

NEWS

BSU event takes an unexpected turn

Campus feels the pain

By SHEALYN PRATT
Feature Editor

The Black Student Union hosted its first Back-to-School Pool Party at the Alva City Pool on Friday after a lifeguard allegedly reported “suspicious behavior,” prompting police and administrators to arrive.

The incident made BSU members and attendees question why police were called to their event when a similar pool party had taken place earlier without police presence.

The organization’s first event of the semester brought together members of the Ranger Family, including the Northwestern men’s and Lady Ranger basketball teams, Northwestern football, Ranger Cheer, Northwestern men’s and women’s track and field, Northwestern Rodeo and faculty.

About 30 minutes into the school-approved event, an Alva city sheriff’s deputy, two on-duty officers and two off-duty officers arrived at the Alva City Pool. A lifeguard allegedly called the police because of “suspicious behavior.”

“It was crazy because they just had two sports go to the pool, but when it’s a Black Student Union and Black people, it’s a problem,” said Toni Green, a senior sprinter for the Northwestern women’s track and field team.

Prior to the Black Student Union’s event, the Alva City Pool hosted a pool party for the Alva Middle School cross country team. There were no officers present at that event.

The officers circled the area and entered the BSU event. Two off-duty officers spoke with Black Student Union club adviser and Assistant Men’s and Women’s

Track & Field Coach Zaccheus Beasley before leaving. On-duty officers entered both the women’s and men’s bathrooms before leaving.

“It honestly makes no sense that there were at least four cops circling us for 30 minutes when we were just having fun,” Green said.

The Alva City Police Department did not respond to a request for comment.

After the on-duty officers and sheriff’s deputy found no cause for concern at the event, administrators were called to the pool.

Caleb Mosburg, vice president for student services and enrollment management; Kaylea Brown, Student Government Association co-sponsor; spoke with club adviser and Northwestern Cheer Coach Chloe Rogers before leaving.

Northwestern Administration also found no cause for concern about the event.

“One racist lifeguard assumed we were doing something because we are Black,” Green said. “We told Caleb, we were just having fun and if the roles were reversed, he wouldn’t even be out here.”

Mosburg has spoken with city officials regarding the matter.

“I feel bad about how the situation was handled with the pool staff,” Mosburg said, “In conversations with the city, they’ve assured me that the situation will be handled appropriately.”

Mosburg added, this was not about race for administration.

“I don’t want any of our students, especially our Black students, thinking that I’m showing up just because of race,” Mosburg said. “I don’t care what student or organization it is, if there are claims that something is going on, I’m showing up.”



Photo by Nathan Hall
Police show up unexpectedly at BSU pool party event causing unease by attendees.

Once confusion was resolved, students at the event resumed swimming and enjoying ice cream, snacks and drinks provided by the Black Student Union. The earlier police presence had caused unease among some attendees and disrupted the flow of the event. The lifeguard who made the alleged report was asked to leave the event by her superior once administration left. The party continued with line dancing and music provided by Northwestern Cheer Captain Mikayla Ramsey.

“You guys had everything under control,” Brown said in an apology written to the Black Student Union. “Caleb and I only showed up because of our responsibilities as SGA advisers, and it’s crystal clear that the blame for tonight falls on one side.”

The Alva City Pool apologized for the confusion surrounding the lifeguards’ reports but did not comment on the alleged racist behavior.

Northwestern administrators have expressed their concern about how the Alva City Pool managed the situation with a majority of their Black students and student athletes.

“I am so frustrated by how the pool and the city treated the situation,” Brown said.

Despite the controversy, as the semester continues, the Black Student Union plans to host more events.

World Afro Day is on Sept. 15. The BSU will hand out free cake pops to anyone wearing their natural hair on campus.

“We want to embrace our hair, our culture, who we are and how our hair grows naturally,” said Amelia Nyambuka, president of Northwestern’s Black Student Union.

