.

The Rangers found their rhythm midway through the half, as Parsons, Larry White, Free and Love all made big baskets to put Northwestern up by 14 with nine minutes left in the game.

Despite a fierce rally from Cameron, the Rangers held on to win, 89-86.

Parsons led the Rangers with 34 points, while Shavaul Butters scored 11 and racked up a team-high 15 rebounds.

The next home game for Northwestern is Thursday, when the Rangers battle the Tigers of East Central at 7:30 p.m.

SPORTS

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Lady Rangers dominate for 3-0 start



Paige Scott attempts a layup during Northwestern's game against Kansas Christian Monday at Percefull Fieldhouse. The Lady Rangers defeated the Lady Falcons, 111-45.

By **CONNOR GRAY**
Senior Reporter

The Northwestern women's basketball team is off to a hot start to the season.

The Lady Rangers played against Friends University and Kansas Christian College in their last two games in which Northwestern has outscored opponents 184 to 85.

The first game for Northwestern was Nov. 19 against Friends. Northwestern jumped out to an early lead and did not look back.

The Lady Rangers got a 5-0 lead and ended the first quarter with a 14-9 lead.

The next quarter, they got an 8-0 lead, and it was all Northwestern from there.

The Lady Rangers had control for the rest the game and won 73-39 to improve to 2-0 on the season.

Faith Simpson and Nikya Orange set the pace on offense for the Lady Rangers with 13 points, followed closely with 12 from Carly Craig.

Camille Thomas led defensively with eight rebounds. Talayah Thomas collected five assists.

The next game for Northwestern was Monday versus Kansas Christian, and the Lady Rangers had a dominant start.

The Lady Rangers jumped out on a 15-0 run and had a 35-4 lead at the end of the quarter.

Northwestern shot more than 50% in the second half to keep the blowout going.

The Lady Rangers eventually won the game, 111-45, to get their third win on the season after a dominant performance against Kansas Christian in a game where 16 Lady Rangers played.

Simpson set the pace on offense and defense with a double-double of 23 points and 11 rebounds.

Chelsea Lindsey followed in points with 12, and Orange followed in defense with eight rebounds. Craig also accumulated a double-double for the Lady Rangers with 11 assists and 10 points.

The Lady Rangers will open up conference play Thursday against East Central at home starting at 5:30 p.m.

The next games will be on Saturday in Shawnee at 5:30 p.m. against Oklahoma Baptist and Dec. 10 at home against Southern Nazarene at 1 p.m.

How to easily surf the playoff controversy wave

CADE'S CALLS



CADE KENNEDY

December is here once again, which means that more people are going to be staying indoors to stay away from the cold.

This type of cabin fever can drive people crazy, and college football receives a decent amount of this zaniness during this time.

Every time I turn on the television or endlessly scroll through social media, I see people arguing about the College Football Playoff. More importantly, these people are usually arguing about who should be in.

When there are only four spots available, fans who only watch their team turn into Nostradamus.

People start to think up the weirdest scenarios possible and then try to predict how their team (which probably does not deserve to get in) can make the playoffs and compete for a national title.

This happens to most fans when their team reaches the top 10 in November. The excitement that comes with imagining players they know and support holding a trophy can set up a permanent residence in the minds of millions.

It is important to know that these people are everywhere, and they will usually reveal themselves by talking about how bad one school is, or how they play in a terrible conference.

Almost every time I see someone say this, their team is only a few spots away from the playoff.

I do not blame these people for acting the way that they do, as they only want what is best for their squad. However, there is a line where rationality ends and insanity begins.

Let's take a look at the top four teams in the playoff rankings this week. Georgia remains on top, while Michigan, TCU and USC all have great chances of making the playoff.

If you are a fan of Ohio State

or Alabama, there is still a chance that your team could sneak back in and take a spot.

The selection committee had a different set of playoff contenders last week, and that is OK.

However, some people took the fact that LSU was fifth and USC was sixth as an attack against them and lashed out about how the entire system is a fraud and that the committee favors certain teams.

These people also failed to recognize that USC had an opportunity to prove itself against Notre Dame, and LSU has to play Georgia at the end of the season.

If you use some common sense when looking at the rankings, they are not as bad as they seem. They are setting up what they

think will happen, just like every other fan of college football.

These rankings come out on a week-by-week basis, which means that rankings are going to change every single week.

