

# Happy Holidays



# NORTHWESTERN NEWS

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## Part 3 of 3: New image of sports

# New NFL rules protect players

By ELY NOBLE  
Senior Reporter

Randall Gay didn't see the hit coming. As cornerback.

As a cornerback for the New England Patriots in 2005, big hits were just a part of the job.

The game was different back then, tough and unforgiving.

Gay felt his head rattle as another player slammed into him, helmet-to-helmet, a hit that would get a 15-yard penalty.

Lying on the field, Gay thought to himself, "this is just football."

Years later, Gay watched as the NFL made big changes to the game.

"Back then, the big hits were how you got noticed," he said. "Now, you see the league trying to make sure players are healthy after they retire."

Over the past 20 years, the NFL has worked to make football safer. Hits that were once celebrated are now seen as dangerous.

Concussions, neck injuries and long-term brain damage, like Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE), have pushed the league to take action.

New rules were introduced to protect players while keeping the



Defensive backs Ben Heidebrecht, No. 27, and Bashu Delco, No. 21, take down an Oklahoma Baptist player in a legal tackle while linebacker Coby Tillman, No. 44, runs to help during the Oct. 26 win, 30-28. The NFL has made changes to tackling rules to make them safer.

Photo provided



Photo Provided

New Orleans Saints cornerback Randall Gay, No. 20, now retired, prepares to make a tackle during his NFL career, which spanned 2004-2010. Today, he says, the NFL is making changes to keep players healthier.

game exciting.

"I wasn't sure about the new rules at first," Gay said. "But after seeing what some of my teammates are going through, I think it was the right thing to do."

In the early 2000s, the NFL started making changes to keep players safe.

The first rule that stood out was the "no-contact" rule for wide receivers, put in place in 2004.

This rule stopped defenders from hitting receivers more than five yards from the line of scrimmage.

It didn't just make the game more exciting by allowing more passing, it also helped reduce violent collisions.

Then, in 2009, after New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady suffered a season ending knee injury, the NFL created a rule to protect quarterbacks.

This rule, known as the

"Brady Rule," banned defenders from hitting quarterbacks below the knee. ESPN reported that this change was made to prevent serious injuries to one of the game's most important players.

These changes laid the groundwork for what was to come.

The NFL was starting to realize that player safety needed to be a bigger priority.

In the late 2000s, concussions became a major concern. Many former players started suffering from CTE, a brain disease caused from repeated injuries to the head.

As the New York Times reported, players were dealing with memory loss, depression and other serious health problems after they stepped away from football. The Concussion Legacy Foundation has been a key group pushing the NFL to take concussions more seriously.

In the past, players often times would hide their injury to stay in

the game.

Now, with new rules in place, the NFL requires players to pass a test before they can return to play after a head injury.

In 2015, the NFL took another big step by adding concussion spotters.

These were certified doctors that would watch the game closely and can stop play if they think a player has a concussion.

According to NFL.com, this has made a big difference in catching concussions early.

One of the biggest changes to the game has been the way players tackle.

In the past, hard hits were celebrated, especially when defenders led with their helmets.

But these hits also caused a lot of concussions and neck injuries.

In 2013, the NFL introduced a rule banning players from hitting

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# NEWS

## NWOSU readies for finals

By **DERRICK GALINDO**  
Senior Reporter

NWOSU's finals week is starting next Tuesday, and whether you're steadily studying or crankily cramming, it is fast approaching.

From Tuesday at 8 a.m. to Friday at 10 p.m., students can expect a summative review over the semester to take place in their fall classes.

A schedule is listed on NWOSU's website, by either typing in "finals schedule" in the search bar in the top left or by using this link: <https://www.nwosu.edu/finals-schedule>.

In preparation for finals, chair of the communication department and assistant professor of speech Tamara Brown said using materials provided was her greatest tip when it comes to studying.

"If there is a study guide that is given, use the study guide to help you prepare," Brown said.

"If there are hints in class, pay attention to that information. Jot that down, use that information to help guide your studies.

"Also, drawing conclusions from the information given about the test.

"If an instructor says, 'you'll need to be able to recognize this,' that's very different than 'you need to absolutely know this inside and out.'"

Sarah Fletcher, a TRIO SSS project adviser, said finding patterns and word associations in the material that is being studied helped her the most when it came to studying for finals.

"There were very packed semesters where I'd be taking similar psychology classes," Fletcher said. "As I got to my senior level, I noticed a lot of overlapping information. I was able to take that, really learn the crucial parts of the information, know where everything goes and to answer questions effectively when it came to who said what, who did what, what theory it was

apart of and anything that relates to psychology."

Dr. Jennifer Sattler, chair of the department of natural sciences and professor of physics, said that her best tip is to start early, not to cram and to actually sleep.

"I remember being a student and I would stay up all night studying," Sattler said. "Sometimes, it's best to get some sleep because you'll remember more, you'll retain more and you'll learn more if you actually get sleep."

**Check your schedule for finals at [nwosu.edu/finals-schedule](https://www.nwosu.edu/finals-schedule)**

## NWOSU alum set to speak at graduation

By **TARA OWEN**  
News Editor

Northwestern Oklahoma State University fall commencement ceremony will be held on Sunday Dec. 8 at 2:30 p.m. Percefull Fieldhouse.

Judith Ridgeway will be speaking at her alma mater as she will be delivering the commencement address. Ridgeway graduated from Northwestern with two degrees in science and a degree in psychology and sociology in 1970. While on campus, she sang with the campus singers.

Born in Missouri, Ridgeway then moved in with her aunt Aurice Huguley at a young age. Huguley worked as a finance officer at Northwestern for 43 years.

After graduation, Ridgeway earned a Juris Doctorate in Law from the University of Oklahoma in 1975.

She then began her career as an attorney.

She also taught classes and hosted lectures at OU from 1993 until 2005. Ridgeway retired in 2011 from being an attorney.

To watch commencement live, head to [www.YouTube.com/NWOSURangers](https://www.YouTube.com/NWOSURangers).



Alum Judith Ridgeway will speak at fall commencement on Sunday. *Photo provided*

## What's Up?

### December 5

- 7-9 p.m. Jazz Ensemble Concert in Feller's Family Auditorium in Herod Hall

### December 6

- 4:00-7 p.m. Hot Cocoa and Friends at the Runnymede (402 4th St) 5:00-8 p.m. First Friday Art Walk @ Graceful Arts
- 7:00 p.m. Tree Lighting & Christmas Carols on the Courthouse Stage
- 8:00-9:30 p.m. Kids & Cops Family Christmas Movie at the Extreme

### December 7

- 7AM Doggie Reindeer Dash & Santa Fun Run
- All-Day Events throughout Downtown Alva
- 7:00 p.m. Holiday Gala feat. NWOSU Choir and Band Ensembles

### December 8

- 2:30PM-5:00 p.m. Fall Commencement
- 4PM-6PM Fall Commencement Reception in the Student Center

### December 9

- 10 p.m. Late night breakfast at Coronado Cafeteria

### December 10-13

- Finals for NWOSU Students

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# NEWS

## New way of dining for Northwestern students



New Just Baked vending machine advertises White Castle sliders.