Family Day is on Sept. 19. The BSU will host its second annual bake sale in the Student Center from noon until everything is sold. The bake sale will feature more cake pops, cookies and other treats.

Reporter’s note: This story was written by a member of the Black Student Union.

By ALLISON RUWALDT
Senior Reporter

Craig Anthony Ricke, head of the NWOSU IT department, unexpectedly passed away at age 52 on August 12, 2026.

Ricke was born on June 27, 1974, in Enid, OK. He grew up in Aline and graduated from Aline-Cleo High School in 1992. He married Jaime Bushman in 2006, and they raised two children together, Tatum and Trendon.

“We just knew we could call Craig,” the assistant director of the NWOSU IT department, Lee-ta Grimsley, said. “He would always take care of it because he always had the answer.”

Ricke graduated from NWOSU, created a home and decided to stay here for 30 years, working in the IT department.

As technology changed, he adapted and helped his coworkers adjust and learn new things.

During his funeral service, there were four rows full of former and current staff, showing how many of his coworkers’ lives he touched.

Both the church where the service was held and the NWOSU Ballroom that livestreamed the service were full of people who were impacted by Ricke.

His coworkers describe him

as a quick-witted, funny man. Some recalled stories of him helping people with computer issues and pulling small pranks on them by quickly coming up with convoluted ways to say simple phrases.

Ricke not only worked hard to help the school, but he also worked hard to help the community when given the chance.

He was heavily involved in his church and was instrumental in helping schools set up their distance learning options.

His coworkers emphasize his bright personality.

He was always willing to help and visit with anyone about anything.

He loved woodworking and would make gifts for his loved ones, and was constantly renovating his personal and rental homes.

Ricke was said to have been one of the most dedicated people on campus.

Anytime someone called him with an issue, he was there to help.

“None of us can step into those shoes,” Grimsley said. “But we’re all just gonna work together.”

Craig Ricke was known as an amazing man who was passionate about showing up for people who needed it, and his memory will forever be engraved in this campus.



WHAT’S UP

SEPTEMBER 7-12

- 7

- Suicide prevention and awareness week
 - BCM Fresh Monday, Ranger Room 8 pm-9pm
- 8

- Education Career Fair, Student Center Ballroom 11 am-1 pm
- 9

- Meet the Rangers, Ranger football field 7-9:15 PM
 - BCM Worship, Student Center ballroom 7:30-9:30 pm
- 12

- Heartland BEST robotics kickoff, Fellers Family Auditorium 8 am-2 pm

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NEWS

Construction causing problems on campus

Having to let go

By ALLISON RUWALDT
Senior Reporter

The construction being done on Highway 281 continues to affect students and staff at NWO-SU, even a year later.

Last year, construction to widen the highway began.

It was decided that the water lines and pipes would be renovated with the road, and that sidewalks would be added.

However, some people are disappointed with the amount of time it has taken.

Although it may be worth the wait, many people are having to deal with the negative consequences of the construction.

“It’s been a mess all summer trying to get from one building to the next,” said Irys Pollock, the Food Unit Lead at NWO-SU. “Something is always in the way.”

Over the summer, the construction caused the parking lots at the wellness center and at Vincent Hall to close.

They did not open back up until a week before the semester started, so summer students and faculty had to make adjustments.

“It can be frustrating, but I’m glad they’re redoing the road,” said Norah Scarbrough, a senior at NWOSU.

Scarbrough and Alana Pierce, who are both students at NWO-SU, expressed frustration that it slows down traffic.

However, overall, they are grateful that the road is getting renovated.

“I’m really appreciative that they’re getting it accomplished and finished,” Pierce said. “It’s



Photos by Jessica Schieber

Construction on Highway 281 made the two lane street into a one lane, causing confusion and struggles for Northwestern students.

just kinda slower with traffic.”

Although some are annoyed, many students who live on campus are unaffected by the work being done.