When December comes around, the dust will settle, and the four most deserving teams

will be in the playoff.

The best way to survive waves of controversy and talking heads is to avoid people who are just looking to start an argument.

In a season that has new twists and turns every day, there is no point in griping about something that will not last.

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WALTER: Highs, lows mark coach's tenure

Continued from Page 1

Championship in 1999. In two years, Walter worked his way up to the NCAA level by taking the assistant strength and conditioning coach job at Louisiana Tech in 2003.

After a short stint in Ruston, Louisiana, Walter took a new job at Southeastern Louisiana. After a few seasons of being an assistant coach, he became the head strength and conditioning coach, according to the Northwestern News archives.

One year later, Walter left the state of Louisiana to become the head strength and conditioning coach for New Mexico State.

Walter moved once again in 2010, when he took on the roles of special teams coordinator, wide receiver coach and head strength coach at Emporia State. Two years later, he became the offensive coordinator for the Hornets and helped lead them to their first 10-win season in school history.

RETURNING TO ALVA

In 2015, Walter returned to Northwestern as the head coach of the program as the Rangers looked to compete in the Great American Conference. In Walter's first season at Northwestern, the Rangers got off to a rough start. Northwestern finished the season with a record of 3-8.

The Rangers showed signs of improvement in 2016, but Northwestern faced the same problem as it did the prior season. After a 59-56 win over Arkansas-Monticello, the Rangers lost three games in a row. Northwestern ended the season with a 4-7 record.

The best season in the Walter era occurred in 2017, when the Rangers achieved a record of 5-6. This was the first five-win season for Northwestern since 2010. The Rangers had several chances to achieve a winning season but lost four games by one possession.

Northwestern regressed for the first time



Former Northwestern head football coach Matt Walter stands on the sidelines during a 2022 football game.

Photo by J.D. Eddy

under Walter in 2018, as the Rangers once again had four losses by one possession. The Rangers got off to a slow start, as they won one of their first five games. The Rangers went 4-7 that season.

Neither progression nor regression occurred in 2019, but the Rangers had a five-game losing streak during the second half the season. The Rangers went 4-7 once again, with more scores becoming lopsided.

When 2021 rolled around, every team in Division II had the same problem. No one played the year prior, so it would take some time to readjust to the grind of the gridiron. Northwestern took blow after blow from multiple teams during a seven-game losing streak to start the season. The season ended on a positive note as the Rangers beat Southwestern to go 2-9.

The same could not be said for the 2022 season. Northwestern battled injuries throughout the year. The Rangers had another slow start before defeating Arkansas-Monticello, the only game the Rangers won.

The Rangers failed to win a home game for the first time as a member of the Great American Conference and finished the season with a 1-10 record.

OFFICIALS RESPOND

"We appreciate all of the hard work that Matt and his staff has put into the program," Athletic Director Brad Franz said in a statement. "He's worked every day to be a champion on and off the field and his work is much appreciated. We will continue to work to elevate the program to contend in the Great American Conference."

Northwestern President Dr. Bo Hannaford said: "Coach Walter will always be a valued member of the Northwestern Oklahoma State University family. Matt is a graduate and a former outstanding player, and I appreciate his time and effort toward our football program. We will now concentrate on finding the best candidate to lead our football program and our student-athletes."

Graduation is Sunday

Fall commencement at Northwestern Oklahoma State University will take place at 3:30 p.m. Sunday at Percefull Fieldhouse.

Randy Smith, a Northwestern graduate and former athletic director, will serve as the graduation speaker.

Smith arrived at Northwestern in 1971 and played baseball for four years. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in 1975 and returned to get his master's degree in 1978.

Smith also was the housing director and baseball coach for years until he became athletic director. Smith was inducted into the Northwestern Hall of Fame in 2005.

About 90 students will graduate, so officials will not sell tickets to cap attendance. Students will need to be there 45 minutes early to be ready for the ceremony.

A reception for the graduates will take place after the ceremony around 4:30 p.m. in the Student Center. It is open to all graduates, family members friends and any other guests. Cookies and punch will be served. Guests are welcome to bring dishes of their own for the graduates.

The Northwestern band will play during the ceremony, and some members will play a brass quintet.

A live internet stream of the graduation can be found at: www.youtube.com/NWOSURangers.