

Time to file taxes

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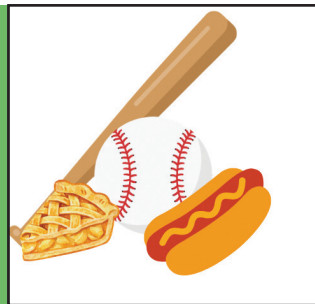
APRIL

15

TAX DAY

Baseball

Rangers head to Enid April 14 to host Baseball, Hot Dogs and Apple Pie. Read more on page 10.



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County honors Lady Rangers

From left, Lady Rangers Summya Adigun, Camille Pritchard and Catyn Graham read through the Proclamation of Honor issued by the Woods County Commissioners on Monday to make the day Lady Ranger Day throughout the county. The commissioners praised the women's basketball team for "exceptional talent, dedication, and sportsmanship" throughout the season that ended with the team winning the Great American Conference and making it to the first round of the NCAA playoffs. NWOSU President Bo Hannaford and Athletic Vice President Brad Franz also spoke and congratulated the women during the event held at the county building.



University Relations Photo

SPECIAL REPORT: AI

AI touches all stages of marketing

By **INGRID MALDONADO**
Senior Reporter

Artificial intelligence writes itself, generates graphics in seconds, creates strategies, and now many wonder if the strategic communication industry is losing its human touch.

The growing use of artificial intelligence in marketing and advertising may have its benefits, but it also raises concerns that it may degrade the quality of branding and authenticity.

"It's being used in everything that we do in marketing and advertising," said Hannah Landry, who is the vice president of the Krush Advertising Agency in Oklahoma City. "It's writing copy, generating

images, personalizing emails, optimizing ad spends, analyzing data and chatbots. It's literally touching every single stage of the marketing process."

Krush Advertising is an agency in Oklahoma that is honest about using AI and advertising it on their website. She explains they use their AI First Model to save brands time and money and improves their quality. They call this AI Plus Human Touch Advertising.

"It doesn't replace the human," Landry said. "What we're not using it in is the creative strategy side or that human oversight." "We're an AI focused agency with the human touch, and that's a big part of what we do."

Landry explained AI is a tool for everything they do. She said AI has taken off,

and she feels as if every day there's an update to AI technology. It has gone from everything feeling like a test, and now it is more refined, she said.

Angel Melvin, the CEO and founder of Light Alive Agency, said her agency does use AI but is extremely selective about what they use it for. Melvin said she finds many marketers use and rely on AI, like content generation, but they believe marketing should be personal and human.

"The thing is that even if you are really good with using the correct prompts and really getting into kind of fine tune what the outcome is going to be, I feel like it still spits out very generic content," Melvin said. "You can tell businesses out there using AI because all their language, all everything starts to sound the same and you

lose that brand authenticity."

Krush Advertising uses Claude, they also have ChatGPT, Adobe Creative Cloud and its AI features. Landry said they use Veed for video production. They also use AI for media buying, she said.

Light Alive Marketing has graphic designers who use Photoshop, so it is the human brain doing the process with software, Melvin said. Then sometimes for social media content creation, AI is used to create motion graphics like animated texts. She explained the design is still an original concept, but AI was just used with the technical side.

"AI just pulls from general information on the internet, and it's not a human brain

See **MARKETING**, Page 6

NEWS

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OPINION

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SPECIAL REPORT

Pages 6 & 7

FEATURE

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SPORTS

Pages 10 & 11

NEWS

Newspaper wins 7 first-place awards

The Northwestern News staff won 13 awards — seven first place, four second place and two third place — on April 1 at the annual Oklahoma Collegiate Media Association Conference in Stillwater at OSU.

Ten colleges and universities in the state belong to OCMA. Eight schools sent representatives to the conference.

Members of the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame judged the contest entries, which appeared in the Northwestern News between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2025.

The following Rangers won **first-place awards:**

Jaxyn Cloud, General News Story, “Asbestos closes JD Annex”

Alli Schieber, Breaking News, “Crystalized picric acid causes campus to temporarily close Thursday morning”

Ingrid Maldonado, In-Depth Reporting, “How can America be healthy again?” Feature/Personality Profile, “Do children have too much screen time”; Sports Photo, “Rodeo does well at FSCC”

Emma Gott, Sports Feature/Personality Profile, “Car accident changes player’s life: The story of Lily Anderson”

Victor Kinzie, News Photo, “Protestors seek justice in police



Photo by Kaylene Armstrong

Northwestern News staff members Oaklee Fielder (far left), Victor Kinzie (middle left), Ingrid Maldonado (middle right) and Kevin Kaumans (far right) hold awards won from the OCMA conference at Stillwater April 1.

shooting”

Second-place awards:

Oaklee Fielder, Breaking News, “Jones out after 2-9 football season”

Karolina Juresiute Arensdorf, Feature/Personality Profile, “Do cellphones distract students?” and In-Depth Reporting, “AI becoming beneficial tool”

Sarah Brashears, Personal Column, “Authenticity over people pleasing”

Third-place awards:

Jaxyn Cloud, Feature/Person-

ality Profile, “Adventures, family, friendships and kindness: The story of Dr. Jenny Sattler”

Ingrid Maldonado, Personal Column, “Importance in having community support”

“Once again, the Northwestern News staff’s work excelled at OCMA,” said Dr. Kaylene Armstrong, who has advised the staff for 11 years. “Many people don’t realize the late nights and untold hours these students put in to make the newspaper outstanding.”

SGA election candidates run unopposed in election

By CORKY HALL
Senior Reporter

Northwestern Oklahoma State University students will see a full slate of unopposed candidates in the upcoming Student Government Association election, with each candidate set to assume office following the vote.

Maci Flowers, a sophomore agricultural business major from Tecumseh, is running for student body president.

Flowers said her primary goal is to build on the current SGA’s successes.

“My goals are really to continue building on what we did this year,” Flowers said. “We had several events that went really well and a few that didn’t go as planned, but I want to focus on doing what’s best for the student body, listening to them, taking their opinions into account, and making next year even better than this year.”

Flowers also highlighted initiatives aimed at improving student life on campus, including one lighthearted addition she hopes to push forward.

“I would love to see hammocks around campus, be able to hang out outside and get outside in the sun whenever it’s beautiful,” she said. “I would definitely push for getting hammocks on campus.”

Coy Bullard, a sophomore computer science major from Elk City, is running for vice president.

Bullard, a member of the university’s cross country team, said increasing student involvement in SGA meetings and events is among his top priorities.

“The current SGA has been doing a great job on campus,” Bullard said. “I think the biggest way we can make even more of a change is by promoting our events and meetings better. I’ve sat through most of the meetings this year, and there just aren’t that many people there. We have a small campus, but we can definitely fill a room with people who care.”

Bullard also said he hopes to strengthen connections between students and faculty by creating more opportunities for interaction outside the classroom.

“I’d like to see more faculty and staff involved in student events,” he said. “Creating more opportunities to interact outside of class would benefit everyone.”

Kate Mann, a junior early childhood education major from Drummond, is running for secretary.

Mann has been active in campus organizations throughout her time at NWOSU.

Edmilson Perez, a freshman health and sports science major from Laverne, is running for treasurer.

Perez is also a member of the university’s cross country team.

With all candidates running unopposed, the election will serve as a formality before the new officers officially take their positions.

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NEWS

WHAT'S UP

April 10

- Workshop of the Marshallese People and Culture 1 p.m. EC 109

April 13

- Emotional Echoes Art Show 13-17 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

April 14

- SINGO 6:30 p.m. Alva Beer Co.
- Job and Internship Fair in the Ranger and Wyatt Rooms 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- Writers Round Table 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
- Daniel Voth Junior Voice Recital 7 p.m. - 8 p.m. @ First Presbyterian Church

April 15

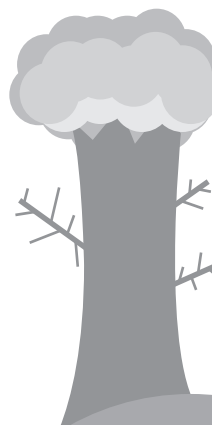
- CDL Truck Driver Training Course 7 a.m. - 4 p.m. NWTC

April 16

- Chi Alpha Night 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

“No winter lasts forever; no spring skips its turn. April is a promise that May is bound to keep, and we know it.”

— Hal Borland



Carnival adds crafts

By ALLISON RUWALDT
Student Reporter

The NWOSU carnival will happen from 5:30 to 8 p.m. on April 9 at the NWOSU Student Center Ballroom.

The carnival this year is trying something new by adding crafts rather than just games.

The SGA wanted a way to open the activities up to people who cannot or do not want to play games.