“Well, personally, I don’t live off campus, so I’m not having to find a parking spot or anything like that,” said Jenna Mills, a student at NWOSU. “So for me it’s probably not as bad as it is for someone living off campus.”

A main takeaway from discussing the construction was that parking has gotten more difficult.

While some spots have been blocked off and others have disappeared, many people are upset and feel there is less parking available.

“I just get stressed out about parking,” said Eile Dang, a student at NWOSU. “I don’t know what’s really permitted.”

The compact parking area near Vincent Hall has been occupied by double-wide trucks and SUVs,

most likely because the new lines outlining the spaces have not been painted yet.

Before work on the road started, students complained about the parking situation on campus and, as of now, this issue has only gotten worse.

“It makes it really hard to park every day,” said Matilda Conway, a senior at NWOSU. “I’ve had to park at the tennis courts.”

Overall, the construction on Highway 281 is being seen as an inconvenience by the students. While it will be worth it when it is finished, it has proved to be a struggle for those at NWOSU.

There are still some students that refuse to cross the road as it is being worked on to attend events hosted by th BCM or the Bible Chair. These students think it’s safer to just avoid the hassle at all then to try and go to them.

Students will have to continue their difficulties of walking across 281, as construction continues.



A sign on Highway 281 that indicates two way traffic. The sign is used to warn drivers that the road they are traveling on is changing from a one-way street or a divided highway to a road with two-way traffic sharing the same roadway.

By JESSICA SCHIEBER
News Editor

Death is something that no one can escape, no matter how loved and cherished those people may be.

This past month there were many people who were adored that have passed away.

Dolly Parton, a singer-songwriter, actress, businesswoman, and philanthropist past on August 25.

Parton was the Imagination Library. This library has gifted a total of 332,411,218 books according to the Imagination Library website.

It is dedicated to inspiring a love of reading by gifting books free of charge to children from birth to the age of 5.

The funding for this library has been from Dolly Parton and local community partners in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and the Republic of Ireland.

Parton was a part of something greater than herself and was an inspiration to many people.

People all over the world felt saddened when the news of her passing came out. Dolly lived to be 80 years old.

Another death that affected many was the death of Tim Curry. Tim Curry also died on August 25, but the announcement of his death came August 26.

His team had made the decision to wait on the announcement when they saw about Parton’s death. Curry was an actor and singer.

He was in movies that included “It” produced in 1990, “The

Rocky Horror Picture Show” produced in 1975, “The Three Musketeers” produced in 1993, and he voiced a character in “Barbie and the Three Musketeers” produced in 2008.

Many people who were interested in theater looked up to Curry, and his voice will be missed by many.

Another voice that has left us was the voice of Optimus Prime from the “Transformers” franchise. Peter Cullen passed on August 26.

Cullen voiced many characters other than Optimus Prime; his second most known character was Eeyore from the “Winne the Pooh” series.

A death that not many may have noticed was the death of a Japanese artist named Yayoi Kusama.

She died at the age of 97 on August 14.

Kusama’s art often featured polka dots, yellow pumpkins, and immersive infinity mirror rooms.

On August 15, “the Bionic Man” Tommy John passed.

He lived to be 83. John was a four time All-Star and played Major League Baseball for 26 seasons. He played between 1963 and 1989. John played for the Cleveland Indians, Chicago White Sox, Los Angeles Dodgers, New York Yankees, California Angels, and the Oakland Athletics.

Hayden Panettiere passed on August 16. She was the youngest on this list at age 36.

She was an actress known for her roles in “Heroes,” “I Love You, Beth Cooper,” and “Remember the Titans.” She was also in “Bring It on: All or Nothing.”

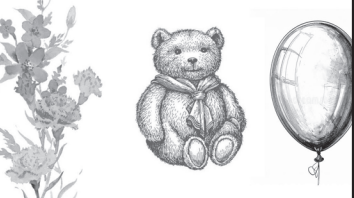
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Fun at the Pool Party



Two pool enjoyers relax on an inflatable crocodile at the BSU pool party.



