

Enrollment down 10.5%

BY ELISABETH LIVELY
Editor-in-Chief

One year into the COVID-19 pandemic, enrollment at Northeast Texas Community College has dropped significantly, leaving the numbers down 10.5%, an additional 3% down from the fall.

"We were pretty seriously affected," NTCC President Dr. Ron Clinton said.

But NTCC isn't alone in its declining enrollment rates. According to Clinton, community colleges were hit harder by the pandemic than any other form of higher education, primarily due to what makes a community college so communal.

"We take everyone that walks through our doors, and we deal with some of the more at-risk students, economically-disadvantaged students, and those are the

ones who got hit the hardest with the pandemic," he said.

Clinton said when comparing the fall 2019 and fall 2020 semesters, the number of students in online classes versus face-to-face classes were flipped. According to the president, enrollment is down because NTCC is limiting its face-to-face classes.

"In the fall we were down about 7.5% which sounds bad, and it was," Clinton said. "It was not something you want to see in enrollment because that has budgetary implications. And even more importantly than that, it just means that we're not having as many students, and that means that either students are perhaps, hopefully, going somewhere else, but the problem is that some of them are not going anywhere."

See *Budgets*, Pg. 2

Theater program returns to NTCC

BY JOELLE WEATHERFORD
Editor-in-Chief

Drama is making a comeback at Northeast Texas Community College this fall.

After being shut down last year due to COVID-19, the NTCC drama program will resume with three classes being offered in the Fall 2021 semester.

Associate Vice President of Arts and Sciences Anna Ingram said that drama was an important program for the college to bring back after COVID.

"It's been a strong program at NTCC for many, many years so we do need the program back and now is the time to do it," Ingram said.

The college administration has opened applications to hire a new theater faculty member.

Ingram said that the drama department gives students the opportunity to experience theatre, not just as a member of the audience, but also as a part of the production.

"It brings that fine art that so many students are never exposed to. I do think it really brings that element to campus," Ingram said.

Enrollment is now open for the fall and summer semesters.

Students can register for Stagecraft I (DRAM 1330), Acting I (DRAM 1351) and Theater Appreciation (DRAM 1310).



STAFF PHOTO | ELISABETH LIVELY

NTCC culinary students prepare a meal by straining sauce for strawberry shortcake, pulling crab cakes from the oven, and grabbing additional bowls for use during their northeastern cuisine assignment.

Cooking through COVID

BY DOC ANDERSON
Staff Writer

The sun shines through the floor-to-ceiling windows of the restaurant-turned-schoolhouse. This former privately owned business is now home to the Northeast Texas Community College Culinary Arts program.

The students enter through double doors facing main street in downtown Pittsburg, Texas. Each of the students have on their white chef's coat, black and white checkered pants, black headgear and face masks. Together, they look like soldiers arriving for their first formation. They take their seats, socially distanced, and prepare for the day's lesson.

Instructor of Culinary Arts Chef Brenda Young takes her place in front of the class and addresses her brigade.

Last spring, COVID-19 forced the majority of classes online changing the way professors taught and students learned. With this in mind, Young whipped up a new recipe to combat the online-only style provided for students. This recipe combined online learning with at-home meal preparation. Young credits her experiences as a professional chef for the quick thinking used to continue classes.

"As chefs, we have to be able to adapt to variances," Young said. "Sometimes, ingredients run out and it is up to the chef to make the meal work. The meal must be completed, and the quality must be at the highest. This is customer service and word of mouth will make or break you."

See *Culinary*, Pg. 5



STAFF PHOTO | ELISABETH LIVELY

Culinary student Isai Baltazar preps duck breasts for grilling during a recent class.

Eagle Pantry makes its move to new, larger home

BY DOC ANDERSON
Staff Writer

The Eagle Pantry has come a long way since 2018. At its genesis, it was a couple of shelves worth of food. Now, it has its own area of operations with multiple shelves filled with food, hygiene and clothing products.

Since it opened, the Eagle Pantry has provided non-perishable foods and personal care items to current students with valid student IDs at Northeast Texas Community College.

The pantry has continually worked to meet the needs of NTCC students. The pantry has outgrown its first two facilities and is moving locations.

Previously located in the NTCC Wesley Fellowship building, and later the former Physical Fitness

Annex, the Eagle Pantry has found a new home in the former criminal justice classroom located in the Industrial Annex building.

After having the walls painted and carpet laid, the pantry was effectively moved into its new home on March 20.

"We're just super excited and very appreciative of the administration for being able to find us a permanent location," Carmen Shurtleff, faculty advisor of the Eagle Pantry, said. "We are beyond ecstatic."

NTCC President Dr. Ron Clinton said that their new home will be "more permanent" and additionally said, "We don't anticipate moving them again." With the pantry taking over the former criminal justice classroom,

"I get to have an office in there, there's extra storage, the interns

will get an office, and plus, we can load and unload from the back doors," Shurtleff said.

Shurtleff said that she will have another intern from Texas A&M-Commerce joining her in the summer, following the two she had last year.