The carnival gives clubs the chance to put on a booth with a game or craft, so the clubs have another chance to connect with those not in the club.

It also gives students a chance to come together and have fun on campus.

It is also a good way to get the community more involved with the campus.

The community of Alva is always trying to help the students, and the carnival gives them a chance to see why helping the college is worth it.

The members of SGA are encouraging people of all ages, all

around town, to come take part in the activities. Opening the event up to community members is also a good way to encourage younger students to attend NWOSU.

When speaking to SGA members, it was made clear that they are excited about the opportunities that the carnival will bring to the campus. Community members around town are always making donations or volunteering to help in some way, so this is a good way to help pay it back.

“Alva just rallies around Northwestern and supports us so much that this is just an opportunity to get them on campus,” said Maci Flowers, the vice president of the NWOSU Student Government Association. “They can see what they’re supporting, who they’re supporting and have a fun night for them to get out as well.”

Tickets will be one dollar, unless it is a NWOSU student, then they are fifty cents.

Wristbands can also be purchased for \$20 rather than buying a ticket for each game or activity. The money being raised will help fund other club and student events.



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Lasso A New Spring SWIG!

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reserve the right to condense or edit any letter
for grammar, libel and space limitations. All
letters submitted may not be used.

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OPINION

World's most resolute boundary

By **ECE OZDEMIR**
Opinion Editor

Looking at a world map for a long time
stirs a strange sensation. With millions of
square miles filled with cities, countries and
borders, it feels as though every corner has al-
ready been explored and every story already
told. Yet, in a corner of the map, a tiny dot
sits in the middle of the Indian Ocean: North
Sentinel Island.

The people living there do not know
the rest of the world; perhaps they do not
want to. Planes fly overhead and ships pass
through their waters, but their world remains
unchanged. While we produce new technol-
ogies, cities, and ideas every day, they raise
their arrows and fire at approaching boats.
Sometimes I wonder: Who is truly isolated?
Is it them, or is it us, filling the world with so
much noise that we cannot even hear our own
voices?

North Sentinel Island is part of the Anda-
man Islands in the Bay of Bengal. Although
it belongs to India on paper, it is practically
severed from the rest of the world. The Sen-
tinelese people have refused contact with the
outside world for thousands of years. Boats
approaching the island are often met with
arrows. When helicopters fly low over the

island, tribespeople can be seen gathering on
the shore, brandishing their weapons.

At first glance, this attitude might seem
like aggression. However, some anthropolo-
gists suggest it has a much simpler meaning.
The Sentinelese are essentially sending a sin-
gle message: "Leave us alone."

This stance represents perhaps one of the
most resolute boundaries in human history.
North Sentinel Island has long been a subject
of great curiosity for the modern world. In the
20th century, several anthropologists attempt-
ed to approach the island. Among them was
Indian anthropologist Triloknath Pandit. Pan-
dit and his team occasionally neared the shore
to leave small gifts: coconuts, pieces of iron,
and sometimes toys. But the Sentinelese usu-
ally met these gestures with distance.

"We tried to reach out to them but never
forced it," Pandit said in an interview years
later. "Because even the slightest contact
could have endangered their lives."

Indeed, contact itself is a massive risk. For
a community whose immune systems have
never encountered modern diseases, a com-
mon cold could be fatal. What we know about
the Sentinelese is actually very limited; we do
not know their language, their beliefs, or even
what they call themselves. We call them "Sen-
tinelese" because they live on Sentinel Island.
In a sense, we gave them their name. Yet, in

their world, what we call "the world" might
consist solely of that island.

In the modern era, nearly everything is in-
terconnected through the internet, aviation,
and global trade. People can speak to one
another from thousands of miles away, yet a
small community living on the same planet
manages to stay outside this entire network.
Sometimes when I think of Sentinel Island, a
question comes to mind: Does what we call
progress truly mean the same thing for every-
one?

We built cities, manufactured machines,
and sent vehicles into space. But we also
depleted nature, filled cities with noise, and
sometimes lost our own lives in the rush.
Meanwhile, the Sentinelese have continued to
live on the same island for millennia. Perhaps
their world is smaller than ours, but it might
be calmer.

Modern humans are constantly seeking
ways to reach new places—the depths of the
oceans, Mars, and even other star systems.
But perhaps the most interesting place we
have yet to reach is that tiny island sitting in
the middle of the map.

The people there do not open their doors to
us, and perhaps for the first time, as humanity,
we are learning to accept that.

Because sometimes, the greatest discovery
is learning not to go somewhere.

Upcycling as a silent revolution

By **ECE OZDEMIR**
Opinion Editor

The era we live in is an age
of velocity where objects have
lost their souls. Our connection
with the things we own is steady-
ly weakening, and belongings are
ceasing to be vessels for memo-
ries. Instead, they become mere
statistics destined to be discard-
ed once their primary function is
fulfilled. We consume everything
in a rapid cycle of "use and toss."
Rather than spending five minutes
repairing a shirt with a missing
button, we order a new one; in-
stead of fixing a wobbly chair leg,
we leave it by the dumpster. Yet
against this cycle of hyper-con-
sumption, a silent revolution is
rising: Upcycling.

This is not merely a superfi-
cial hobby like turning a jar into
a flowerpot. It is a journey to-
ward reclaiming our lost patience
and honoring forgotten labor. To
modern humans, an object is of-
ten just a paid-for commodity,
but through upcycling, that object
becomes a companion. When we
grasp what a material is trying to
tell us, we rediscover not just an
item but our own creative poten-
tial.

When we delve into the philo-
sophical roots of repair, we en-
counter the mesmerizing Japa-
nese art of Kintsugi. Going back
to the 15th century, this tradition
involves restoring broken ceram-
ics using resin mixed with gold or
silver powder. It serves the belief
that an object becomes more valu-
able once it has been damaged
and possesses a history. Cracks
are not hidden; on the contrary,

they are highlighted with gold.
Flaws are not a source of shame
to be concealed but a badge of the
object's struggle to survive.

In my view, this philosophy is
a wonderful rebellion against the
perfectionism imposed by mod-
ern life. The lived experience of
an object is its greatest treasure.
Repairing is no longer just about
tightening a screw; it is about
adding a new paragraph to that
object's story and ensuring its
continuity.

A scratch on an old chair might
carry the warmth of a family din-
ner. When we paint it and bring
it back to life, we save a memory
rather than just a chair.

Upcycling as a hobby offers
a sense of freedom. It helps us
break away from the "consumer"
label that society gives us. While
buying new things makes us
dependent on stores, fixing or
changing an object turns us into
creators. By using our hands, we
stop being just shoppers and start
shaping our own environment.
This process gives us a sense of
independence and allows us to
take back control of our lives and
our surroundings.

So why do we need upcycling?
The reason is simple: Our minds,
imprisoned by pixels all day, long
to prove their potential. To do
this, they need to leave a mark
on the physical world. When
you take up sandpaper or dip a
brush into paint, the flow of time
shifts. In psychology, this state
is called "Flow"—a condition
where a person is so focused on
a task that they disconnect from
the outside world and find peace.
A simple but useful planter made
from an empty yogurt container

creates a sense of satisfaction that
cannot be bought in any store.
This is because that object con-
tains your time, your attention
and your soul.

As I mentioned at the begin-
ning, upcycling is not just about
objects. While repairing an old
table, you are also repairing your
own patience. Transforming ob-
jects allows a person to look at
the messy parts of their inner
world with compassion. We learn
to approach ourselves like an art-
ist. We realize that we are more
precious because of our mistakes.

In this process, we learn to
view ourselves through the lens
of upcycling. We recognize that
we are more valuable with our
flaws. The next time you intend
to throw something away, stop
for a moment. Look at it not as
trash but as a potential work of
art. Perhaps what you need is not
a new product but the inspiration
to reveal the hidden beauty with-
in what you already have. Re-
member, everything repaired is a
sincere promise made to life. To
keep objects alive is, in truth, to
keep our own humanity alive.

By embracing this philosophy,
we begin to break free from the
cycle of constant consumption.
We learn to appreciate what we
already have, to nurture it and to
find beauty in its evolution. In do-
ing so, we not only reduce waste
but also cultivate a deeper sense
of gratitude and mindfulness in
our daily lives.

When we take time to restore
what is worn, whether is an object
or part of ourselves, we are mak-
ing a quiet but powerful state-
ment: that nothing and no one is
beyond renewal.

Four truths you need to know to beat burnout

By **ECE OZDEMIR**
Opinion Editor

Follow the signals: Decreased
performance, a general sense of
weariness and fatigue, indiffer-
ence toward responsibilities, ab-
senteism, deficiencies in time
management, and organizational
problems are all effects of burn-
out.

Being aware of these behav-
iors and following them closely is
vital to preventing burnout from
becoming chronic.