Above: Four attendees of the BSU pool party pose with Ranger guns on Friday.



A group of partiers at the BSU's pool party play pool basketball.



A partier lays on an inflatable raft while firing a water gun during raft wars at the BSU pool party.



Above: two BSU members sit on an inflatable crocodile while dodging incoming fire during raft wars at the BSU pool party.



A pool-goer shoots for a three-pointer while someone blocks at the Black Student Union's first back-to-school pool party.

Photos by Tierra Green

ENTERTAINMENT

Give your chacters proper motive

By **KEVIN KAUMANS**
Entertainment Editor

Hello everyone. It is me again, your favorite storyteller. Ever since Freshman year, I have been working for the newspaper, writing stories, talking about my favorite genres, and even giving my readers some advice for creating their own stories every now and then.

It is my hope that this advice will encourage students at Northwestern to become better writers and maybe, someday, they will learn to improve their craft and become a well-renowned author whose name will be known centuries from now.

This week, I want to talk about something a character from almost every story should have: Motivation. Whether you are making a book about a lone outlaw, creating a television show about a high school teacher that becomes a crime boss, or a movie about a teenage superhero, motive is what drives the story forward. Without it, there is no reason for anything to happen.

Let us say, for example, you write a story about a peasant boy

in a fantasy world who goes on a magical quest. What would drive this young boy to leave his home and everything he knows behind to go exploring in a dangerous world where he will likely die?

Maybe he needs to find a magic plant that will cure his sick mother who has an unknown illness. Or perhaps he needs to seek revenge for the evil dark lord who killed his father.

If you are not feeling all that creative, you can go the cliché route and make the boy have a dream where someone tells him he is the chosen one and needs to find the magical weapon that will save the world.

Now, when writing a motive for your protagonist, it is important that you make sure it is relevant to the plot. If your main character’s goal does not conflict with the antagonist’s, you need to ask yourself what the point of your story is.

If the main villain and your hero can both get what they want without interfering with each other’s own morals or motives, then what is the conflict? What reason would they have for fighting one another?

Now, notice how I said earlier

how a motive was something almost every story should have. That is because there are instances, few as they may be, where a motive is not required to write a good story. A good example of this at the top of my head is “Blood Meridian”, by Cormac McCarthy. The book’s main character is a young teenager known only as “The Kid” who runs away from his abusive father and eventually ends up joining a gang of outlaws that make money selling scalps of the indigenous people they kill.

The Kid is a blank state. Despite being the protagonist, he does not talk as much as the other members in the Glanton Gang. We are never told his interests, his hobbies or even what he wants out of life.

From what I have described so far, you might think this would make for a poorly written character. After all, how can a story move when your main character has seemingly no real reason for doing anything?

However, I would argue that the Kid having no agency is what makes him so interesting. His whole life has been surrounded in violence; he has never experi-

enced any love or affection from any other human being.

Why would he have any motivation? His whole life has been focused on surviving and nothing else. He jumps from place-to-place, never being able to settle down in one place for long because of his temper.

To him, this gang of scalp hunters who rape and murder innocent men and children is the closest he has ever had to a family.

The Kid does not indulge in the gang’s debauchery because he wants to move up the ranks or out of some sadistic pleasure. If anything, in my own personal interpretation, he seems to approach these heinous acts with indifference.

As I said, his whole life had him raised in violence. In the Kid’s mind, brutally murdering people and then mutilating them for money is no different than getting into a bar fight or getting into a scuffle on the sidewalk.

Even at the end of the novel, when the Kid fully grows up years later after the fall of the Glanton Gang, he seems to be unable to escape his truculent tendencies. Many literary critics over the years have debated the

point of the Kid’s character. Why did McCarthy have him killed by the Judge at the end?