With this newfound space, the pantry plans to expand its services to also include perishable foods. The pantry is currently using a borrowed freezer to store perishables, but Shurtleff said they are waiting for additional funding to purchase a heavy-duty, commercial refrigerator.

"I'm beyond excited of the possibilities of the added resources that we can have for our students," she said.

Shurtleff said that she is also

See *Pantry*, Pg. 2



STAFF PHOTO | ELISABETH LIVELY

Customer Tyler Stanford looks through some of the items in the pantry.

Quote of the Month:

"Spring is nature's way of saying 'Let's party!'"

- Robin Williams

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Career and Training Expo.....April 23
- East Texas Men in Harmony Concert.....April 24
- Scholarship Fair.....May 7
- Summertime on the Farm.....June 14-24

NEWS

Pantry adds features, prepares for future

Cont. from Page 1

looking forward to adding a “cooking nook” to the pantry’s new facility.

“If a student wanted to come in and bring a Crockpot and cook their meal during the day, and then take it home at night, [they can]. Or also, we’re going to have an air fryer.”

On the virtual side, the pantry’s website, EatBetter4Less.com, provides online assistance for students. Shurtleff said she plans to expand the pantry’s virtual reach by adding services via the internet.

The website offers classes such as How to Eat Better for Less, Cooking Hacks Everyone Needs to Know and Food Pantry Gourmet Meals.

“We’re also going to expand to where we’re going to do some more engaging things with the grant program, EatBetter4Less, so we may have classroom-style things too, like maybe basic cooking, maybe cooking demos, that kind of stuff. So, we will expand,” Shurtleff said.

She is continuing to work out the details of the situation and examine the new amenities and resources.

EatBetter4Less.com was established by the Eagle Pantry last fall using grant funds provided by the League for Innovation in the Community College. On the website, individuals can watch videos and take interactive classes to earn a certificate.

“We are creating more partnerships with the EatBetter4Less program,” Shurtleff said. “We are in the process of going and meeting with those community partners to see how we can activate our program at their agency.”

The pantry is trying to create a comfortable atmosphere for the students

“We’re going to create a very student-friendly environment,” Shurtleff said. “If students want to

come in there and study and hang out a little bit, as long as there’s not a class, that’s what we want, we want students to be more comfortable and using the space.”

Donations for the pantry are welcome in all shapes and sizes. Both student and local civic organizations, as well as individuals, work to fund the pantry and replenish the food on its shelves. Recently, Clinton performed a piano concert in the Whatley to benefit the pantry. The concert brought in over \$2,500, all of which went directly to the pantry.

“There’s been a lot of needs that have come up as a result of COVID,” Clinton said. “But I think in terms of the work that the food pantry has been doing over this past year, there’s been a lot of new needs because of the pandemic and because of the economic situation, not just, obviously, with the college, but with the community. So, I felt like that was an important outreach initiative to support. And there are many others. But I felt like this was good timing to support that initiative.”

Shurtleff said she is grateful Clinton shared his talent with the community to help the students.

“It was a very nice event,” Shurtleff said. “I’m very appreciative that they put that on and that he performed.”

According to Shurtleff, the Eagle pantry has served an estimated 1500 students and has accumulated over 5000 pounds of food since they began. The new location is equipped with a set of double doors in the rear, which allows for a more streamlined donation and delivery system.

The pantry is open every Wednesday from 12:00 P.M. to 5:30 P.M. To donate, email Shurtleff at cshurtleff@ntcc.edu. Non-perishable food, hygiene items, cash donations and gift cards for grocery stores are welcomed. For more information, contact care@ntcc.edu or visit www.EatBetter4Less.com.



STAFF PHOTO | ELISABETH LIVELY

Eagle Pantry customers Tyler Stanford, left, and Johnny Ramirez, right, search the pantry shelves for food to take home. The Eagle Pantry recently relocated to IA 105. The pantry is open each Thursday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Honors Northeast student named Coca-Cola Team Gold Scholar

SPECIAL TO THE EAGLE

Jalyn English, a Presidential scholar at Northeast Texas Community College, has been named a 2021 Coca-Cola Academic Team Gold Scholar and will receive a \$1,500 scholarship.

Students are nominated for the academic team by their college administrators. Selection is based on academic achievement, leadership, and engagement in college and community service.

This program is sponsored by the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation and is administered by Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society.

English serves as President of the Honors Student Council and is Vice-President of the NTCC’s Phi Theta Kappa chapter.

In PTK, he received a STAR Scholarship and was recently inducted into the District III Hall of Honor.

A recipient of the 2021 Eckman Award and the 2020 Chitsey Award, English was the first winner of the James and Elizabeth Whatley Honors Endowed Scholarship for leadership, public service, and academics.

He is the producer of the State of Texas Caldwell-Award-winning film on Adina De Zavala and the director/producer of this year’s Webb Society Chapter Award-winning film “PILGRIMage: a Story aBOUT Northeast Texas.”