Remember to make time for
yourself: The most important
way to cope with burnout is to
reduce stress and ensure a work-
life balance. In a professional
life that feels like a marathon, it
is essential to set aside time for
yourself, your hobbies, and your
loved ones.

Create sustainable work rou-
tines: Although what motivates
each individual varies, establish-
ing habits that ensure continuity
in your professional life is vital
for your career. A sustainable
work routine can be achieved by
establishing a dynamic of work-
ing with breaks and rewards, or
by being more organized and sys-
tematic.

Manage your expectations: It
is also important to get to know
the institution you work for and
its culture. Understanding what is
expected of you will help reduce
stress and anxiety by minimizing
uncertainty in professional life.

OPINION

Gender inequality still in workplace

By ECE OZDEMIR
Opinion Editor

Despite living in the 21st century, we still witness discrimination against women in professional life and across various companies.

Generally, a woman must work much harder than a man to reach a specific position. According to a 2022 study by the Pew Research Center, women in the United States earn 82 percent of what men earn.

While this ratio varies in most other countries, statistics consistently reflect that women earn less than men. These results prove that gender inequality still persists. There are women who earn less, those who face prejudice during recruitment, and those who may never reach certain positions simply because they are not men.

Why does this still exist? In their research on hiring biases, Edward H. Chang and Katherine L. Milkman noted that women are often assumed to be less competitive or less talented than men during the recruitment process. The fact that many leading firms still do not have a single woman on their board of directors is another indicator of workplace discrimination.

The value of female intelligence and perspective has been proven by many researchers. As mentioned in the article by Chang and Milkman, it is truly inspiring to

see the great success achieved by women who receive the recognition they deserve or who start their own businesses. To prove this with statistics, according to a 2019 International Labor Organization (ILO) study of 13,000 enterprises across 70 countries, the contribution of women to the business world is significant:

When the number of female board members increases, company workflows improve by 20 percent.

In firms that ensure gender equality in employment, fringe benefits, and company policies, the probability of increasing profitability and productivity rises by 62.6 percent.

The likelihood of retaining talented employees increases by 59.7 percent.

The probability of enhancing company reputation increases by 57.9 percent.

The likelihood of more accurately monitoring consumer demand increases by 37.9 percent.

The importance of the perspectives and contributions women bring to the business world needs to be better recognized. In some European countries, such as Belgium and Italy, boards of directors are required to have a certain percentage of women. I believe the business world needs more decisions like these.

The challenges women face while climbing the career ladder are not limited to wage inequality; non-meritocratic barriers

known as the “glass ceiling” continue to persist. While women successfully serve in middle management roles, they are often halted by an invisible barrier as they approach executive positions.

Compounding this issue is the “glass cliff” phenomenon, where women are frequently placed in leadership roles during times of crisis or when the likelihood of failure is highest. In these instances, the blame for failure is often unfairly shifted to the female leader, creating a cycle of bias that calls their leadership capabilities into question.

A primary root of workplace inequality lies in the traditional roles society imposes on women. The concept known in literature as the “motherhood penalty” describes the discrimination women face in hiring and promotion based on the assumption that mothers are less committed or less flexible.

Conversely, fatherhood for men is often viewed and rewarded as a sign of career stability.

When companies fail to institutionalize policies such as childcare support, flexible work models, and paternity leave, they force women into an impossible choice between their careers and family life, causing a significant waste of potential.

Gender equality is not merely a matter of justice; it is an engine for innovation. Including women with diverse life experiences in decision-making processes increases

cognitive diversity, allowing companies to find more creative solutions to problems.

Homogeneous teams—those composed exclusively of men—are more prone to the trap of “groupthink,” whereas inclusive teams that incorporate women are better equipped to analyze the expectations of female consumers, who represent half the market. In this context, increasing female employment is a strategic move that directly strengthens a firm’s intellectual capital.

While legal regulations and quotas create change on paper, true transformation must occur within the depths of corporate culture. Behaviors categorized as “microaggressions”—such as interrupting women in meetings, accepting ideas only when repeated by a man, or pushing women into supportive rather than technical roles—undermine psychological safety in the workplace. By organizing unconscious bias training and supporting female talent through mentorship programs, companies can foster a healthy ecosystem where every individual exists based on their competence, rather than just achieving numerical equality.

However, beyond mandates or laws, the perception of women within enterprises must also change. As a woman, I do not want to be considered less competent than a man when applying for a job. I also do not want to be in a less advantageous position in the professional sphere.

Guilty of ‘diderot effect’? Starbucks coffee turning into bank

By ECE OZDEMIR
Opinion Editor

Imagine you have just purchased a new table for your living room, but every other piece of furniture remains the same. What was your first thought? Was it the excitement of the new purchase, or the nagging feeling that your old belongings no longer “fit” next to it? As a modest gift from the capitalist economic order, continuity and excess in consumption have occupied a significant portion of our lives. Buying things we do not need is no longer a problem; it has become an ordinary part of our day.

So, let’s return to the question: Did the new item excite you, or did it make you uncomfortable thinking about how it looks next to the old ones? For those who feel discomfort, the likely response is a desire to replace or renew everything else. In consumer behavior, this is known as the “Diderot effect.” If you find yourself picking out a new sofa set, rug or curtains just because you changed your table, you are likely under its influence. The Diderot effect causes consumers to feel a need to replace old possessions because they believe they no longer harmonize with a new acquisition.

The behavior is named after the French philosopher Denis Diderot, who realized he began consuming more after a “scar-

let robe” entered his life. There are two versions of this story: in the first, the robe was a gift; in the second, Diderot purchased it himself. In both versions, the outcome is the same. Once the robe arrived, Diderot felt his old furniture was unworthy of it and began spending heavily to replace everything. After realizing this “irrational” behavior, he wrote an essay titled “Regrets on Parting with My Old Dressing Gown.” Consequently, “more consumption” triggered by a new purchase was named after him.

Which companies use this as a deliberate marketing strategy? Have you noticed that most iPhone users also own AirPods or an Apple Watch? Adding an iPad or a MacBook to the mix is also quite common. These are not coincidences. If you were using a different brand of computer but felt “unsettled” after buying an iPhone — eventually swapping your laptop for a MacBook — the reason is the Diderot Effect. Although you can use these products independently, Apple makes it difficult to feel “complete” without the full ecosystem. By frequently marketing products together—such as featuring AirPods in a new iPhone commercial—Apple shows consumers exactly how they “should” complete their set.

Similarly, it is nearly impossible to head straight to the exit in an IKEA store. To leave, you must pass through various mod-

el rooms decorated with IKEA products. It is easy to believe they are simply providing “ideas” for home decoration, but the intent is less innocent.

IKEA encourages you to buy complementary items by showing how your new purchase should be completed. Thanks to these “model” displays, the moment you feel the Diderot Effect at home, you already know which IKEA products will fix the “disharmony” of your old furniture.

Pandora uses this effect not just by encouraging matching sets (like buying a necklace to match earrings), but by convincing consumers that certain products are “incomplete” or less “glamorous” without additions. If you own a Pandora charm bracelet, you know you “must” buy the charms. A bracelet that could easily be worn plain feels “empty” because it is marketed with charms. Had the advertisements featured the plain version, perhaps it would not feel so lacking.

The Diderot Effect is an active marketing strategy for many other companies. Because it has become so normalized and widespread, its impact can be hard to gauge—but you might find that nearly everything you buy follows this psychological pattern.

Instead of being happy with a single item, people feel the need to upgrade everything around it to maintain a sense of harmony. As a result, small buying decisions can turn into larger spending habits.

By ECE OZDEMIR
Opinion Editor

Starbucks first opened in Seattle in 1971.

Since its inception, its goal has been for people to view Starbucks as a “third place,” alongside their offices and homes.

To achieve this, the company provided suitable environments for work and trained employees to greet customers with warmth and a smile.

After some time, Starbucks found that it could not sustain success with just a few locations and its neighborhood “third place” image.

Schultz’s first move was to expand the number of Starbucks locations, beginning with major cities across the United States. Looking at this initial strategy to save the company, one might think he took a significant risk.

Generally, it is assumed that companies expand as they become successful—if a business is successful, it grows and opens new branches, right?

According to Starbucks, however, a company grows to join the competition and increase its brand recognition.

This move, which could be considered highly risky, proved to be a great step toward getting things back on track.

More people were introduced to the “third place” concept and wanted to be part of the friendly atmosphere Starbucks provided. As its recognition grew, the company successfully adopted its desired concept.

So, why has Starbucks started to be called a bank?

Closely following technological advancements, Starbucks introduced gift cards and launched campaigns to encourage their use. Soon, everyone began downloading the Starbucks app and using virtual versions of these cards.

According to Starbucks reports, an average of \$3 billion has been loaded onto these cards.