I am abridging a lot of the deeper elements of the Kid’s character here due to being limited to only one page in the newspaper, but I hope I have said enough for you to get what I am saying here, fellow reader.

In rare instances, it is possible for you to write a deep, philosophical story without needing to give your characters much depth to their actions.

That being said, it is important to remember that McCarthy was an experienced author who had decades of experience before he crafted the story of “Blood Meridian”. If you are someone who is new to writing, it is probably best if you stick with the rules of basic storytelling before trying to break the mold.

I hope some of these examples will help you come up with ideas on how to give your protagonist motive for the story. I am excited to see what this semester has in store for all of us. Make sure to pick up a copy of “Northwestern News” every Thursday and check what new topics I have to talk about. Thank you.

The importance of learning multicultural literature

By **KEVIN KAUMANS**
Entertainment Editor

For my senior year here at Northwestern, I am taking a class in multicultural literature with Professor Xan. The textbook for the class contains stories from Asia, Africa, and many other places outside Europe and North America.

See, the problem with the literary canon is how restrictive it is. When you only have some many days out of a semester to teach English, a language that has been around longer than the United States itself, it is reasonable to say that you will probably not be able to talk about every book or short story you want to.

Another problem with the literary canon is that English was not always the inclusive language spoken worldwide like it is today. For a good majority of its life, it could only be read and written by white-skinned European men, and that was only if you were born into a rich family.

This meant, even if you were a white, Christian male, you still probably would not have the privilege of owning a bookshelf unless your family could pay for the privilege of learning the alphabet first.

Nowadays, in our post-colonial world, English is spoken and read in almost every country by every race. However, as I men-

tioned earlier, most non-white authors are not considered part of the literary canon due to writing in English only being accessible to wealthy Europeans up until only a few hundred years ago.

While some might attribute the literary canon’s lack of diverse authors to racism (though I will not completely deny that it might be true to some extent), I feel like the main reason is simply because English was not reachable to many people of different skin tone due to it being a language only the elites of Europe could understand.

Of course, now that English is a language open to all, I think we could see a lot more authors from different races in the near future

who make it into the literary canon.

I believe we will start seeing more fantasy books made up of mythologies outside of Europe and North America. Some will write tales of dead tribes and their culture. Or perhaps they will write the stories they want to write regardless of what they may be expected to right because of their heritage.

The reason I wanted to talk all this is because I believe it is imperative that we as readers start consuming literature from authors all over the world, not just the neighbors in our continents.

Because here is the thing: Even if two countries are a lot alike in, say, their clothing, their

religion or their politics, no two cultures are gonna be the same.

For example, let us say you wanted to visit every group of living Native American tribes across the country.

If you did that, I’m sure you would find that the Choctaws and the Cherokees, while both residing in Oklahoma, do not have the exact same legends or stories they tell one another.

The point I am trying to make here is that every group of people has their own unique ideals and view of how we see the world, whether it be on a small island or a country with hundreds of millions of people.

I encourage all of you to try and read as many different au-

thors from as many ethnicities as possible. Research their customs, their mythology, learn what about them makes them different from everyone else.

Who knows, maybe it will even help give you ideas for a new story. There are thousands of monsters from countries whose mythos I feel is underrated. Monsters whose power and description never thought of before in our own culture.

You could also discover new schools of philosophy that change the way you will think forever. Honestly, the amount of new things you can learn from a single culture is nearly endless. You should count them yourself.

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SPORTS

Can soccer keep winning?

By **OAKLEE FIELDER**
Editor-in-Chief

As the Lady Rangers’ soccer season gets underway, they look to improve from last season, when they had 10 wins, six losses and three ties. Three of their losses last season came in the final four games, when they faced three tough opponents.

Despite their losses to those incredibly tough opponents, they made the GAC Tournament. They lost to Harding University in the first round of the tournament.

In 2026, they have Carla Briscoe running the show again. 2025 was Briscoe’s first year as the Lady Rangers’ head coach, and she turned the program around.