English was on a panel with fellow Honors Northeast scholars at the yearly meeting of the National Collegiate Honors Council that highlighted the benefits from the production of a feature-length film within an honors program. English’s contribution to the presentation covered how he conquered his fears, gained skills, and grew as a leader in his position.

Dr. Andrew Yox, NTCC Honors Director, congratulated English for his hard work.



Jalyn English

“Speaking on K-Lake, at the National Collegiate Honors Council, in Austin for a session of the Texas State Historical Association, and even at the Franklin County Alamo Mission Museum Association, Jalyn has been a great ambassador for NTCC, and for what our students here can accomplish,” Yox said. “Among many other accolades, our 2020 Chitsey Award winner was also the producer and director of two of our most recent award-winning films, on Adina De Zavala, and Bo Pilgrim.”

The Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation sponsors the Coca-Cola Academic Team program by recognizing 50 Gold, 50 Silver, and 50 Bronze Scholars with over \$200,000 in scholarships annually.

Each scholar also receives a commemorative medallion. Coca-Cola Academic Team members will be recognized in a virtual ceremony and internationally during Phi Theta Kappa’s virtual annual convention, PTK Catalyst, April 8-10, 2021.

“Hard-working and conscientious, Jalyn certainly deserves this honor,” Dr. Melissa Fulgham, lead advisor for the Phi Theta Kappa chapter said. “He’s excelled at NTCC, taking advantage of opportunities available in the Honors Program as well as Phi Theta Kappa. It will be exciting to see him recognized at upcoming national award ceremonies.”

Budgets cut as enrollment drops

Cont. from Page 1

Clinton recently created an enrollment task group composed of leaders from various academic and non-academic departments to find a way to boost enrollment.

“It took a while to get into this pandemic mode, and it’s going to take us a while to get out of the pandemic mode,” Clinton said.

At the start of the 2020-2021 school year, the NTCC Board of Trustees anticipated a 10% decline in enrollment as a means of preparing for the uncertain future.

And where there’s low enrollment, budget cuts are sure to follow close behind.

“We had to make about a 10% cut in our budgets, and it was not an easy thing to do,” Clinton said. “So, we ended up, again, having to cut certain parts of our operation budget, but I think we tried to do it in such a way that it affected personnel as little as possible. And then that put us in pretty good shape, really, for the rest of the year to weather these declines that we’re having.”

Due to budget cuts in the fall, the Whatley Center closed its doors to the public for the fall semester, the theater program shut down indefinitely, and Theater Northeast instructor Martin Holden was let go.

“It was a budget impact,” he said. “It was a blow. And it’s one we hope we don’t have to do again anytime soon.”

Last spring, NTCC received \$500,000 from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, or CARES Act, as provided by the federal government. Clinton said they are expecting at least the same amount this semester from the new Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, known as the CRRSA Act.

In addition, following Governor Greg Abbott’s announcement that the state will no longer be responsible for requiring masks, the college stated that masks will continue to be enforced while on campus throughout the spring semester. Clinton said the college made their decision based on safety precautions set by the Center for Disease Control and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

“It’s going to be a little bit bumpy, I think, getting out of the pandemic, in terms of when do you pull the trigger, when do the masks come off, when does the social distancing come off,” Clinton said.

Nevertheless, Clinton said he’s optimistic about the upcoming semester.

“I wish I had a crystal ball,” he joked. He later said, “We’re hoping by the fall semester that we’ll be back to a more normal routine.”

Honors program releases 9th film

SPECIAL TO THE EAGLE

The Northeast Texas Community College Honors Program recently hosted a premiere for its ninth feature-length student film. This year’s film, “PILGRIMage, a Story aBOUT Northeast Texas,” examines the story of Bo Pilgrim, the founder of Pilgrim’s Pride.

The Honors Northeast film explores the various facets of Pilgrim’s life and his legendary impact. The script for the film is based on an original interpretation of the Pilgrim story pursued by the scholars of Honors Northeast, and the local Webb Society, a collegiate auxiliary of the Texas State Historical Association.

The testimony of several former Pilgrim executives, and workers, as well as community leaders helped to shape the final script. The feature-length film was further enabled by the patrons of Honors Northeast, such as Jerald and Mary Lou Mowery of Mount Vernon, and administrative help at NTCC.

Cade Bennett stars as Bo Pilgrim. He had previously presented his perspective on Pilgrim at the fall meeting of the state Webb Society. Brian Ramirez served as both the producer, and the unit production director of the film.

Presidential Scholar, NTCC’s Caldwell-Award winning film on Adina De Zavala, is the film’s director.