More interestingly, about \$2.4 billion of that amount was loaded by people to be used at a later date.

Customers did not hesitate to load extra money onto their Starbucks cards because they knew they would use it sooner or later. In essence, people began investing in Starbucks.

Another fascinating statistic shows that approximately 10 percent of the funds on Starbucks cards were never used.

This means a substantial amount of money was simply forgotten in Starbucks’ accounts.

The company’s ledger has now become a place where millions of people actively perform monetary transfers.

MARKETING: AI work loses authenticity

Continued from Page 1

that understands somebody's brand voice," Melvin said. "AI can generate some pretty cool looking graphics or videos, but you just lose that authenticity that really makes the business who they are in my opinion."

At Krush, Landry said AI has changed creativity in advertising by improving their brainstorming as it allows them to scale more as a smaller team. Although it can be a great tool for creativity, there's a risk of things like graphics and images, starting to look the same if they rely too much on AI technology without strong creative directions, she explained.

"We're not sitting here just pumping out graphics because the initial look and feel still has to be conceived by a human," Landry said.

Melvin explained they started using AI two years ago when it was just beginning. She said it is now integrated into many softwares and programs. People need to decide where they want to use it to make their business more efficient, she explained.

Speed is one of the greatest impacts AI has had in their agency, Landry said. What once took hours or days is now taking less time. Landry said marketers can now focus on their strategy instead of entering data and doing type work.

"Consumers don't really care how something was made, they care if it feels lazy or generic," Landry explained. "So, what we focus on is that quality and human oversight, and that's truly what matters."

Landry explained consumers don't mind if they use AI if they provide quality work. Melvin said she is seeing marketing firms and agencies struggling to compete against AI because clients want to use AI like ChatGPT.

"I literally had a client ask me a couple of weeks ago on a consultation 'Well I can go on Canva and make some graphics, and I can go to ChatGPT and write me some content, so I can kind of do my own social media marketing. So why should I hire you?'" Melvin said.

She explained clients can do it themselves but do they have the time to do it? Time is one reason clients hire an agency. People hire agencies to use their expertise, creativity and human insight, Melvin said. Small businesses are relying heavily on AI for their marketing and advertising, and it's only increasing, Landry said.

"It's one of AI's biggest wins," Landry said. "But it doesn't replace the understanding of marketing fundamentals; it amplifies what we already know."

One misconception about AI is it replaces strategy, Landry said. She explained it is not a strategist but a tool, and without distinct human direction, AI produces forgettable, competent work.

"I'm always conscious about how we're using it [AI]," said Allyson Bush, the owner of The Daisy Village in Alva. "I feel like authenticity is my branding standpoint, but it does make our website so much easier."

Bush explained the website she uses for her business is Shopify, which has AI integrated into the system. Bush said AI has helped with product descriptions and even lets her choose a type of voice, and she chooses the playful one as it sounds more authentic to them.

Bush also said it has helped with Search Engine Optimization which has helped her have a larger reach and she doesn't have to worry about typing out keywords as it does it for her. Emails have also become easier with the use of AI, she said.



"Consumers don't really care how something was made; they care if it feels lazy or generic."

—Hannah Landry, vice president of Krush Advertising Agency in Oklahoma City.



"I always say, anything with AI, you gotta go in and edit and make it you," Bush said.

Carly Williams, the owner of the Alva Beer Company, said she uses AI to get ideas for captions but like Bush, she will personalize it so it will be more authentic. Williams also uses it to create a staff meeting agenda and project numbers and help with the budget.

When Williams first began to use AI at Alva Beer Company, she would use it to create a social media timeline. It helped her decide how many times she should be posting, she said. The reason she started using it was to save time, she said. While it does save her time, Williams explained she is uncertain about AI, especially with its environmental impact.

Williams said she has used AI in Canva but has a team that helps with images and graphics. The ABC uses Comanche Spirit Photography and Ingrid Infinity Photography for images as well as a graphic designer and illustrator, Cash Wheeler, to create graphics like the logo and the well-known beer bug graphic.

Williams explained it is important to have consistency with the brand. When people recognize the brand and its consistency, they will trust the business more. It is important to be authentic as well as to support people in the creative field, Williams said.

"We've got to support those people; they're artists; they are great at what they do," Williams said. "I think we should support their craft rather than a machine that doesn't really know us."

Nate Fisher, a professor at Oklahoma University, who

"I always say, anything with AI, you gotta go in and edit and make it you."

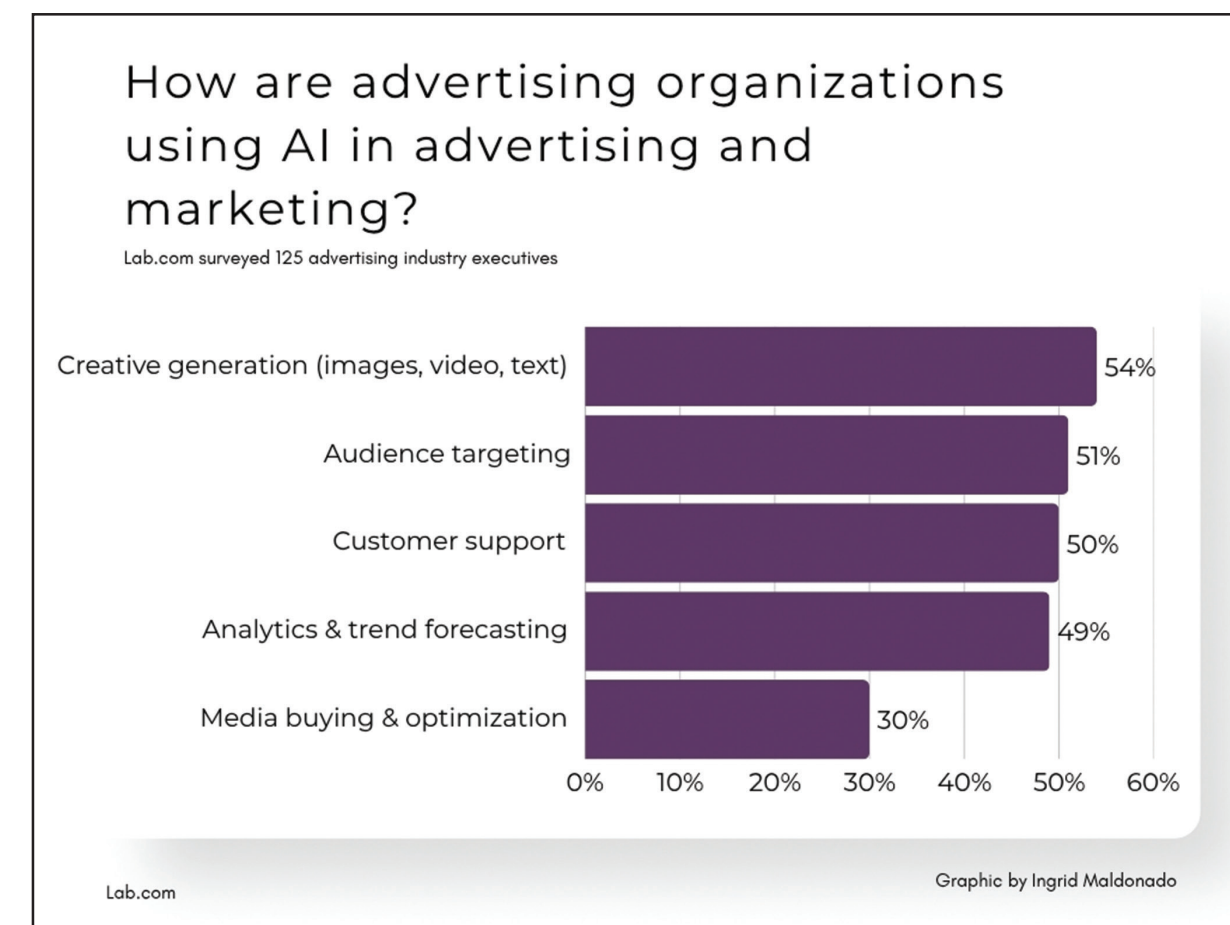
—Allyson Bush, owner, Daisy Village in Alva



teaches digital strategic communication and has a peer-reviewed paper on perception of AI-generated ads, said AI has changed to where it is being integrated into many creative aspects of advertising. He explained with some of the research he has done, he found the people who have a lot of experience with AI and its tools are more positive toward it in general but have negative feelings when they know they are trying to be persuaded with AI.

"It's like they kind of have a little bit of Peter Parker principle," Fisher said. "So, they sort of recognize the power that these things have, and they're a little more reticent for their use in advertising."