In 2024, the year before Briscoe joined the team, the Lady Rangers went 2-9-7. With only two wins, they were one of the worst teams in the conference.

In Briscoe’s first year, she took the program and turned it into a playoff-contending team.

Now in 2026. The Lady Rangers have eyes on them from around the conference. They are expected to continue being contenders as they enter year two with Briscoe.

Briscoe isn’t the only returning impactful member of the team. Goalkeepers Taylor Annen and Alexa Flores will be the two leading keepers this season.

Defenders Elie Dang, Marisa Chavez, Kamalei Kealoha and Braxtyn Turner return from last year.

Midfielders Jenna Mills, Kato Jo Werner, Emerson Curd and Ja-



Photo by Tierra Green

MacKenzie Hickman, No. 18 for Northwestern Oklahoma State, defends against a Newman University attacker on August 27 in the home opener.

zelle Alvarado return as well. And with more returning players, the team has a strong bond.

The big question is, can they improve from last year? There’s a good chance they can. The Lady Rangers were selected fourth in the Great American Conference Preseason Coaches Poll.

The top four teams were close in the vote points. Harding was first with 31 points. Southwestern Oklahoma State was second with

30 points. Ouachita Baptist was third with 29 points, and Northwestern Oklahoma State had 24 points. Fifth place, Southern Nazarene University, was more than 10 points behind the Lady Rangers.

It’s known who the top teams will be this year; the only question is who will be the top team. The Lady Rangers could easily be the top team if they continue their momentum of growth.

To start the season, the Lady Rangers have won one game and tied another. The Newman University Jets came to Alva hoping for a season-opening win.

The Jets scored the first goal, but it was answered with a goal from Emerson Curd from a free kick. The Lady Rangers had the momentum in the second half, but they ran out of time and settled for a tie.

Rogers State University was

the second matchup for NWOSU, but the Lady Rangers threw down the hammer and took the win. Cambell Tabor scored the lone goal in the Lady Rangers’ second game of the season.

Next on the Lady Rangers’ schedule is William Jewell College in Liberty, Missouri on Wednesday. Then, they come home and play Fort Hays State University on Saturday at 5pm in Alva.

Can volleyball flip the story and take on the GAC?

By **OAKLEE FIELDER**
Editor-in-Chief

The volleyball season has started for the Northwestern Oklahoma State University Lady Rangers. How could this season look for the Lady Rangers?

The 2025 season was rough for the Lady Rangers. They finished with a 6-22 overall record and a 3-13 conference record.

The conference games they won were against East Central University, Southern Nazarene University and the University of Arkansas at Monticello.

Game one in 2025 against East Central University was a close 3-2 game, coming down to a winner-take-all set.

This seasons’ roster has 11 returning players including, Ivanny Blackwood, Ryann Eastes and Jady Padilla. Head coach Jon Bingesser will be the head coach of

the Lady Rangers in 2026. 2025 will be Bingesser’s 5th season as Northwestern’s head

coach. This year, they started off with a 1-3 record after going to the

Southern Invite in Joplin, Missouri. The Lady Rangers faced

Southwest Baptist University, Missouri Southern, Missouri S&T and Northeastern State University.

NWOSU lost the first three, and swept Northeastern State 3-0 to close out the Southern Invite.

The Lady Rangers came home and faced McPherson College on Tuesday. They took down McPherson 3-0.

Northwestern are set to face three New Mexican teams and one Oklahoman team in the Meadow City Classis in Las Vegas, New Mexico.

The teams are Eastern New Mexico University, New Mexico Highlands University, Southeastern Oklahoma State University and Western New Mexico University.

After their trip west to New Mexico, they will face the East Central University Tigers on Tuesday at 6pm in Alva, starting their conference play in 2026.



Photo by Oaklee Fielder

Lady Ranger, Kaylah Thomas, blocks two McPherson College Bulldog attackers on Tuesday night in Alva.