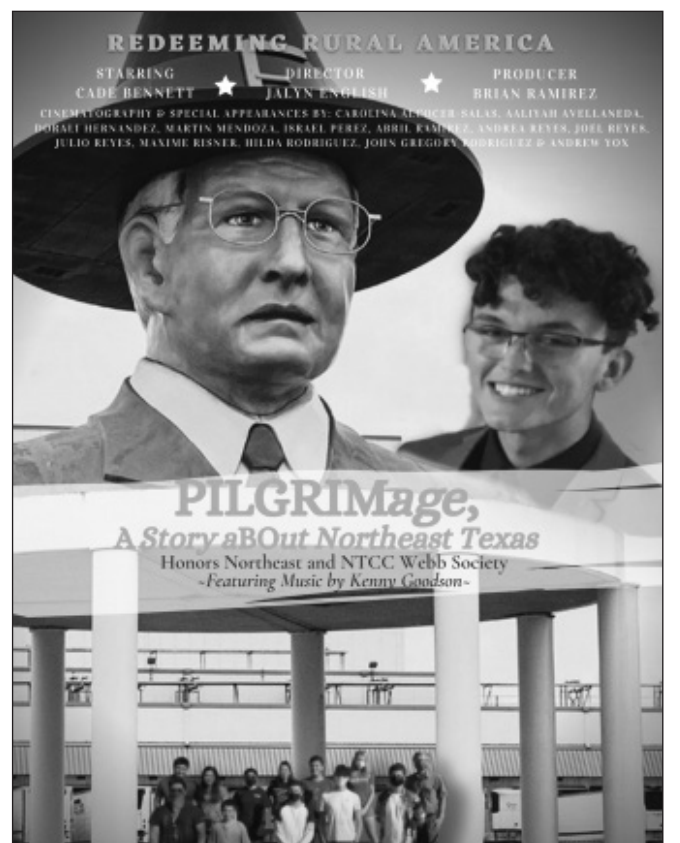
“This year’s Pilgrim film, born in the midst of our COVID summer of 2020, owes much to different groups of supporters, coming though at key moments,” Honors Director Dr. Andrew Yox said. “A particularly memorable turning point came last July when a Snapchat community led by Brian Ramirez spearheaded the idea that a more-or-less traditional film could be produced.

“We did have to work with some restrictions, but the enthusiasm of students, patrons, and administrators carried us safely through a difficult period.”

The cast includes Maxime Risner as Patty Pilgrim, Andrea Reyes as both Pilgrim’s grandmother, Ada, and mother, Gertrude and Carolina Alcocer-Salas as Carol Countryman, an anti-Pilgrim reporter.

Doralí Hernandez and John Rodriguez appear in a variety of roles. Alcocer-Salas, Hernandez, Ramirez, and Risner managed to cover the cinematography, as each also had other important roles.

Martin Mendoza appears as Pilgrim executive, Cliff Butler, with Abril Ramirez appearing as a Pilgrim’s worker.



COURTESY PHOTO

The student film, “PILGRIMage, A Story aBOUT Northeast Texas,” recently debuted on campus.

Yox takes on the role of Pilgrim’s competitor, Don Tyson. Aaliyah Avellaneda, Hilda Rodriguez, and Israel Perez appear at the end of the production as film scholars.

The production was rescued from a last-minute actor-deficit by the Reyes family. Julio Reyes plays the role of Pat Johns who first partnered with the Pilgrim brothers, and Joel Reyes, as brother, Aubrey Pilgrim.

For the second time, the NTCC film featured an original film score. Kenny Goodson, a local composer as well as a former tech and band director, coordinated with the students, to provide accompanying music.

For more information contact Yox at ayox@ntcc.edu.

NEWS

The Eagle staff wins 38 TIPA awards

SPECIAL TO THE EAGLE

The Eagle newspaper recently won 38 awards in various journalism competitions at the 2021 Texas Intercollegiate Press Association on March 26.

The awards included 15 first place awards, 10 second place awards, seven third place awards and five honorable mentions.

The TIPA conference is normally held in-person, but COVID-19 restrictions caused the event to be held virtually through Zoom.

During the conference, The Eagle staff had the opportunity to participate in media-related workshops taught by professionals in their field before watching the award ceremony.

“This year’s TIPA was a different experience for us,” Editor-In-Chief Joelle Weatherford said. “I’m very proud of our team and can’t wait to see how we do in the fall at TCCJA.”

The awards that were announced at the conference were based on the student work from the spring, summer and fall 2020 semesters, half of which took place in the peak of the COVID pandemic, when schools, stores and restaurants closed their doors indefinitely.

While the pandemic also closed newsrooms for many colleges and universities across Texas, The Eagle staff continued to pursue their work from home. The entire third issue of spring 2020 was designed by Editor-in-Chief Elisabeth Lively from her home.

“And I hope I never have to do it again,” Lively said with a laugh. “It was a difficult and tedious process, and I’m grateful to be back in the newsroom with my co-editor by my side as we work together to deliver news and design The Eagle.”

Eagle Adviser Mandy Smith said she is proud of the things the staff accomplished during and after the COVID lockdowns.