Ranger Market is getting a new dining kiosk for students to enjoy during and after the market closes.

The kiosk will sit outside of the Ranger Market and serve a variety of items including bao, pot stickers, pretzels, chicken alfredo and donuts.

The kiosk will be fully functional after Christmas break.

The machine has 64 slots to hold food but the Ranger Market employees are planning on keeping it stocked as much as possible.

The machine also has an app called Just Baked where you can order up to 24 hours in advance.

You can also order using the machine however, it only takes card and, you cannot use flex dollars on it. The items are a little pricey ranging about 6-7 dollars.

The machine works by ordering an item that will then go into a microwave where it heats up the food in just a minute or too.

The machine is also handicap accessible by moving the screen down where people in wheelchairs can click it.

Anyone can also use the help needed button and get refunds if something is wrong however, refunds will take at least 3 business days.

## Theater



Pictured left to right: Lucas Wood, Jadyn Hendrickson, Sam Grinder, Alexander Marshall and Samantha Grimes thanks elementary students for coming to the show.



Pictured left to right: Aleya Johnson, Bethany Towns, Jonathon Snyder high-five children that watched NWOSU Theaters rendition of "The Wizard of Oz" at the Fellers Family Auditorium.

The NWOSU Theater puts on a children show every year for elementary students all across Northwest Oklahoma to attend. This year the show was "The Wizard of Oz" a short play by Erin Detrick.

## Construction



Construction workers work diligently to restore the roof of Vinson Hall and other buildings on campus.



Worker moves materials to and from construction site as they work on the roof in front of Vinson Hall.



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SCAN TO SHOP

Construction workers have been working on updating several roofs across campus including the science building, Vinson Hall and health and sports science building. The construction started before Thanksgiving break with Vinson Hall and is still continuing with the health and sports science building being what they are currently working on.

Construction workers working on the Vinson Hall roof before Thanksgiving break.



## NORTHWESTERN NEWS

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### Fall 2024 Staff

**Editor-in-Chief**  
Alli Schieber

**News Editor**  
Jady Hendrickson

**Editorial Editor**  
Leo Robles

**Sports Editor**  
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**Advertising Manager**  
Logan Hicks

**Circulation Manager**  
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**Online Manager**  
Jaylee Ross

**Adviser**  
Dr. Kaylene Armstrong

News office: Jesse Dunn Annex 232  
Telephone: 327-8479; Fax: 327-8127  
E-mail: nwnews@nwosu.edu  
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Northwestern Oklahoma State University,  
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Letters to the editor shall bear the  
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classification, title, etc., address and phone  
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on file. Unsigned letters to the editor will not  
be published.

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follow the rules stated above and can be sent  
to nwnews@nwosu.edu. Please limit submis-  
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for grammar, libel and space limitations. All  
letters submitted may not be used.

All letters represent the views of the  
author.

# OPINION

## A different perspective of Christmas

By **Ingrid Maldonado**  
Student Reporter

Christmas is a special time of  
year, and many different cultures  
have different traditions.

As a Hispanic, one of my fam-  
ily's traditions is to open pres-  
ents Christmas Eve night around  
midnight. During my childhood,  
I grew up being excited for  
Christmas Eve night rather than  
Christmas day. Christmas day  
was meant to relax, eat, and enjoy  
your gifts.

If you were to ask any person  
of Hispanic background when

Christmas is, they would tell you  
December 24, not the 25. They  
will tell you they stay up late  
waiting for midnight to strike the  
clock and open presents. The next  
day, they sleep in, eat leftovers  
and relax with the family.

The foods of Hispanic culture  
during Christmas include, tama-  
les, pozole, menudo, carne asada,  
champurrado and other foods. Tama-  
les are corn dough filled with  
pork, chicken, or even sometimes  
sweet wrapped in a corn husk.  
Pozole is a type of soup with  
hominy, choice of meat, usually  
chicken, and seasonings. Cham-  
purrado is a frothy hot chocolate  
drink with spices.

In Hispanic cultures, there are  
days you celebrate leading up to  
Christmas. December 12 is the  
Day of the Virgin Guadalupe,  
which is when a catholic feast  
is prepared to honor the Virgin  
Mary. Las Posadas, which trans-  
lates to the Inns, is December  
16-24 and families go from home  
to home, singing a song which re-  
enacts Mary and Joseph trying to  
find a place to stay in Bethlehem.

For Christmas, there are more  
foods than tamales. There is tur-  
key, rice, beans, ham, and many  
more. Buñuelos are a dessert they  
make during the holidays. It is  
fried dough with sugar and cin-  
namon.

After Christmas, the festivities  
do not stop. The New Year arrives  
and there is a tradition to eat 12  
grapes before the clock strikes  
midnight in order to have good  
luck each month of the year. Af-  
ter New Years, the next festivity  
is January 6.

January 6 is Dia de Los Tres  
Reyes Magos which translates to  
Three Kings Day. It is when the  
three travelers went to Bethle-  
hem to give their gifts to Jesus.  
A sweet bread in the shape of a  
wreath is shared with family and  
inside the bread is a hidden baby  
Jesus. Whoever gets the baby  
Jesus must make tamales for the  
next get together.

## The true symbol of Christmas

By **Leo Robles**  
Editorial Editor

Christmas is the greatest of  
all the holidays. We all are get-  
ting ready for Christmas and the  
happy reunion with the family. I  
think we all have an opinion on  
why Christmas is and has made  
an impact in all of us, but is it ever  
questioned on why a Christmas  
tree has to be the main symbol of  
Christmas.

The Christmas tree stands  
as one of the most enduring and  
recognizable symbols of Christ-  
mas. Its presence is synonymous  
with the holiday season, causing  
feelings of joy, warmth, and tra-  
dition.

Beyond its aesthetic appeal,  
the Christmas tree carries deep  
cultural, historical, and emotional  
significance, making it the center-  
piece of Christmas celebrations  
and one of the most iconic aspects  
of the holiday. Even with the star  
on top and all the ornaments that  
surround it, the Christmas tree  
has maintained the main signifi-  
cance and purpose of celebrating  
Christmas.

One reason the Christmas tree  
holds such iconic status is its abil-  
ity to bring people together. Dec-  
orating the tree is a cherished tra-  
dition in households worldwide,  
often involving family members  
of all ages.

Hanging ornaments to placing  
the star or angel on top, the act  
of decorating becomes a bonding  
experience filled with laughter  
and shared memories.

For many, the Christmas tree  
is more than a decoration, it be-  
comes a repository of stories, as  
ornaments often hold sentimen-  
tal value, commemorating mile-  
stones, vacations, or loved ones.  
The use of significant ornaments  
into the tree brings higher senti-  
mental value on why having a  
tree for Christmas is important in  
everyone's homes.

The tree itself also embod-  
ies themes central to Christmas  
which are hope, renewal, and

light. The reason why a pine is  
the specific tree to have during  
Christmas was chosen for its re-  
silience and ability to remain vi-  
brant even in the depths of win-  
ter, symbolizing eternal life and  
enduring hope. This association  
dates back centuries, when ear-  
ly Christians adopted evergreen  
boughs as part of their Christmas  
celebrations, merging them with  
older pagan winter solstice tradi-  
tions.