When advertisements are labeled as "generated by AI," people have mixed feelings toward it, explained Fisher. He



"My hope is that there's still going to be a need for the human element and human touch when it comes to producing really good, impactful resonance advertising."



Nate Fisher, professor, OU Gaylord College of Journalism & Mass Communication

said studies show consumers feel it is inevitable for there to be advertisements generated by AI that will be targeting them as consumers, making them feel indifferent about advertising. Fisher said he thinks it depends on the consumer and people with high sense of dispositional persuasion knowledge, which is a person's natural habit to recognize and evaluate when someone is trying to persuade them.

"My research has shown that people with these high levels of dispositional persuasion knowledge, that actually interacts to improve their overall opinion of the ad," Fisher said.

Fisher said a personality trait called ad avoidance exists where people just avoid advertisements all together. People with that trait have a more negative feeling toward AI generated advertisements. On the other hand, if someone can see persuasion, Fisher said it does not bother them as much, especially if it is labeled AI, which improves their perception of the ad.

AI generated advertisements are not close to the level of creativity and impact the best human generated advertising can do, he said.

"I think we're still in a place where human creativity is still the best that we can do, but I don't think that day is far off when that's not necessarily going to be the situation," Fisher said.

Technology is improving, and there are even virtual influencers as well, Fisher said. Many people probably don't realize when creative executions or elements are AI. AI was once easy to see but now it is getting harder to recognize, he said.

Reports show employers are giving out less entry lev-

el job positions in all industries, including marketing and communications, Fisher said. According to the Boston Consulting Group, 71% of marketers plan to invest at least \$10 million into AI over the next three years. Fisher said students who are preparing to graduate and enter this career need to know and understand the tools that are being used and know the vocabulary of the tools.

"Let people know you are not interested in using tools as sort of a shortcut for some of the harder work that needs to be done," Fisher said. "That you're willing to put the work in that you need to, to gain the experience that's going to be valuable for both you and your future employer."

Fisher said he thinks and hopes the future of marketing and advertising will be a leaner smaller industry but with human creativity being valued to an extent AI can't replace. He said what attracts people to this industry is it is both a little bit of science and a little bit of art, and too much science with targeting and personalization will have a negative effect.

"My hope is that there's still going to be a need for the human element and human touch when it comes to producing really good, impactful resonance advertising," Fisher said.

Heinz marketers to AI: Draw ketchup



Credit: Campaigns of the World

From real-axe.com:

In "AI Ketchup" campaign, Heinz gave simple prompt for DALL-E 2 to generate images of ketchup. Surprisingly, the images made by the AI resembled Heinz's classic packaging. Slightly hour-glass bottle shape, distinguishable label and plastic squeezable bottle with a flip-top cap. Heinz turned the image into an extensive marketing execution from billboard, magazine, art gallery, social media and metaverse.

Campus

Activities are supporting SAAM

NWOSU has been observing Sexual Assault Awareness Month this week.

A chair display in the campus mall area wrapped with teal ribbons represented survivors.

Teal chalk messages on the

sidewalks around campus provided supporting words. A support/encouragement sticky-note board in the Student Center was also available.

The week was sponsored by the NWOSU Alva Psychology Club.



University Relations Photo

Area high school students shop for free dresses at the Primp for Prom event at Woodward High School in March.

High schoolers get free dresses

The Northwestern Oklahoma State University Department of Social Work distributed nearly 500 dresses to students representing 30 high schools across Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas at the 12th Annual Primp for Prom event held at Woodward High School in March.

Since its launch in 2015, Primp for Prom has provided nearly 3,000 free dresses to high school students across the tri state region. Each student who participates is able to register to receive a scholarship to attend Northwestern after graduation.

Primp for Prom is an annual spring event that provides free prom dresses to high school stu-

dents co sponsored by Northwestern's Department of Social Work and Woodward High School.

"This event represents far more than free dresses," Dr. Kylene Rehder, chair of the Northwestern Department of Social Work, social work program director and professor of social work, said. "It reflects our university's mission and our professional social work commitment to serve. This community event provides meaningful financial support to families, builds a sense of community, celebrates inclusion, and promotes positive self image, confidence and empowerment among young people."

— University Relations



University Relations Photo

Members of the Northwestern Department of Social Work (left to right) Krystan Pierce (alumna); Mona Henos; Mattie Gore; Isabella Burden; Haylee Durrence; Codi Harding, director of social work field education; and department chair Dr. Kylene Rehder

Social Work student go to Capitol

Northwestern Oklahoma State University's Department of Social Work concluded its celebration of Social Work Month in March by participating in the 2026 Legislative Education and Advocacy Day (LEAD) Day at the Oklahoma State Capitol.

LEAD Day provides social work students and professionals with an opportunity to deepen their knowledge of the legislative process. Participants engage directly with state lawmakers and their staff to better understand how public policy impacts social work practice and the populations

they serve.

During LEAD Day activities, Oklahoma State District 58 House Rep. Carl Newton formally recognized social workers on the Oklahoma House floor, acknowledging their contributions to communities across the state and highlighting the vital role of the profession in advancing social well-being and public policy.

The department's participation in LEAD Day reflects the profession's 2026 Social Work Month theme, "Social Work: Uplift. Defend. Transform."

— University Relations

FEATURE

How to choose a team

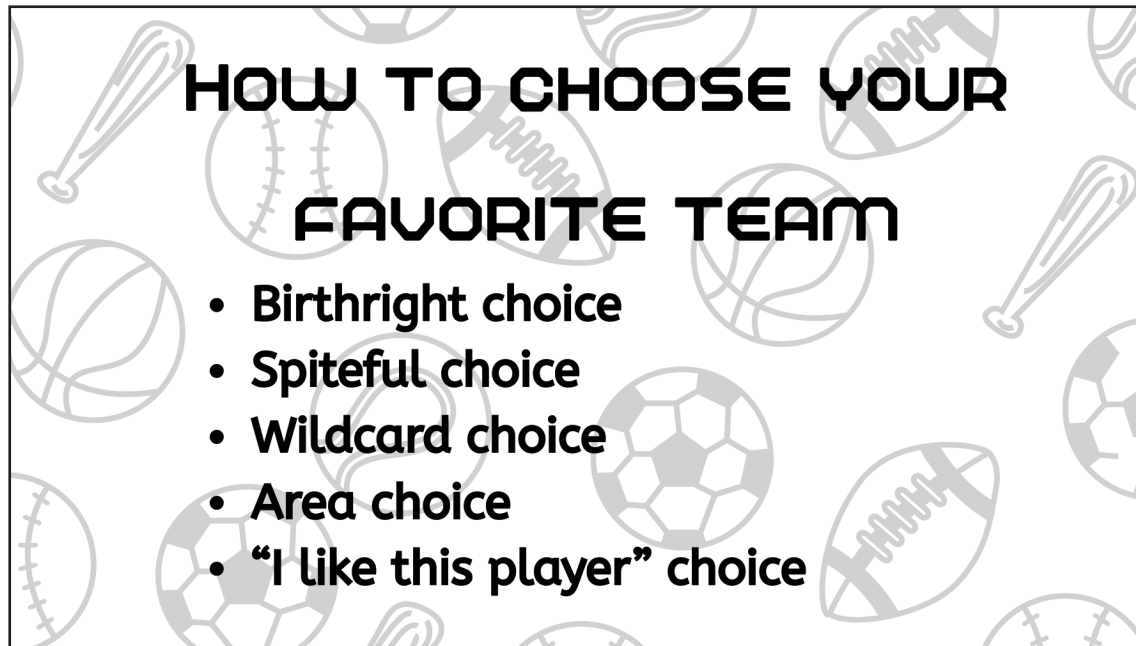
By **JESSICA SCHIEBER**
Co Editor-in-Chief

So, you want to get into sports but don't know how to find a team to support? You're not alone in the wondering.

Here are some tips I have to help you on the journey to your favorite pass time.

The first is a birthright team. If there is a team your family supports in the sport you are looking into liking, well buddy, there's your ticket in. If your parents like a team, chances are you know more about that team than you let on. It wasn't until a few years ago that I truly started getting into football, but I knew my team. The Kansas City Chiefs have been my dad's team for as long as I have been alive and that support ended up being passed down to me. It doesn't matter if they're winning or losing, those boys are my team.

The second team picking could be spiteful. Your entire family likes one team, and you want to be different. Maybe you



chose to support their rival team? Maybe you will go into a different division and choose a team? It doesn't matter how you do it as long as you aren't supporting the team your family does.

Another could be trying to get into a sport that isn't around you at all. This was me with hockey.

Any team had a fair chance to become my team, but I kept seeing something about one team. This choice I call the wildcard choice. There really is no rhyme or reason to the choice you just like it. After I did research on my team I found out they were once based in Kansas City-maybe it's an in-

ternal liking.