“This year’s 38 awards were really special

as our staff still tries to find our way out of the past craziness of the coronavirus pandemic,” Smith said. “Last year’s Eagle staff faced a difficult challenge when we were hit with COVID-19 and the college shut down all face-to-face classes after spring break. The decision to move all classes online didn’t stop our editors though. They stepped up and continued meeting virtually each week and even worked from home to produce the last issue of the newspaper for the spring semester. Our co-editors hard work and determination continued into the fall when they learned that the staff would only be allowed to produce one printed newspaper for each semester. Again, the fact that they could not print did not deter them as they continued to lead the Eagle staff to produce online issues of the paper.”

That hard work paid off for one editor when Lively won Reporter of The Year in the two-year schools category.

“Seeing my name flash on the screen in big letters was a bit of a surreal moment,” Lively said. “I’m honored by this award and want to give a big thanks to my adviser and friend Mandy Smith and my high school journalism coach Cassi Crane for encouraging me to better my skills and develop new talents. I don’t know what step I’ll be taking next to further my career, but I’m sure this award will help me do it.”

This semester is the last that Lively and Weatherford will be attending at NTCC. Weatherford plans to receive her associate degree this May and become a freelance copy editor. Lively received her associate degree in December and is planning to transfer to a university in the fall to receive a bachelor’s degree.

Meetings for The Eagle Newspaper are held every Wednesday in Humanities 108 at 1:00 p.m. The Eagle is looking for writers, photographers, videographers, designers and cartoonists.



COURTESY PHOTO

The spring 2021 Eagle staff. From top left: Jade’ Woods, Mandy Smith, Eagle adviser, Joelle Weatherford and Doc Anderson. From bottom left: Ethan Wims, Elisabeth Lively, Gage Stockinger and Skylar Fondren.



STAFF PHOTO | ELISABETH LIVELY

Joelle Weatherford, editor-in-chief, and Adviser Mandy Smith celebrate Weatherford’s 3rd place win for sports page design. The Eagle staff won 38 awards at the 2021 Texas Intercollegiate Press Association conference for their journalistic work in the 2020 academic year.

Eagle TIPA Awards

Reporter of the Year (Two-year schools) - Elisabeth Lively

1st – Cartoon strip - Elisabeth Samel

1st – Literary magazine cover design - Kaitlyn Wells

1st – Newspaper cover design - Elisabeth Lively

1st – Critical review - Elisabeth Lively

1st – Editorial - Emma Yeager

1st – Editorial cartoon - Kachina Swafford

1st – Environmental portrait - Serenity Mitchell

1st – Feature page design - Elisabeth Lively

1st – Feature photo - Elisabeth Lively

1st – Feature story - Elisabeth Lively

1st – Illustration - Kachina Swafford

1st – In-depth reporting - Elisabeth Lively

1st – Special edition design (print) - Joelle Weatherford, Elisabeth Lively

1st – Sports action photo - Elisabeth Lively

1st – Sports feature photo - Elisabeth Lively

2nd – Breaking News - Elisabeth Lively

2nd – Editorial cartoon - Elisabeth Samel

2nd – Environmental portrait - Serenity Mitchell

2nd – Feature page design - Joelle Weatherford, Elisabeth Lively

2nd – Feature story - Emma Yeager

2nd – General news - Elisabeth Lively

2nd – Overall design (literary magazine) - Joelle Weatherford, Elisabeth Lively

2nd – Overall design (newspaper) - Joelle Weatherford, Elisabeth Lively

2nd – Photo story - Elisabeth Lively

2nd – Sports action photo - Elisabeth Lively

3rd – Newspaper cover design - Joelle Weatherford, Elisabeth Lively

3rd – General column - Elisabeth Lively

3rd – General news - Elisabeth Lively

3rd – General news multimedia story - Stefanie Kirschke, Elisabeth Lively

3rd – Headline writing - Elisabeth Lively

3rd – Photo story - James Buckley, Joelle Weatherford, Elisabeth Lively

3rd – Sports page design - Joelle Weatherford

Honorable Mention - Cartoon strip – Kachina Swafford

Honorable Mention - Critical review – Davin Whatley

Honorable Mention - Headline writing – Joelle Weatherford

Honorable Mention - Opinion page design – Elisabeth Lively

Honorable Mention - Sports feature photo – Serenity Mitchell

Student art on display in Whatley center foyer

BY ELISABETH LIVELY
Editor-in-Chief

Art is taking over the Whatley Center after a year-long period of closure. Northeast Texas Community College reopened the doors to the multi-use facility in early March, when it hosted the Mount Pleasant Art Society’s annual art show.

Currently, the Student Art Show is on display in the Whatley’s foyer.

“I feel great, this is good [and] the students are excited,” Debbie Strong, professor of art, said.

The art is collected from numerous art

classes, including art appreciate, design, ceramics, photography, and digital media. Mediums on display include ceramics, graphite, colored pencil, acrylic, digital, watercolor and more.

“It’s pretty amazing that the variety of what these students can produce, even though the assignment might be one way, like do something that you observe,” Strong said. “It’s just what everybody’s vision of what they observe in an object is going to make it different.”

The art show is free and will be on display until Tuesday, May 4. For more information contact Strong at dstrong@ntcc.edu.