Today, the Christmas tree con-  
tinues to symbolize life and the  
promise of brighter days, even in  
the darkest times.

Visually, the Christmas tree is  
a stunning and versatile holiday  
icon. Its decorations like twin-  
kling lights, glittering ornaments,  
and colorful garlands, capture  
the magic of the season, creat-  
ing an important point for joyful  
celebrations. Whether adorned  
with traditional reds and golds  
or modern minimalist styles, the  
Christmas tree brings beauty and  
festivity to any space.

Public Christmas trees, often  
enormous and elaborately dec-  
orated, become landmarks during  
the holiday season, drawing  
crowds and creating communal  
holiday spirit in towns and cities  
around the world.

The Christmas tree also sym-  
bolizes a sense of nostalgia and  
tradition. For many, memories of  
gathering around the tree to open  
presents, sing carols, or simply  
enjoy its glow are some of the  
most treasured moments of child-  
hood. The ritual of picking out a  
tree, whether from a farm, a store,  
or unpacking an artificial one  
from storage, is itself a tradition  
that builds anticipation and ex-  
citement for the holiday.

Some may think that there is  
no Christmas value or spirit if you  
do not have one at all. That is the  
deeper impact that we have put on  
the tree.

The Christmas tree has be-  
come a global cultural icon. Iconic  
displays like the Rockefeller  
Center tree in New York City or  
the towering trees in European



Photo by Leo Robles

Christmas lights in shape of a big Christmas tree at Crystal Beach park  
in Woodward

Christmas markets are beloved  
symbols of the season, drawing  
millions of visitors and sparking  
holiday joy.

The image of the Christmas  
tree transcends religious and cul-

tural boundaries, embraced by  
people of diverse backgrounds  
as a symbol of pure love towards  
what many of the human cultures  
are about which is family and lov-  
ing one another.

# OPINION

## What is it like to collect history and culture

By **Leo Robles**  
*Editorial Editor*

Many people have hobbies, but collecting specific things is a personal favorite. Collecting is one of the most fascinating and diverse hobbies, making it easier for people of almost any age or background to get into it.

Stamps, coins, books, action figures, records or even items like vintage advertisements or sea glass, collecting any sort of thing brings a variety of things that someone can get into and a variety of people with different preferences also get into these same hobbies to connect to others alike.

I recently realized that many of my family members have and had a specific type of collection. My grandfather collected music magazines about classic songs, and he passed that same hobby to my dad. My dad took a more diverse perception of collecting. He collected fitness magazines, videogames, and music magazines. Part of that also was passed on to me.



Photo by Leo Robles

Comic collection of The Amazing Spider-Man and Spawn along with a Vinyl album collection of Molotov, Pink Floyd, Fleetwood Mac and Radiohead.

learns about different countries, eras, and economies, while a collector of vinyl records explores music history and production.

The quest for finding the history behind items is amazing. It

motivator for collectors. Many people collect items that remind them of their childhood. Whether it's baseball cards from their youth, antique furniture that evokes a historical period, or

vintage toys from a simpler time, collecting allows individuals to reconnect with the past in a tangible way. This emotional connection transforms objects into cherished artifacts, making the hobby deeply personal and fulfilling.

The thrill of the hunt is yet another reason collecting captivates people. Searching for that one elusive item that may be a rare coin, a first-edition book, or a limited-edition action figure, provides excitement and a sense of purpose. This pursuit often takes collectors to flea markets, estate sales, auctions, and online platforms, exposing them to new experiences and communities.

The joy of finally acquiring a sought-after piece is unparalleled, combining effort, patience, and a touch of luck. From personal experience I can say that I have found the rarest things in flea markets, but it is very important to make sure that whatever you are buying has to be on a reasonable price depending on the cur-

rent conditions of the item.

Collecting may pursue others for social connections. Enthusiasts frequently join clubs, attend conventions, or participate in online forums to share their passions. These interactions create a sense of belonging among other collectors.

It's not uncommon for collectors to trade, sell, or gift items to help one another complete their collections, reinforcing the collaborative and communal aspects of the hobby.

Collecting is an endlessly interesting hobby because it combines discovery, personal expression, nostalgia, and the thrill of pursuit. It enriches the mind, stirs the heart, and connects people through their same goals.

Whether someone collects for passion, education, or sentimentality, the joy and fulfillment it brings make collecting a truly unique and rewarding experience. Collecting has changed part of who I am as a person.



Photo by Leo Robles

Comic collection of Death of Spider-Man along with other Marvel Comics.

I started collecting comics, then action figures, and I recently started collecting vinyl and music magazines as well. Having different collections makes you feel like you know so much about culture, but you only find out that you're scratching the tip of the iceberg.

One of the primary reasons collecting is so interesting is that it provokes the desire for people to be more curious and be more thoughtful on what is their next item to add to their collection. When it comes to choosing which is the next item to add to your collection, I take my time to decide if it is going to leave satisfied for a while.

Every item in a collection has a story, its origin, history and cultural significance. Collecting often makes you feel like a historian as they research their treasures. For instance, a coin collector

is admirable to have ownership of something that brings significance to your life and has brought meaning to other history.

The choices a collector makes on what to collect, how to organize it, and how to display it, reflect their tastes and passions. For some, it's about preserving memories or connections to a specific time, place, or culture. For others, it's about showing a fascination with the rare, the beautiful, or the unusual.

Through their collections, people tell their own stories, turning their hobby into a creative outlet. I only collect for the unique purpose of liking things until I started to do research on the items I wanted to collect and realized the greater impact in them. Now, I do more thoughtful decisions on what is going to be the next piece of my collections.