This choice can lead to getting your family into a new sport, and their choice of like a team might not be the same as yours. That is fine.

My family got into hockey after I did, and they chose to support the Dallas Stars. This could

be technically considered our home team, because it is the closest to us.

This does not affect my already decided choice however, I got first pick in team, so their choice means nothing to me in all actuality.

Another way to pick could be to like a team because you like a different sports team in the area. This would be like me liking the Kansas City Royals because I like the Chiefs. This doesn't hold any true merit, but I support the teams around the same area. This just heightens your chances of going to the city for more than one event a year.

Overall, the choice to like a team is fully on the individual making it. These are just some ideas I had on how you can come about your next favorite logo.

Maybe you decided to like a team because of a player and you decided to just follow that player wherever they go, the choice is yours.

And what is important is that you have fun and enjoy the sport.

Sidenote:

Future isn't scary

By **JESSICA SCHIEBER**
Co Editor-in-Chief

One thing that I have been thinking about a lot for the past few months is what my future will look like, and that is terrifying.

I have never been one to really think about the next step, as long as I'm working on a step, I feel successful.

The future has always been a scary thought to me; I have no way of knowing where it will lead.

I like to be a person who knows what's going on and what plans are, I have no way of knowing what the future will be.

I will be graduating from school next fall, and I have no idea what will change in my life. Up to that moment I've had a schedule, a day to get through. I will no longer have any sort of expectation of what is next.

Sure, I will find a job, but what if that job takes me far away from my home and family?

My family and I are a lot closer than I realize most families are. This also scares me, because what if it changes? What if I lose my support system?

I don't feel great thinking about what comes next, but I'm going to keep walking towards that step, because I know that forward is the only way to go.

Dwelling on the past doesn't do anyone any good.

I know that no matter where the future takes me, that I will be

where I am meant to be.

For all I know I could end up in a completely different country, but I could also end up halfway across America.

Wherever I am I know that I will always have people back in Oklahoma who can see me shining.

Future is scary, yes, but it also is full of so many promises.

I don't know what it holds, but I know that I will be living my best life when I get there.

I could be a successful author; I could end up being a sports reporter or I could be living a great life as some publishing company. I have options, I have to remind myself of that a lot.

I am not set on one path for the rest of my life. My life is as fluid as the river.

I can do whatever my heart desires. I could become an English teacher in a foreign country for all I know.

Whatever happens I know that I will at least be prepared for it.

If we let fear of the future stop us from moving forward we will never become the best version of ourselves.

I love who I am and where I am from, but I also know that I was made more than some dirt roads in Oklahoma.

Growing means trusting the future and that is terrifying.

I'm learning to let the future come and to be prepared for whatever happens when it does come.

Does it ever scare me?

Of course it does, but I have faith that from my work I have

done that I will be perfectly fine. I trust that my education has prepared me for whatever decision I make to become.

So the future still scares me sometimes but I don't let that prevent me from moving forward.

When we stop, we fail. If we keep pushing forward we will see that the future wasn't so scary after all.

Maybe I will get married, maybe I'll have a family to raise and love. Maybe I'll become more successful than I ever dreamed of being. Maybe my life gets so much better.

These maybes are the reason I keep pushing forward. Having the chance to see what life may hold for me. Knowing that whatever is out there for me will be just for me.

The future seems easier with these thoughts. The maybes make life seem lighter. The future has a plan for me and I have a plan for it.

Thinking on the positives of the future outweighs the negatives that will happen in the future.

Hurt is going to come, but so will joy. Pain is a part of growth. Growth makes you into who you are meant to be.

I am learning to love the future and how to prepare for it when it comes. I am learning that fear can paralyze movements that are meant to be taken. I know that whatever it is I am meant for, I will be great at it. Whatever job comes my way I will work hard at it.

Top 10 Booktok Books

1. "Fourth Wing" by Rebecca Yarros
2. "Beach Read" by Emily Henry
3. "Remarkable Bright Creatures" by Shelby Von Pelt
4. "Seven Days In June" by Tia Williams
5. "I'm Glad my Mom Died" by Jenette McCurdy
6. "The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo" by Taylor Jenkins Reid
7. "Better Than The Movies" by Lynn Painter
8. "The Song of Achilles" by Madeline Miller
9. "Red, White and Royal Blue" by Casey McQuiston
10. "Divine Rivals" by Rebecca Ross

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What is fentanyl?

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ENTERTAINMENT

Visiting writer promotes new book

By KEVIN KAUMANS
Entertainment Editor

This Monday, I attended the Northwestern Visiting Writer event with my fellow literature enthusiasts. This year, the author who came to the Student Center was one Dr. Constantine Squires, author of the Oklahoma Book Award for Fiction “Along the Watchtower”. However, the real reason she was there was to promote her latest book, “Low April Sun”, a historical fiction recount of the Oklahoma City Bombing.

You see, compared to other tragedies in American history, the theorist attack that took place April 19, 1995 is not really a

setting that takes place in literature all that much. For example, have you ever noticed how there were at least a hundred books that were published shortly after 9/11 happened, or all the books that feature a fictional cast in Pearl Harbor?

When people think of America, one of the last states that come to mind is that of one of the smallest states in the country. This is not being said to insult those who are proud to live in Oklahoma, quite the contrary.

By pointing out the fact that our tragedies are overlooked because of how small of a state we are brings awareness to it.

After the event, I had the pleasure of interviewing Dr. Squires myself. When I

asked her why she wanted to be a writer, Constantine had this to say:

“When I was a little girl, my dad asked me what I wanted to be. At first, I said I wanted to be an underwater explorer. I cannot remember why; I think I was reading a lot of stories about it at the time. Later on, I changed my mind and said I wanted to be a princess. Eventually, I realized that if I became a writer, I could be whatever I want.”

As she got older, Dr. Squires would begin taking inspiration from writers such as George Elliot, Don Delillo, and Donna Tartt. These three writers had the biggest influence on her prose and style.

Her latest novel, “Low April Sun”, is not just a fictional recount of the Oklahoma

City bombing.

It is told from the point of view of multiple characters, from an alcoholic who grew up in a neo-Nazi community that was in cahoots with Timothy McVeigh, to a woman who is being searched for by her brother and half-sister. The novel is one of suspense and the study of how much of a psychological impact something like this would have on a person.

Overall, Dr. Squires is a woman who is endlessly talented in her writing. Her novel is a must-read for fans of the historical Southern fiction genre. I recommend anyone with the money available go grab themselves a copy of her latest book as soon as possible.

Student stories from “Alabaster Echoes”: Issue 3

Editor’s note: For those of you who were unaware of the Creativity Feast that took place Thursday night, “Alabaster Echoes” is Northwestern’s official art and literacy magazine where students share their drawings, poems, and short stories for others to see.

Students enter their works that they are proud of in the first semester of the school year. This allows the works to be edited through out that semester and leaves the magazine with fully edited and complete works.

A student is able to enter any sort of creative piece that they would like to and during the Creativity Fest they can share any piece they would like, it does not have to be a piece that was entered into the “Alabaster Echoes” for someone to share it.

The point of the Creativity Fest is to share how much we need creativity in our lives and to celebrate anyone who creates things, because creativity is a dying art.

With the creation of A.I. it is more important now to celebrate artist and their creativity.

Creativity is a huge part of what makes humans so special.

Overseen by Dr. Christina Xan of the English Department, has let me know that anyone who missed the Creativity Feast but would still like a copy of the journal can find them around the student center and Vinson Hall.

They will later be uploaded online digitally for online purchases.

Here in the text below is some of the writings that can be found in this year’s edition of “Alabaster Echoes”:

“Sublime”

By Ashland Crites
Above a mossy lake sits a dragonfly
On a slacked line.
A lover holds their hand in mine
As the world swirls in the breeze,
Landing in the trees blazing in

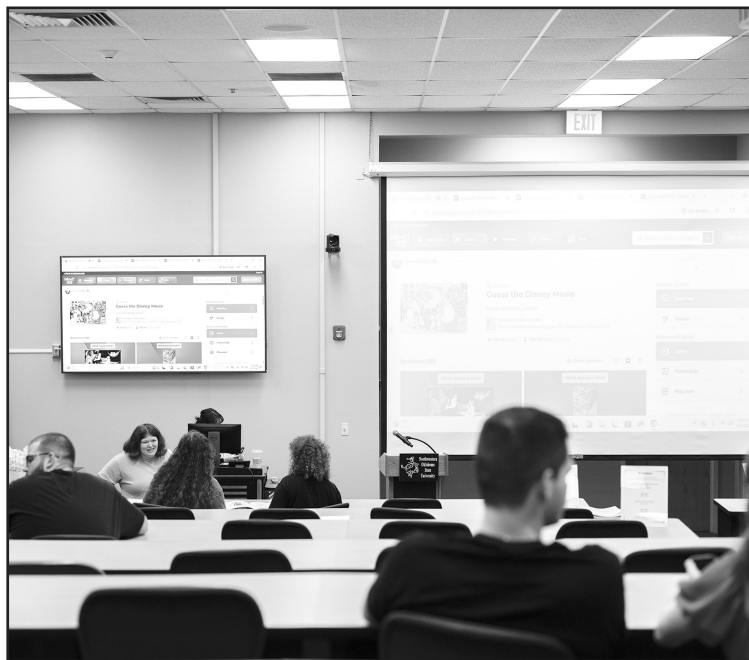


Photo by Ingrid Maldonado

Students gathered in EC 109 for the Creativity Fest on April 2. During the event students had a chance to share entire that they put into the “Alabaster Echoes” issue three that was released on the same night.

the sun.