Northeast Texas Community College



College

Host

**EatBetter4Less
Community Event**

Garden Demo
Free Kid Games
Free Pallet Herb Garden

APRIL 24TH 1-4 PM
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NEWS

Scholars present works at Honors Council

SPECIAL TO THE EAGLE

Recently, the Northeast Texas Community College Honors Society managed a robust showing at the spring meeting of the 2021 Great Plains Honors Council.

The conference, hosted virtually by the Redwine Honors Program at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas, featured qualifying students from universities and colleges in the area from Nebraska and Missouri down to Texas. NTCC had 14 students qualify in the college's 14th year of participation, a record for the college.

Two NTCC students were involved in special panel discussions with students from other colleges, and gave oral presentations on zoom. Brian Ramirez, the unit production director, and producer of the recently premiered film on Bo Pilgrim, discussed the making of the NTCC Honors film.

John G. Rodriguez, one of NTCC's two Boe nominees as determined by the NTCC Honors Committee, presented his paper on Hispanic Quietism in Texas. Rodriguez delineated differences between the historic positions of Hispanics in California and Texas.

NTCC's Professor of Health & Physical Education Dr. Tom Seabourne was the subject of a spirited vodcast by James Dickson. Dickson juxtaposed Seabourne's many athletic feats and books supporting better health with the current sensibility of athleticism in American culture. This culture, ironically according to Dickson, gravitates to "spotlight sports," which

actually are inimical to health. Dickson has received some offers that would attach his video with established websites.

Health has indeed been an important idiom in NTCC's recent student research. Maxime Risner and Dorali Hernandez presented their Caldwell-Award winning works on the disenchantment of a rural veterinarian, and the showcase successes of two turn-of-the-21st-century nurses, Cynthia Amerson, and Karen Timmons.

Nallely Gutierrez presented her poster displaying the history of nursing during the 20th century, with an emphasis on the "sudden surge" in professional care that occurred for a variety of factors in the 1970s. Jansen Laney presented his work on the once famous Texan TV-host of health, Dr. Red Duke.

Besides Quinones, NTCC also had two "veteran" presenters, Katelyn Lester, and Jalyn English. Lester came in second in the virtual 2020 McGraw Hill Poster Contest, and English gave a museum talk in Franklin County on NTCC's Conrad film.

Both Lester and English presented at the National Collegiate Honors Council this past Nov. and in Austin last year in March for the state Webb Society.

Both also presented on secondary topics. At the GPHC, Lester presented work on neo-medieval symbols in modern culture. English detailed a remarkable tie between the City of Gladewater, and the great 1950s singer, Elvis Presley.

Other scholars who contributed to NTCC's Bo Pilgrim film research also won acceptance with the GPHC. Israel

Perez presented his thesis on how Bo Pilgrim embodied the "Protestant Work Ethic."

Hilda Rodriguez detailed the "domestic isolationism" of an anonymous Hispanic immigrant, and how this type of isolation, especially with females contributes to a lack of civic involvement.

NTCC's Cypress Bank Scholar, Cade Bennett, gave a spirited and highly focused story of how capitalism in Texas has powered innovation. Compared to the universities whose innovations are peripheral, Texas corporations and investors have bequeathed to the world three legendary innovations: the integrated circuit, the artificial heart, and fracking.

Honors Northeast Director and Professor of History Dr. Andrew Yox gave his congratulations to all the honors students who presented on a job well done at this year's Council conference.

"Our 2020-21 honors cohort has been a special, and uniquely talented group," Yox said. "Presenting side-by-side with university and college students coming from the whole region between the Brazos and Platte rivers, our NTCC group was impressive by its size, success and by the general acuity levels of the student vodcasts. Our students were all good, and I believe any one of them could win our upcoming McGraw Hill Poster contest at the Whatley on May 7."

Anyone interested in the research projects presented, many of which featuring local and regional themes, should feel free to contact, Yox at ayox@ntcc.edu.

MyEagle Portal adds new chatbot

BY GAGE STOCKINGER
Staff Writer



Last Fall, students may have noticed a new addition to the school website in the form of a small blue square on the lower right-hand corner, enticing them to sit down and have a chat.

This blue square is Northeast Texas Community College's newest addition, called a chatbot. This bot created by Erika Garza, director of Title V, Sebastian Barron, director of computer and technical services, and Austin Baker, online help desk/virtual one-stop specialist, is programmed to take any question related to a specific department that is commonly asked and relay an answer to that question back to the student.

NTCC is one of the first colleges to develop the chatbot with Jenzabar, a company that provides software for higher education institutions, and plays a critical role in future chatbot developments in higher education facilities.

The A.I. that this bot possesses will match the problem a student faces with the most similar question asked and respond with the answer that matches the best.

However, if the question proves to be too unfamiliar or unrelated to any of

the departments, the bot may just leave this question unanswered. In such a situation, students will still be given the option to "Ask a Human" in which the online help desk and virtual one-stop specialist will be readily available when the bot cannot pull through.