Nostalgia is another powerful



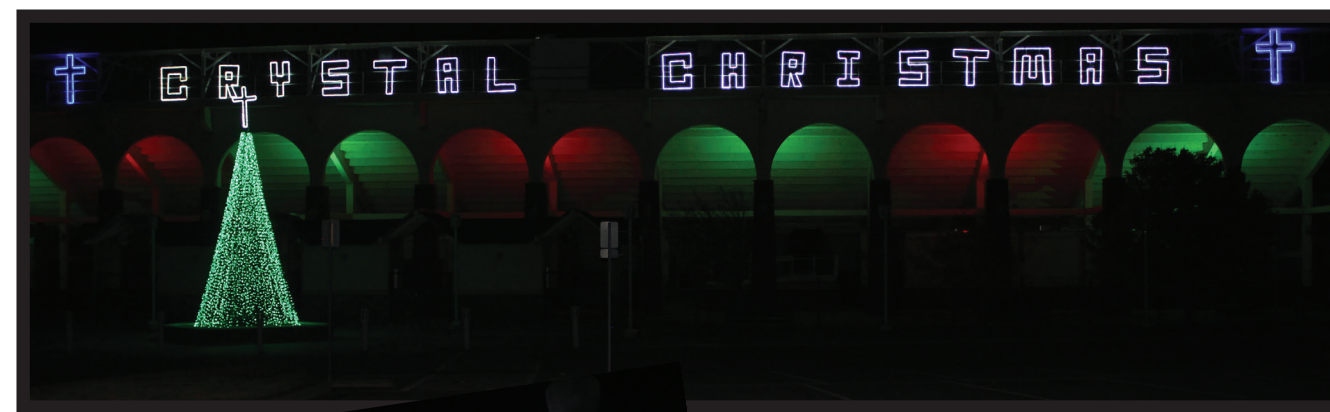
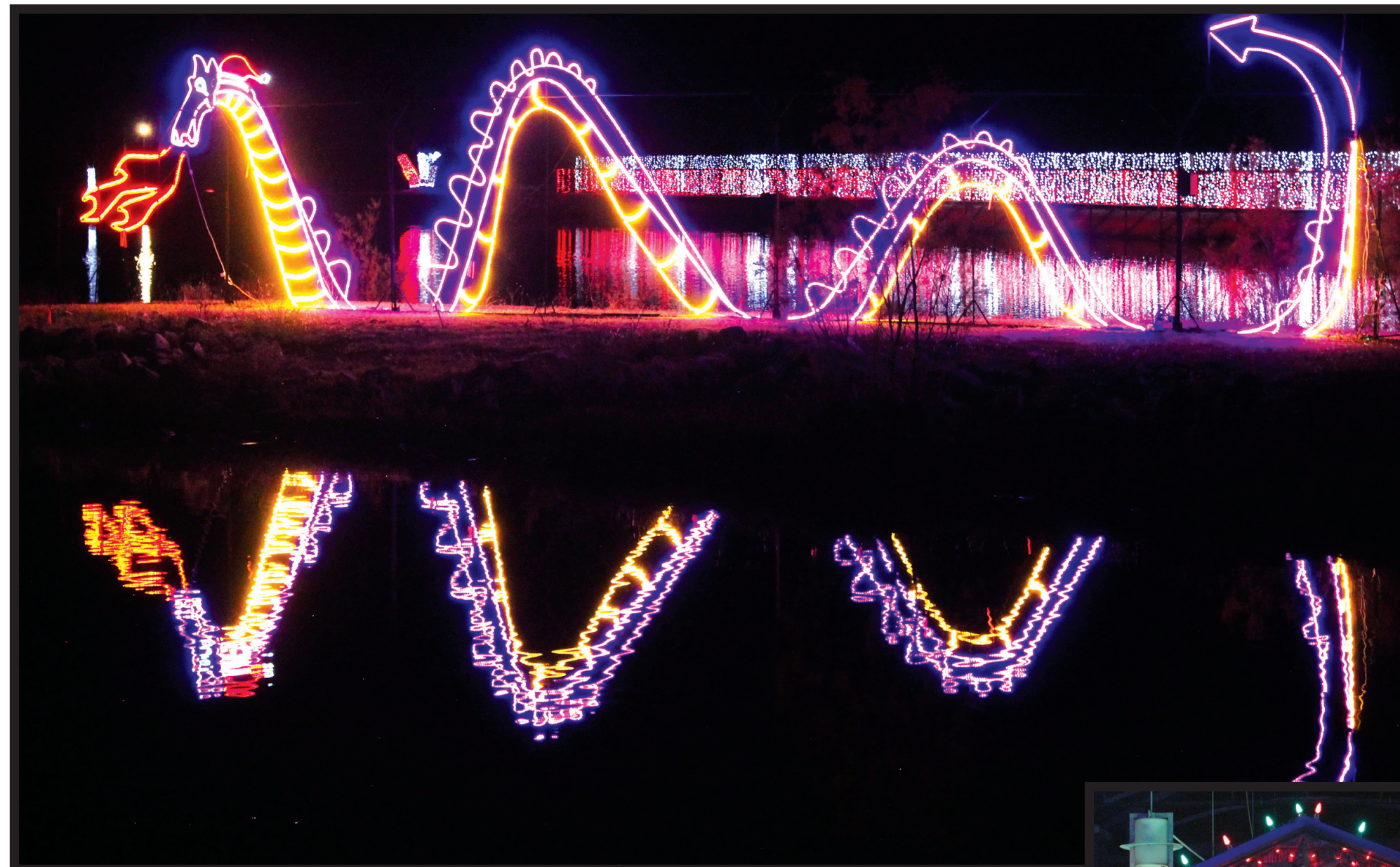
Photo by Leo Robles

Action figure collection of iconic characters from movies, comics and videogames sitting on a shelf.

# It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas — in OK

## Where to see Christmas Lights around Alva

- Beadles Nursing Home & across the street, 916 Noble St.
- 1320 Barnes Ave.
- 1808 Skyview Drive
- 115 Ash St.
- 711 Church St.
- 525 Myers Drive
- 13322 Locust St.
- 1216 Flynn St.
- 1210 Flynn St.
- 703 5th St.
- 1856 E. Flynn St.
- 918 Barnes Ave.
- 27240 County Road 460
- 707 S. Sunset
- 132 E. Oklahoma Blvd.
- 102 Hickory St.
- 712 Oak St.
- 1224 Choctaw St.
- 1405 Noble St.



Photos by Leo Robles

Crystal Christmas, a light show in Woodward, allows visitors to walk through the park and look at lights.



Houses in downtown Oklahoma City an Nichols Hills are decorated for Christmas. Photo by Victor Kinzie



Photo by Victor Kinzie

## Bring Christmas Home for the Holidays Downtown Alva Sponsored by the Alva Chamber

### Friday

- 4 p.m. Santa, Mrs. Claus and friends, hot cocoa, cookies, books, elves — Woods County Courthouse lawn
- 5-8 p.m.
  - First Friday Artwalk, Graceful Arts featuring work by Carla Miller and BJCC inmates. Wicked Grind Coffee Truck — 523 Barnes
  - First Friday Artwalk, Runnymede, features crafters with items for sale, free hot chocolate and free chicken noodle soup — 4th and Flynn
- 6 p.m. Christmas Carols by NWOSU Choir — downtown corners of the Downtown Square
- 7 p.m. Christmas Tree lighting and carols with Interfaith Choir — court house stage
- 8 p.m. Kids and Cops free Christmas movie with free popcorn — Extreme, 425 College Ave.