“A Small Brown Feather”

By Andrea Thomas
Today I found a small brown feather.
I was on the way to sub for an art class,
And it was just there, nestled softly on the sidewalk,
An unassuming gift that others passed by.
Today I picked up a small brown feather,
And I carried it wonderingly to the classroom,
Where students were working on elements of art,
Crossing boxes on a chart: line, form, shape, color.
And again I held up the small brown feather
And twisted it in my fingers, noting
Its delicate lines and gentle sloping edge
Its silky texture and stiff dorm.
I examined the small brown feather, its shades of light,
Tufts of gossamer at its base, and
A hollow quill of intention design-

A small miracle of flight, nature’s artwork.

Today I treasured a small brown feather
Because it reminded me that the universe is listening,
And it felt like a magical confirmation
That my life is worthy of a nod from God.
That we are all art, like the small brown feather,
And we leave whispers of magic on the sidewalks.

“Path”

By Amy Brandley
My path has never been easy.
It’s often rocky, dark, and steep.
But a light inside points the way-
Something dim, something blazing.
Suffering puts up roadblocks.
Distractions are all around.
The guides nudge me, remind me.
My inner wise one trusts the journey.
Now I see the beauty and the pain,
The synchronicity and the

confusion:

All the sacred waypoints.
No answers. No real map.
I’m navigating by the stars-
In the sky and in my heart.

“A Papercraft Called “Yesterday”

By Derrick Galindo
Barley made it through yesterday.
A paper facade can only bear so much.
Mosquitoes snipping in my chest.
There’s a chance to escape-walk home on the crumpled road.
But escape makes silence,
Said silence means confronting.
Folding words, actions, con-

flict and resolution.

I lost sight of it all,
tearing apart yesterday.
The future could always be better,
so chin up.
A snip, crumple, fold, or tear,
Can rearrange blue yesterdays and craft yesterdays.




“Agian”

By Belind Garvie
I take a sip,
It comes back out.
Stopping at my throat;
Choking me until it’s free.
I cough, I hack.
I still cannot breathe.
Yet I try again,
With tears in my eyes.
I’m tough, I say.
I tell myself lies.
I’m choking again.

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BASEBALL

Rangers have even record

By **OAKLEE FIELDER**
Sports Editor

The Rangers split the week as they won two and lost two after a three-game series against Oklahoma Baptist and a game against Washburn University.

The Rangers won their first two games against the Oklahoma Baptist Bisons, but lost the final game against OBU and lost to the Washburn Ichabods.

The first win over the Bison was a huge 21-8 victory. The scoring slowed down in the following game as the Rangers only scored nine. Northwestern lost by ten in game three, and lost by two to Washburn.

NWOSU 21-8 OBU

Chase Gordon had a jaw-dropping six RBIs in game one against the Bison, and he opened the scoring. Gordon hit a single to sent Alex Dabrowski home. Joel Lindahl hit a single to center field, sending Gordon home. In the following inning, Gordon hit a sacrifice fly, sending Brandon Jennings and Dabrowski home after an error by second base. The Bison responded with four runs in the third, tying the game.

The game continued to be tied through the fourth inning as both teams scored two runs, making it a 6-6 game. Then, Northwestern scored seven unanswered runs in the fifth to give them a huge lead. Gordon hit a four-run grand slam homerun in the fifth, taking him, Blake Mattern, Dabrowski and Jennings home.

The Rangers scored one in the sixth. The Bison scored twice in the eighth, cutting the Rangers'



NWOSU Athletics Photo

Northwestern pitcher No. 18 Will Kates, throws a pitch against Southern Nazarene University on March 27.

lead down to six. The Rangers had another seven-run inning in the top of the ninth, giving them the 21-8 lead that they would win with.

Jennings hit a homerun in the top of the ninth, one of his two hits and three runs scored. Gordon, Jason McCarty and Lindahl had three hits apiece. Gordon had six RBIs and Mattern had three.

Will Kates, Elias Herrera, Ryan McClaskey and Alex Figueroa all pitched in game one against OBU. Kates and Herrera had three strikeouts apiece.

NWOSU 9-0 OBU

The Rangers won in the seven-inning game two against Oklahoma Baptist. Cole Barton and Jailon Goodfellow had good games in the batter's box as they

both had three hits and three RBIs.

The game had no score until the third inning, where Dabrowski hit a single which allowed Matthew Bailey to run home and score. Then in the fifth, Dabrowski hit a double sending Goodfellow home. Barton was next, and hit a single to right field, sending Jennings home. Goodfellow had

a homerun in the sixth, giving Northwestern three runs. Barton then sent two runners home with a single to left field. Later, the Bison pitcher walked Lindahl with the bases loaded, handing the Rangers another point.

Barton and Goodfellow were the best hitters in game two, followed by Lindahl with two hits and one RBI. Logan Sandoval pitched all game and had seven strikeouts.

NWOSU 1-11 OBU

The Rangers dropped game three against the Bison as Oklahoma Baptist had a large win over Northwestern.

The Bison scored all 11 of their runs in the first three innings. The Rangers had responded in the fourth with a single to shortstop by Barton to send Mattern home. Mattern and Gordon had two hits apiece. Kyle Holzer, Kaden Spray and Trey Barkman were the pitchers in game three. Barkman had four strikeouts

NWOSU 0-2 WASH

The Rangers lost another in the game against Washburn University. The game spent the first six innings scoreless. In the seventh, the Ichabods scored once, leading into another run scored in the eighth.

Gordon and Barton had two hits apiece. Nathan Nunez, Figueroa, Austin Maddox, Spray and McClaskey all pitched against the Ichabods. Nunez, Maddox and Spray had one strikeout apiece.

The next games for the Rangers are three games against Henderson State this weekend, and a neutral site game against Southern Nazarene in Enid at David Allen Ballpark on Tuesday.

Fan favorite tradition continues for Northwestern

By **MEGAN SPRAY**
Senior Reporter

Northwestern will host its annual Baseball, Hot Dogs and Apple Pie event Tuesday, April 14, when the Rangers take on Southern Nazarene University at 7 p.m. at David Allen Memorial Ballpark in Enid.

The event, which began in 2010, has grown into a community tradition that brings together students, alumni and families for a night of baseball and celebration. Support from local businesses continues to help the event expand each year.

Tara Owen, marketing and communications specialist for the Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association, said the event is one she looks forward to every year.

"Baseball, Hot Dogs and Apple Pie is one of my favorite events of the year," Owen said. "It's an opportunity for the Ranger family to come together to en-

joy some Ranger baseball while also getting a free hot dog and apple pie, something that wouldn't be possible without our generous sponsors."

Sponsors of the event provide hot dogs, apple pies, hot dog buns, waters, and more. Their support is a big part of the success of the event.

One of the highlights of the evening is the participation of area youth baseball and softball teams. This year, 27 youth teams are scheduled to take part in the event.

Youth players will have the opportunity to run the bases, meet members of the Ranger baseball team and watch as one selected youth pitcher throws out the ceremonial first pitch. Miss Northwestern Abbey Elam will perform the national anthem prior to the game.

"One of the best parts of this event is inviting youth baseball teams to join us," Owen said. "It's incredible to see these college athletes connect with young-

er players who admire them so much."

John Allen, director of alumni relations for the Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association, said the event was designed to bring younger audiences into the college baseball atmosphere.

"A few years ago, we decided we needed to add an element that would bring in the youth and let them enjoy watching a college-level baseball game," Allen said. "This gives our youth teams an opportunity to make memories."

Allen said attendance has con-

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tinued to grow as more teams and families from surrounding communities participate. He said seeing young players interact with Ranger athletes remains one of the most meaningful parts of the event.

"I think my favorite part of it is seeing the kids enjoying it so much and seeing our young men, young baseball Rangers, interact

with those little kids," Allen said. "They become heroes to these little kids who have run around the bases, they high-five them as they come around the bases, and it's just a good, positive event full of joy."