"The artificial intelligent chatbot helps students virtually answer questions over admissions, financial aid, advising, and other departments to help reduce the onslaught of emails and calls each department gets with repetitive questions," Garza said. "The chatbot allows us to provide 24/7 service to the students and give them the ability to self-serve around the clock."

For improvements on the bot,

students are encouraged to ask questions that they may have for the college so that chatbot can learn more and become a better tool for those to come.

"The chatbot questions rolling in have allowed us to find trouble spots by identifying common issues our students are having," Garza said. "It has given us the ability to identify areas on our website that need improvement based on the questions."

In addition, when the bot answers a question properly or fails to respond, it will still be scrutinized and will tweak its questionnaire database so that information will be more discoverable and available to users.

While this bot is still unnamed, the developers are always looking for suggestions and can be contacted through success@ntcc.edu for feedback on what students may want implemented or be improved. The college staff are working on new projects to better connect NTCC and improve workflow.

Signal Vine is another project being worked on by campus staff and will allow for students to communicate one-on-one through a text messaging platform.

For more information, contact Garza at egarza@ntcc.edu.

Students win Britt Poster Awards

SPECIAL TO THE EAGLE

For the sixth and seventh time in NTCC history, scholars of Honors Northeast have won Britt Poster Awards of the Great Plains Honors Council.

Aaliyah Avellaneda, a first-year student, won in the social science division for first and second-year students, while Martiza Quinones won in the STEM division for the same freshman-sophomore category.

There are only four Britt Awards each year in the lower division. The awards come with a \$100 check and a special plaque. The GPHC encompasses some eighty honors programs in colleges and universities from Nebraska and Missouri south to Texas.

The association, that promotes the regions' uplift in honors education, dates back to 1975.

Avellaneda presented her Caldwell-Award winning work on Northeast Texas' former state senator, Bill Ratliff. Quinones, a previous winner of a State of Texas Caldwell Award, presented her scholarship on infertility. Avellaneda showed how Ratliff functioned as a Texas Ticketsplitter, cultivating a mysterious and alluring political identity in an age of polarization.

Quinones argued that infertility is an overlooked global problem that is getting worse, because of its unperceived,



Maritza Quinones



Aaliyah Avellaneda

multi-dimensional nature.

"I have been so impressed by the fierce work ethic of both Avellaneda, and Quinones," Honors Director Dr. Andrew Yox said. "They have finely tuned schedules, and lives that cannot tolerate much in the realm of wasted time, or error. And yet for their poster videos, they suddenly lit up with so much verve and energy. It was so exciting to witness their excitement, and their mastery in scholarship. Their posters also were attractive, and compelling."

To learn more, contact Yox at ayox@ntcc.edu.

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NEWS

Alpha Mu Chi wins 6 international awards

By Doc Anderson
Staff Writer

Northeast Texas Community College's chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, Alpha Mu Chi, participated in the PTK international virtual convention, Catalyst, on April 8-10, and returned with four major awards. Alpha Mu Chi competes against 1,300 other chapters in 10 different countries.

"We were recognized as a Top 100," Dr. Melissa Fulgham, professor of History, Division Chair for Social Sciences, and PTK faculty advisor said. "We made that, out of 1,300. We were also named as a distinguished chapter internationally, which puts us in the top 20."

Alpha Mu Chi received the Top 100 Chapters Award, Distinguished Chapter Award, Distinguished Honors in Action Award and Distinguished College Project. Advisers Matthew Lambert and Andrea Reyes also won the Paragon Award for New Advisers.

Alpha Mu Chi is a Five Star Chapter. To maintain their Five Star status, the chapter is required to meet and maintain a specific criteria. This criteria centers around improving the conditions of the local community and the world. The awards for Distinguished Honors in Action and Distinguished College Project met this criteria.

"Some of the things we do that are entered into competition, the two main categories, are an honors in action and college project," Fulgham said. "Scholarly research is done on an issue and then comes up with a project."

Since COVID-19 restrictions moved most learning online, Alpha Mu Chi researched the accessibility aspect of online learning for those with disabilities, especially for those with visual impairments.

"Since everything went online, there was a whole segment of the population that was disadvantaged," Fulgham said. "It

doesn't work. The so-called ADA and the compliance requirements are not actually being met."

In addition to their international awards, Alpha Mu Chi attended the Texas Regional Convention virtually in March. The chapter also successfully campaigned for the Texas Region District III vice president position. The elected representative, Cade Bennett, will take part in leadership training, public speaking opportunities and travel throughout the state.

"Being able to see the vast amount of leadership and effort that goes into making the regional convention happen was truly incredible," Bennett said. "I'm extremely honored to follow in the former vice president's footsteps, and I'm so excited for the next year of serving the Texas Region."

Carolina Alcocer-Salas, chapter president, was among seven Texas chapters that presented a poster about their projects during the convention. The chapter placed in the yearbook contest with a "Fractured Fairytales from a Fractured Year" theme and will receive a scholarship to the Texas Honors Institute held in the summer.