### Saturday

- 7 a.m. Doggie Reindeer Dash and Santa Fun Run — Farmer's Market on north side of courthouse parking lot
- 8-9 a.m. Special needs children's breakfast with Santa, Mrs. Claus, Elsa, Anna and Olaf — City Hall, 415 4th St.
- 9-10 a.m. Children's breakfast with Santa, Mrs. Claus, Elsa, Anna and Olaf — City Hall
- 9-noon Book sale — Alva City Library, 7th and Barnes
- 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Holiday Store for Kids and free photos with Santa (special needs children 9=10 a.m., adults at 3 p.m.) — Runnymede, 4th and Flynn
- 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Live entertainment — courthouse stage
- 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Make & Take event for children — Graceful Arts Center, 523 Barnes
- 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
  - Free face painting by Cake Face, inflatables and carnival games — Extreme, 425 College Ave.
  - Gift wrap station — courthouse lawn
  - Pocket Park Pop Up Shops and Marker's Market — around the Square
- 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Free horse and carriage rides — around the Downtown Square
- 1 p.m. Free Children's Christmas Play, donations welcome — ACT 1 Theatre, 516 Flynn
- 2-4 p.m.
  - Christmas Cookie Decorating and story time with Mrs. Claus — library pocket park, next to Senior Citizen Center, 625 Barnes
  - S'mores and Stories in Elsa's Igloo with photo opportunities with Anna, Olaf and Kristoff Reindeer, Grinch's corner — courthouse lawn
- 2:30-4 p.m. Christmas talent show — courthouse stage
- 4 p.m. Bed races start — in front of Holder Drug, 513 Barnes
- 5-6 p.m. Christmas movie — Rialto Theatre, 516 Flynn
- 7:30 p.m.
  - Christmas Light Parade — Downtown Square
  - Maps available for Alva cruise to enjoy lights around Alva after the parade
- All day
  - Town-wide Christmas shopping
  - Santa's Bakery featuring local bakers — Bridge-2Hope, 532 Flynn
  - Food and food trucks such as VAP Pizza by the Slice, Kids & Cops Pulled Park, Alva Brewing Company, Scotty's Treats, Crazy A's Food Trailer, etc.
  - Sanctuary Massage Therapy School Clinical Hours Deal: 15-minute massages for \$15 to raise funds for 7-year-old boy battling leukemia — 601 4th St.

### Sunday

- 1-5 p.m. Tour of Homes, ticketed fundraiser for the Cherokee Strip Museum. Buy tickets for \$10 at Holder Drug, LaDeeda and Daisy Village
- 6:30 p.m. Free Keyboards at Christmas concert features four musicians playing on four grand pianos and an organ — Alva Presbyterian Church, 7th and Church



# FEATURE

## Writers are choosing not to be subtle

When it comes to the topic of subtlety in writing, it is often a difficult subject to grasp for inexperienced writers.

A lot of times, when reading their works, I find that they tend to shove the message of their works in your face rather than let you figure it out on your own. A problem I have with a lot of the movies coming out recently is how they

treat the audience like young children that need everything explained to them, else the message goes right over their heads. Granted, not all modern movies do this, but more than enough to

be tolerable have.

So, what exactly is subtlety? Subtlety is when a theme or message is difficult to understand. For example, "Blood Meridian" is a famous book for its subtle writing. Despite being written over 30 years ago, fans of McCarthy to this day are still debating what the point of this book is. This is due to the fact a lot of the book seems to be just violence for the sense of violence. Yet, there is a exotic beauty to the story that I can not for the life of me seem to understand the reason for these feelings of attraction.

Another good example of subtlety is "American Psycho." Many people online argue about which—if any—of the supposed murders Bateman committed were real and which only happened in his head.

There are also the topics of consumerism, identity and some even say homoeroticism, that lie

within the movie. See, a book, movie or video game can have more than one theme and/or message; In fact, it is rare for stories to have only one theme in them, with the exception in this rule being short stories or poems meant for very young children.

"So Kevin, you handsome, quick-witted casanova who definitely does not have an inferiority complex," I hear you cry. "How can I make sure my themes and ideals fit into my books without shoving it down my readers' throats?" And to that, I reply: "No problem Stephen King, take a seat and I'll explain in the simplest terms possible how I can help you write another horror story that'll be adapted into a mediocre film with a soundtrack of unnecessary loud music like the composer is trying to compensate for their wife taking the kids."

Now, the first thing you want to do is figure out exactly what

you want your story to be about. Are you writing a book about a young boy with a physical handicap being transported into a fantasy world who has to find a magical sword to slay the evil emperor of the lands? Or are you writing a movie script about a black woman living as a prostitute in 1950s Alabama? Perhaps you want to make a video game where people play a single father trying to provide for his two children in a post-apocalypse London. Whatever the story is, make sure the themes you attach to it makes sense in the context of the story.

Secondly, you must make sure to include scenes in your story that actually explore the themes you want to. If you want to push the message that we shouldn't judge people by how they were born in your fantasy book about the handicapped boy, show scenes of him being discriminated against by his classmates, family members,

and the people around him. Same goes for the black prostitute story. Don't be afraid to be mature and graphic with your scenes, but at the same time to make it to the point it becomes unrealistic or virtue signaling.

Third and finally, keep the show-don't-tell rule in the back of your mind at all times. If you just have your characters explain word-for-word what it is you're trying to portray, it won't have the same effect on the audience as showing it in a subtle light will. Some might even get offended, thinking you're calling them too dumb to figure it out by themselves.

Overall, subtlety in writing is an art that can take years, if not decades, to master. But you must be patient and not try to rush the learning process. Don't be too hard on yourself either. No one is perfect, and the only way to improve is to make mistakes.

### 10 holidays celebrated in December

1. Hanukkah (Dec. 18-26)
2. Kwanzaa (Dec. 26-Jan. 1)
3. St. Nicholas Day (Dec. 5 or 6)
4. Yule (Dec. 21-Jan.1)
5. Bodhi Day (Dec. 8)
6. Immaculate Conception Day (Dec. 8)
7. Feast Day of Our Lady Guadalupe (Dec. 12)
8. Boxing Day (Dec. 26)
9. Zarathosht Diso (Dec. 26)
10. New Years Eve (Dec. 31)

### New Year's Day foods for luck

- Pork
- Cabbage
- Black eyed peas
- Greens
- Rice
- Cornbread
- Lentils
- Fish
- Noodles
- Grapes/Fruits
- Dumplings
- champagne

### History of New Year's

A New Year's celebration was recorded 4,000 years ago in ancient Babylon. The first moon after the vernal equinox started the new year. People celebrated with a festival called Akitu.

This celebration consisted of one different ritual for each of the 11 days of celebrating. Atiku celebrated the mythical victory of the sky god Marduk who originated from Babylonian culture. During this time, a new king would be crowned or the current king would be symbolically renewed.

The Early Roman Calen-

dar held only 10 months or 304 days. The new year began at the beginning of the vernal equinox. According to tradition it was created by Rome's founder Romulus in the eighth century B.C. Later in Roman history King Numa Pompilius is credited with the addition of Januarius and Februarius to the calendar.

When it was discovered the calendar was slowly becoming out of sync with the sun, the calendar was changed by Julius Caesar. This change moved the first of the year to Jan. 1 as it is seen today.

### Top 10 modern Christmas songs

1. "Merry Christmas" by Ed Sheeran and Elton John
2. "Not Another Christmas Song" by Blink-182
3. "Ribbons And Bows" by Kacey Musgraves
4. "Night Before Christmas" by Sam Smith
5. "Cozy Little Christmas" by Katy Perry
6. "DJ Play a Christmas Song" by Cher
7. "Bring Me Love" by John Legend
8. "Christmas Tree" by Lady Gaga
9. "Santa, Can't You Hear Me" by Kelly Clarkson (feat. Ariana Grande)
10. "Christmas Tree Farm" by Taylor Swift

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### Christmas Dad Jokes

How did the reindeer learn to play piano?

*He was elf-taught.*

How does Christmas Day end?