Organizers encourage community members to attend and enjoy what Allen called "the great American pastime, Ranger style."

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SPORTS

Softball loses three to OBU

By **OAKLEE FIELDER**
Sports Editor

NWOSU softball lost their three games of the week to Oklahoma Baptist while at home, increasing their loss streak to eight games.

Although they lost to Oklahoma Baptist, they played competitive games against the Lady Bison. Throughout all games, they didn't lose by more than three runs.

OBU 7-4 NWOSU

The Lady Rangers lost to the Lady Bison in the three-game series opened by three runs. Savannah Duran and Jamie Molina were able to get two hits in the series opener.

Oklahoma Baptist scored twice in the first inning. Molina hit a double in the same inning, which allowed Duran to run home. Then, the Lady Bison scored three in the second and one in the fourth, which was responded by a single from Abby Baglin which sent Duran home.

The Lady Bison scored once more in the fifth, giving them a five-run lead over the Lady Rangers. Then in the seventh, Kaitlyn Corn hit a doble to send Kaylee Madden home which sparked a small moment of momentum for Northwestern. Molina hit a single into left field allowing Corn to run home. Unfortunately, the Lady Rangers were unable to keep the ball rolling and lost by three runs.



NWOSU Athletics Photo

Lady Ranger No. 10, Kaylee Madden, throws the ball against the Oklahoma Baptist University Lady Bison.

Duran and Molina were the best in the batter's box, but there were multiple players with hits. Katy Jones pitched for five innings and had four strikeouts. Madelyn Cason finished off the game for Jones and had only a single run against her in the two innings she pitched.

OBU 6-3 NWOSU

In game two against the Lady Bison, Northwestern had the lead in the middle stage of the game.

The Lady Rangers scored the first runs of the game in the fourth

inning. By the end of the inning, they were up by three. Natalie Ackenhausen hit a single, allowing Baglin to run home. Then, Madden hit a single that went through the right. The Lady Bison attempted to throw Ackenhausen out as she ran home, but failed, giving Northwestern another run and Madden made it to second.

Corn hit a double to send Madden home, and that was all the scoring the Lady Rangers had. Oklahoma Baptist scored three in the sixth and three in the seventh,

giving them the three-run win over Northwestern.

Molina was one of the best batters again, along with Taygan Graham who both had two hits each. Cason and Jones were the pitchers once again, with Cason starting this time around. Cason had four strikeouts and Jones had two.

OBU 9-7 NWOSU

The Lady Rangers scored five in the opening inning of game three against Oklahoma Baptist. Unfortunately, the Lady Bison

found a way to find a way around it and defeated the Lady Rangers by two.

The Lady Bison opened the scoring with one in the first. Then, Raelyn Sandlin hit a single and there was an error by the OBU shortstop. This allowed Corn to run home. Then, the Lady Bison pitcher walked the next two batters with the bases loaded, handing NWOSU two runs. Makaanalei Lapera hit a single to right field to send Sandlin home. Then Madden hit a ground out to short stop, but this allowed Graham to run home and score.

In the following inning, Sandlin hit a single with an error from the Lady Bison shortstop again. Sandlin's hit sent Baglin home. The Lady Bison hit a homerun to make it a two-run game.

In the fifth, Jazmine Mikel hit a ground out into double play, getting her and Graham out. Despite the double play, Sandlin ran home and scored, giving NWOSU a three-run lead. The Lady Bison scored five runs in the sixth, giving them the lead by two, which Northwestern was unable to recover from.

There weren't many standouts in the batter's box for Northwestern as nobody had more than one hit. Grace Hulsey was the starting pitcher for the Lady Rangers. Hulsey had five strikeouts. Katelyn Bezdicek was the reliever and only had one hit against her.

The next games for the Lady Rangers are against Henderson State University this weekend.

Track and field leads competitions

By **OAKLEE FIELDER**
Sports Editor

Northwestern had high finishers at the Friends University Spring Invitational, while four athletes were in Texas competing at the Texas Relays.

In the 400m hurdles, Johns finished 21st in his section with

a time of 59.35. White finished 32nd with a time of 56.90 in his section. Then in the 110m hurdles, White finished 8th with a time of 15.17 and Johns finished 10th with a time of 15.85.

In the triple jumps, Hodge finished 8th with a distance of 14.3m. Hughes finished 10th with a distance of 11.35m.

Further north in Wichita, Kan-

sas, the rest of the Rangers were competing.

In the 100m, Easton Hamar finished 17th with a time of 10.9. Gabriella Hall finished 6th with a time of 12.39.

Amari Stephens finished 12th in the women's 100m hurdles, she finished with a 16.3 time. In the 400m, she finished 8th with a time of 1:11.14.

Hamar also competed in the 200m. He finished 4th in the 200m with a time of 21.41

Alijah Roper finished 16th in the 400m with a time of 50.26. Jada White finished 7th in the women's with a time of 58.50.

Cox finished high in the 1500m event as he ended with a 12th place finish. Jamarie Ross led the Lady Rangers with a 6th

place with a time of 4:52.08.

Coy Bullard finished 5th in the 5000m event with a time of 16:00. Ivy Washington topped the results. Her time of 18:51.06 was the fastest out of all the women competitors.

Tristan Meeker finished 8th in the 10000m with a time of 35:35.61. Jessica Myers was another Northwestern winner, she finished 1st in the 10000m with a time of 40:39.46.

The relay teams finished well at Friends University as the men finished 2nd with a time of 8:11.06 and the women also finished 2nd with a time of 10:02.04.

Jeremiah Anderson finished on the podium in the high jump as he finished 3rd with a height of 2.03 meters.

Zachary Bentley was the top Ranger in the long jump, finishing 8th with a distance of 6.3m. Aaliyah Cobb was the top Lady Ranger as she finished 10th with a distance of 4.98m.

Brock Bourgeois put up another great finish as he finished 3rd in the shot put with a distance of 15.89m.

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NEWS

Bull Battle moves to new arena

By **INGRID MALDONADO**
Senior Reporter

The Bull Battle on Friday and Saturday was the first event held at the new Salt Fork Event Center.

The Bull Battle is an annual event that happens every April, with bull riders coming from around the country and even some from Brazil. It started in 2007 and has been going on for 18 years now. This year it was called Alva Bull Battle X (10) because although it started 18 years ago it has been rebranded.

“I used to ride bulls myself and even at a younger age, 18, it was my senior year of high school when I produced my first show,” said Justin Dowdy the president of the Western Sports Committee. “I kind of put together just a fun little deal, kind of like a family reunion type of deal. Get all my buddies to come to town, and we all have just cool little bull riding, and it just kind of sparked a fire and just kept growing every year.”

The event covers two days; Friday had 31 bull riders, and Saturday had 41, Dowdy said. On Saturday, at 11 in the morning, they held mini bull riding which consists of kids from the ages of 3 all the way to 17, trying to ride. Then at 7 p.m. they opened the doors for the bull riding showcase. The bull riding is a Bull Riders Incorporated sanctioned event, he said.

The money the bull riders win will count toward their finals, which happens in early February every year, Dowdy said. The Bull

Battle is one of the first events for the association. That also is the same with the youth except their finals are in May every year.

Paulo Lima, who is from Brazil, was the overall champion for the Bull Battle X. He won \$3,419 with the average score of 164 from both nights.

With the new event center, many people were curious to see their first look at it. Dowdy said there has been a lot of hype and excitement to see it.

“This is definitely a different ball game from the Alva Dome out at the fairgrounds,” Dowdy said of the original location on the Battle.

Larry Milbourn, the executive director of the Salt Fork Event Center, said he was excited for this event and just seeing the event center take its shape.

“It was fun, and it was interesting to see all the professional bull riders, and I feel like it’s a great event for students, especially if they’re not from Oklahoma,” said America Rios, a student at Northwestern who attended the event.



Photos by Ingrid Maldonado

Above: a cowgirl takes her turn on a bull during the Alva Bull Battle. The annual event was the first in the new Salt Fork Event Center.
Left: Paulo Lima from Brazil, center, accepts the overall champion award and \$3,419.



University Relations Photo

Preparing for musical

Theatre Production 1 and 2 students make props for the upcoming musical, “Little Shop of Horrors,” which runs April 23-24 at 7 p.m. and April 26 at 2 p.m. in Herod Hall. Tickets are available from nwosufin-carts.ludus.com/index.php. Student and senior admission is \$5, general admission \$15, NWOSU employees \$10.

Art show at Runnymede



Photo by Ingrid Maldonado

Visitors to the Runnymede during the First Friday Art Walk look over the award-winning art from the NWOSU Art Society Show held on campus in March. Dr. Steven Maier, dean of faculty, is at far right.