*With the letter Y!*

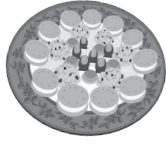


# CHRISTMAS

## Warm and fuzzy with student memories

*“Making cookies with my family. It was my favorite Because we got to spend time with family for the holidays.”*

*-Dylan Nelson freshman*



*“This Christmas will be my favorite because it will be my first Christmas with my eight month old son.”*

*-Que Cherry freshman*

*“A couple years ago my cousin that worked on a ranch in Texas passed away and last christmas his mom got all the cousins pillows made out of his button up shirts. So we can always hold and hug when we are missing him.”*

*-Hunter Crenshaw freshman*

*“Gathering all together at 12 am and opening gifts with everyone. It's a family tradition. My family is very traditional, I like seeing everyone happy and all together. Everyone is spending time together. It is not about the gifts but the family.”*

*-Xavier Fuentes sophomore*

*“My favorite christmas memories would be On christmas eve we go to my grandparents house and have fondue. It's my favorite because it was definitely Unique and fun compared to all the other ones.”*

*-Couper Frisendahl*

*“ On christmas eve, my mom was riding a bike around the backyard and I was really excited because I saw that I was getting a bike for christmas. But I was kind of bummed because I found out Santa was fake. It was my favorite memory because I got a bike. “*

*-Garrett Redden freshman*



*“Getting her childhood jackson dog. We were in an ice storm and we had to rush to go get him. The family had a blast with him.”*

*-Brooklyn Parker sophomore*



*“ One of my favorite Christmas memories is waking up to a living room full of presents!*

*It was the only time it ever happened, but it was a lot of fun.”*

*-Ash Crites junior*

*“ When I was a little, my grandma, cousins and I used to make popcorn balls for hallow- een and christmas” it was my favorite mem- ory because it's the only holiday thing we did where there was no conflict, just popcorn.”*

*-Jaden Matthews junior*

## Festive Recipes For your Christmas table

### Root Beer Glazed Ham

#### Ingredients

- 1 fully cooked bone-in half ham (10 to 12 pounds)
- 1 12-ounce can root beer
- 1 1/2 c. plum jelly
- 1/2 c. spicy brown mustard
- 3 Tbsp. apple cider vinegar

#### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 325°. Score the surface of the ham in a diamond pattern about 1/8 inch deep.

Place the ham on a rack in a large roasting pan, tent it with foil and bake for 2 hours.

2. Meanwhile, heat the root

beer, jelly, mustard and vinegar in a small saucepan until bubbly.

Cook until reduced and a bit thicker, about 30 minutes. (Be careful—the mixture can easily boil over.)

3. After 2 hours of baking time, remove the foil from the ham and brush with the root beer glaze.

Continue baking, uncovered and brushing with more glaze every 20 minutes, until nice and glossy, about 1 more hour.

Remove from the oven and let rest 15 to 20 minutes before carving.

### Pull-Apart Pigs in a Blanket

- 6 Tbsp. salted butter
- 2 Tbsp. honey mustard, plus more for dipping
- 1 tsp. paprika
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- 2 , 8-oz. tubes crescent roll dough

32 cocktail franks (about one 14-oz. package)

- 1 tsp. poppy seeds

#### Directions

1 Preheat the oven to 375°. Melt the butter in a small saucepan. Brush a 9-inch springform pan with a little of the melted butter. Brush the outside of an ovenproof 3-inch-diameter ramekin with melted butter and place it in the middle of the springform pan. Stir the honey mustard, paprika, and garlic powder into the

remaining melted butter until smooth.

2 Unroll a tube of crescent roll dough. Press the perforated seams together. Repeat with the other tube of dough. Cut each sheet of dough into fourths crosswise and lengthwise to make 16 strips per sheet. Brush the strips with the mustard-butter mixture, reserving about 2 tablespoons for the top.

3 Roll each cocktail frank in a strip of dough. Arrange the franks standing up in 2 circles around the ramekin. Bake until the dough is puffy, 25 to 30 minutes. Brush with the reserved mustard-butter mixture and sprinkle with the poppy seeds. Continue baking until deep golden brown, 10 to 15 more minutes. Let cool on a rack for 10 minutes, then remove the springform ring. Fill the ramekin with honey mustard for dipping.

### Top 10 gifts

1. Orastone Re-chargeable Hand Warmer
2. Maelstrom Travel Backpack
3. 3Doodler Flow 3D Printing Pen
4. Owala FreeSip Insulated Stainless Steel Water Bottle
5. Lululemon Everywhere Belt Bag
6. Nightball Tangle Glow in the Dark Inflatable LED Football
7. Kintion Pocket Mirror
8. The Comfy Oversized Wearable Blanket
9. Rosyclo Cloud Slippers
10. World's Smallest Scrabble

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# SPORTS

## Women's BB takes out FU

By **KAROLINA JURESIUTE**  
Senior Reporter

The Lady Rangers played their last non-conference game of the season Saturday afternoon against Friends University Falcons and won by 31 points.

Northwestern women's basketball team is now 3-3 while the Friends University is 5-3.

Carly Craig led the team with 14 points shooting 50% from the three, Camille Thomas had 13 points and six rebounds, while Tegan Jones scored 12 points shooting 4-4 from the three-point line.

Kira Bass led the team in rebounds with nine and Kennedy Hight had the team high of six assists.

The first two minutes of the first quarter was scoreless for both teams until Thomas earned the first point from a free-throw line for The Lady Rangers.

Followed by Bass and Payton Jones' points, the Lady Rangers were up by five points 5-0. The Falcons didn't score until the sixth minute of the quarter.

Few possessions later, the Falcons were in the lead by one point, but that did not last for long and the Lady Rangers 6-0 run and finished the first quarter with a



Photo by Logan Mercier

**Number 10 Camille Thomas charging with the ball against a Friends University defender on Nov 30 in Percefull Fielshouse at 1p.m.**

four-point lead 15-11.

The Lady Falcons managed to only score seven points in the second quarter. Payton Jones started the quarter with her first three and a foul shot.

The Falcons answered back with a three-point shot, but then The Lady Rangers went on a 6-0 run and had a lead of 11 points.

The Falcons scored two more layups but ended up trailing behind by 17 points after the first half of the game 35-18.

The Friends University started off the third quarter first by a successful three pointer and a layup and shrunk the Lady Rangers' lead to 11 points.

The Lady Rangers went on another 5-0 run and extended the lead back to 21 points 51-30.

In the fourth quarter of the game, The Lady Rangers scored the most of 22 points out of all the quarters.

The Falcons tried to fight back and get back in the game, but The Lady Rangers just kept growing the lead and won the game by 31 points 73-42.

The Falcons made 31 turnovers while The Lady Rangers only had six.

The Lady Rangers are getting ready to start their Great American Conference play.

They will be back at home To-

night at 5:30 p.m. playing against Arkansas Tech University at the Percefull Fieldhouse.

Men's team following at 7:30 p.m. Then they will face Harding University on Saturday at 1 p.m. and Southern Nazarene University on next Thursday at 5:30 p.m. at home.

On December 3, Camielle Thomas was announced as the Great American Conference defensive player of the week.

She recorded thirteen rebounds, eight steals, and two blocks in the final two conference games the Lady Rangers played.

Seven rebounds and three steals were recorded against Cameron University on Nov 20.

She also recorded five steals against Friends University, which was a career high for her. She sits sixth in the conference in steals with 2.3 per game.

Northwestern Women's Basketball has had multiple players nominated for GAC player of the week, but Camielle Thomas is the first one this year to earn the award.

The women who have been nominated are Payton Jones, Kira Bass, Kennedy Hight, Jamesha Reece, Summya Adigun, and Carly Craig.

Thomas had not been nominated until this week where she won.

## Men's Basketball win two games, lose to FU

By **ELY NOBLE**  
Senior Reporter

The Northwestern Oklahoma State University men's basketball team recently competed its non-conference schedule with a trio of showcasing highs, lows and standout games by individuals.

### **Cameron University 89 NWOSU 85**

On Wednesday, November 20, the Rangers hosted the Cameron University Aggies in a game that came down to the final buzzer.

Northwestern did fall in this game 89-85, dropping their record to 2-2 on the season. Cameron improved to 2-3.

The Aggies were led by Aaron Jacob's 23 points, but it was the Rangers' Camron McDowell who shined the brightest, dropping a game-high 26 points.

Max Alexander added 18 points, and DaRaun Clark chipped in 14 with Kabeya Tshibangu leading the team in rebounds with six.

The game started with fireworks, as Clark opened the scoring with a three-pointer. The Rangers shot a perfect 3-for-3 to begin the game, getting off to an early lead.

Cameron clawed back, eventually tying the game at 27-27

before Northwestern surged again with a Kabeya Tshibangu dunk in the fastbreak.

A late first-half rally by Cameron saw them take a slim 47-44 lead into halftime.

The second half was a back-and-forth battle, with neither team able to keep control for long.

The Rangers led 80-79 after Tshibangu's defensive block set up a key basket, but Cameron closed strong, securing the win with clutch free throws in the final minute.

### **Adams State 75 NWOSU 84**

The Rangers quickly regrouped for their next game on Saturday, November 23, defeating Adams State 84-75 in front of their home crowd. Northwestern improved to 3-2, while the Grizzlies fell to 3-3.

Max Alexander had an eye opening performance, leading the Rangers with 28 points, seven assists, and five rebounds.

Justin Norris recorded a double-double with 12 points and 11 rebounds. The Rangers had four players score in double figures, including Clark with 12 points and Kenyon Holcombe with 11.

The game started slow, with both teams struggling to score early. Clark ignited the Rangers' offense, hitting three consecutive three-pointers to help Northwest-

ern take an 11-5 lead. Holcombe added a throwdown to get the crowd excited, and Alexander's offensive play helped the Rangers extend their lead to as much as 13 points in the first half. Northwestern led 42-31 at the break.

The second half saw Adams State fight back, narrowing the gap to just two points late in the game. But Northwestern's defense tightened, forcing turnovers and limiting the Grizzlies to just one field goal in the final two minutes.

The Rangers finished with a 9-2 run to secure the win.

### **Friends University 92 NWOSU 71**

In their final non-conference game on Tuesday, November 26, the Rangers faced Friends University.

Despite a stellar effort from Max Alexander, who scored a season-high 38 points, Northwestern

fell 92-71, dropping to 3-3 on the season. Friends improved to 6-2.

The game started promisingly for the Rangers, with Justin Norris hitting a three-pointer to open the scoring. However, Friends responded with a 5-0 run and never looked back. Northwestern trailed 42-34 at halftime after the Falcons closed the half on an 8-2 run.

In the second half, Friends quickly extended their lead to double digits.

The Falcons' Randy Woolf proved to be a problem for Northwestern in the second half, draining three-pointers and helping Friends build a 20-point advantage. The Rangers made brief runs to cut the deficit, but Friends' efficient shooting and dominance on the boards proved too much.

The Rangers now turn their attention to Great American Conference play, beginning Decem-

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# SPORTS

## Our choices for Fall MVPs

### Football

### Soccer



**Travis Romar WR**  
332 Receiving Yards  
5 Touchdowns



**Coby Tillman LB**  
1.5 Sacks  
58 Solo Tackles, 59 Assisted



**Kale Purvis K**  
4 Field goals  
9 one-point conversions



**Tiara Campbell F**  
3 Goals, 7 Assists  
17 Shots on Goal



**Rachel Brown G**  
120 Saves, 1.29 GAA  
270 Shots Faced

### Volleyball

### Cross Country



**Erika Asencio Soriano OH**  
378.5 Points, 3.64 PTS/S  
343 Kills



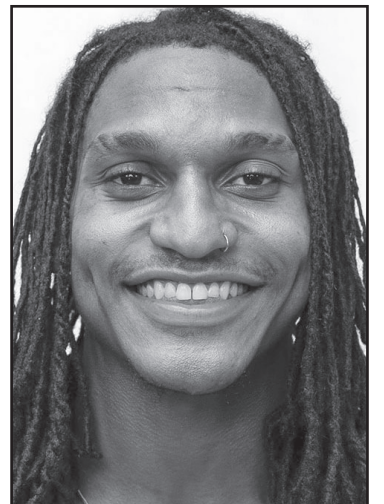
**Hennesys Lalane S**  
624 Assists, 7.96 A/S  
122.5 Points



**Brianda Diaz DS**  
460 Digs, 4.18 DIG/S  
645 TAs



**James Fincher**  
32:13.0 (PR)



**Christian Franklin**  
32:27.8 (PR)

## Volleyball eliminated

By **OAKLEE FIELDER**  
*Sports Editor*

The NWOSU Ranger volleyball team contended in the GAC volleyball tournament on Nov 21, in Hot Springs, Arkansas.

The Rangers were scheduled to play against the Harding Bison.

The Rangers were ranked No. 7 in the eight-team tournament. Harding Bison was ranked No 2.

In the last meeting between the Rangers and Harding in volleyball on Oct 18, where the Bison defeated the Rangers 3-1.

The Rangers headed into the tournament as underdogs, only leading Henderson State in the rankings.

The first set of the game was very close, the Rangers had started a comeback in the ending portion of the set. In the last eight points of the set, the Rangers outscored Harding 5-3. But, the charge was not enough. They lost the first set 25-22.

The last two sets were not as good for the Rangers, only scoring 19 and 16 in them.

The Rangers were eliminated by Harding. Oklahoma Baptist won the tournament.



**Jamaría Ross**  
23:49.9 (PR) (School Record)



**Ava Miller**  
23:51.6 (PR)

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### Basketball

**Jan. 4:** @ Oklahoma Baptist University. Women 1 p.m. Men 7:30 p.m.

**Jan. 9:** @Ouachita Baptist in Arkadelphia, Arkansas. Women, 5:30 p.m. Men 7:30 p.m.

**Jan. 11:** @ Henderson State, Arkadelphia, Arkansas. Women 1 p.m. Men 3 p.m.

# Rule changes help reduce concussions

Continued from Page 1

with the crown of their helmets. This rule doesn't just apply to defensive players but also to running backs, who used to lower their head to power through defenders.

This change forced players to tackle and run differently, focusing more on form and safety.

"Back in my day, it was all about hitting fast and hard," Devery Henderson, former receiver for New Orleans Saints said. Now, players have to think about how they hit. It's not just about the play anymore, it's about safety.

This rule change helped reduce the number of head injuries and neck injuries.

Some fans complained that the game was becoming "soft," but many players, including Gay, agreed that it was necessary. "Football will always be physical," Gay said. "But we have to be smarter about it."

While the NFL was changing the rules, they were also working in better equipment to keep play-

***"It's important to heal up before going back out to the field" — Devery Henderson***

ers safe.

One of the biggest improvements has been in helmet technology. Since 2010, helmets have been designed to better protect players from concussions.

In 2023, The Athletic reported that the NFL is now creating position specific helmets.

These helmets were designed for the different ways players get hit. For example, linemen, who face short, powerful hits, will have helmets built to protect against those kinds of hits.

These changes have helped reduce injuries, especially in practices where players wear extra padding over their helmets.

The NFL's concussion protocol has become one of the most talked-about changes in sports.



Photo provided

Randall Gay, left, prepares to tackle hall of fame running back LaDainian Tomlinson, right. Gay was number 20 on the New Orleans Saints in 2008-2010. Tomlinson played with the San Diego Chargers from 2001-2009.

Before, players would often ignore their injuries and keep playing.

But now, the NFL requires players to pass tests before they can return to the field after a head injury.

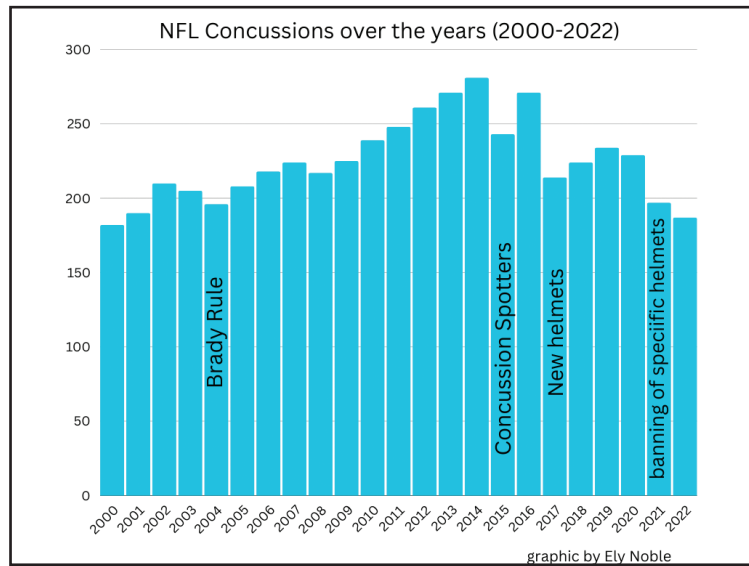
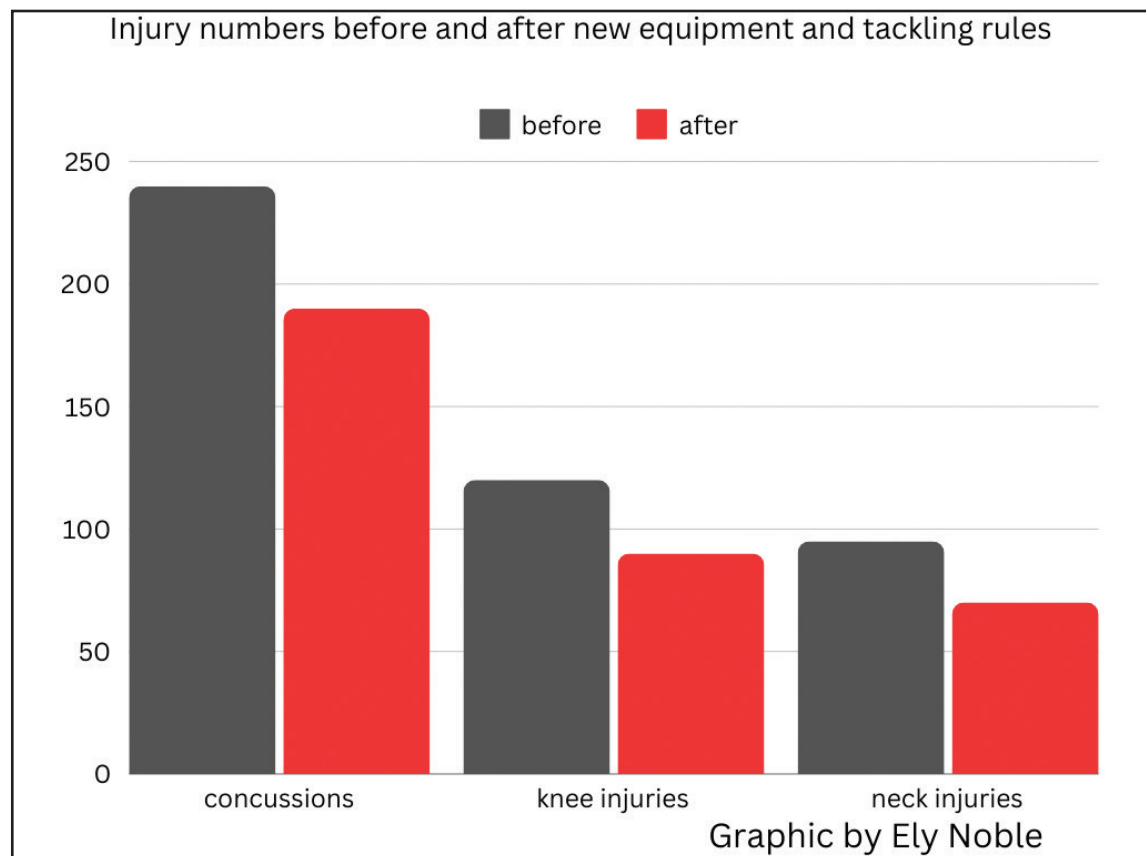
Some players get frustrated with these new rules. They want to get back into the game as soon as possible. But the NFL has made it clear that player health is more important than winning.

"Back in the day, you wanted to get back in the game, no matter

how bad the hit was," Henderson said. "But now they know better. It's important to heal up before going back out to the field."

The NFL's rule changes have changed the culture of football. The game is still fast and physical, but players and coaches are more focused on staying healthy. While some fans miss the big hits of the past, most agree these changes were necessary to protect players.

As The Athletic pointed out, the new rules have made the



game safer, and the number of injuries has gone down. The NFL continues to look for ways to improve player safety, making sure that players can enjoy long careers without risking their health.

Randall Gay, looking back on the time he spent playing football in college and in the NFL, sees the changes as a step in the right direction. "Football is still a tough game," he said. But now, it looks like there doing it in

a way that gives the players a better chance to walk away healthy after their time in the league passes by.



***"Football is still a tough game, but now it looks like they're doing it in a way that gives players a better chance to walk away healthy after their time in the league passes by"***

— **Randall Gay**