"I had a great time at PTK Texas Regional Convention," Alcocer-Salas said. "Our chapter won a bunch of awards. We are the number three chapter in the state. We took second in the chapter yearbook contest. We had several students and advisors inducted into the Hall of Honor."

In addition, chapter member Brian Ramirez received the Outstanding Friend of Texas for exceptional service to Alpha Mu Chi.

"Brian dedicated many hours of service to the chapter and was instrumental in the completion of the documentary for the Honors in Action Project," Andrea Reyes, co-advisor of Alpha Mu Chi, said.

Upon learning that he won the award, Brian said, "I felt immense joy because I was finally getting recognized for my selfless



COURTESY PHOTO

NTCC's chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, Alpha Mu Chi, celebrated the first general session of the international conference, Catalyst, at Adviser Melissa Fulgham's house with pizza. From left, Cade Bennett, Elisabeth Lively, Melissa Fulgham, Rickey Jones, Israel Perez, Jennifer Buckley, Melina Medel, Bryan Ramirez, John Rodriguez, Brooke Clifton and Carolina Alcocer-Salas.

efforts because once you become an adult, recognition doesn't come often enough."

The 23 awards received by the chapter include District III Regional Officer position, Texas Top Chapter, Most Distinguished Chapter - Second Finalist, Honors in Action Award of Merit Theme 6, College Project Award of Merit, Five Star Chapter, Honors in Action and College Project participation award and Yearbook Award.


Additional awards include Texas Regional Hall of Honor for Outstanding Officers for Carolina Alcocer-Salas and Corinne Suits, Texas Regional Hall of Honor for Outstanding Advisors for Matthew Lampert and Andrea Reyes, as well as District 3 Hall of Honor for eight chapter members and

three advisers.

Fulgham expressed her admiration and amazement of the caliber of students she works with in Alpha Mu Chi.

"Amazing, exceptional and incredible students end up here at NTCC," Fulgham said. "I always feel like we are like a unicorn of colleges. There is nothing like NTCC students. For as little as we are, a little college in the middle of nowhere, and we are competing against colleges in Boston and Austin."

To learn more about Phi Theta Kappa at NTCC, email mfulgham@ntcc.edu or visit www.ptk.org. Chapter meetings are held every Tuesday at 12:30 p.m. via Zoom and on campus in SUB 101.



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Culinary students find way around pandemic

Cont. from Page 1

The individual students were made part of the lesson plan. Young conducted her online lessons through Zoom. After the traditional classroom sessions were complete, recipes were introduced to the students, who were then able to choose which recipe they wanted to prepare. The students searched their own pantries for ingredients they had on hand.

This technique allowed for substitution and improvisation. Each student completed their recipes on time and presented them over Zoom. Pictures of the students during the preparation of the meals were submitted via email at the end of each lesson, ensuring the meal was prepared by the person the recipe was assigned to.

"I was surprised at the recipe selection. Each student picked time consuming recipes that challenged them during a trying time," Young said.

Day in and day out the students showed up online with their fully prepared meals. Culinary student Lynnette Bonner spoke about the difficulties she faced during the COVID-19 shutdown.

"I wasn't able to get certain meats, produce or spices due to everything being shut down. So, I had to improvise to create dishes. I guess that's what it means to become a chef," Bonner said. "I feel so grateful and ecstatic that I made it through one of the craziest years of my life."

A year removed from the mandatory lockdowns that changed the face of higher education, colleges and universities have begun implementing socially-distanced classroom learning. The culinary arts program is back in the kitchen, and Program Director Chef Charles Reeves is glad to be back at the schoolhouse.

"I've always thought culinary needs to be face-to-face," Reeves said. With three new



COURTESY PHOTO

NTCC culinary student Lynnette Bonner presents the turkey tenderloin she cooked during the pandemic lockdown.

students in the culinary arts program Reeves is optimistic about their potential. In fact, the chef called the students some of "the best in the world."

COVID-19 forced students and faculty to adapt to an impossible and unprecedented situation. Converting all learning to an online format is a formidable call. A call that was answered by professors and students around the world.

The ability to adapt to the unfamiliar is a useful survival tool. COVID just provided the testing ground needed to harness that said tool.

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ENTERTAINMENT

THE MANY NOODLES OF RAMEN

BY ETHAN WIMS

Standard chicken flavor, kind of salty. I thought this would be more fun right in this very moment, but I'm trying to keep in mind that it's the first one. But I can't lie I'm a little excited to try the "deluxe looking" ones. What does that say about me?



Noodles feel lighter, not as salty. Noodles also look a little darker. Not sure if that has anything to do with the overall product, what I wanted it to be notated in case they end up being toxic. Side note: took a small peanut butter break as a pallet cleanser. So far it's the best part of this review.



Curious to see if the less-salty taste is true of brand with this one. In a total rookie move, I accidentally poured boiling water on my hand while trying to fill the Cup of Noodles. Noodles seem lighter and not as salty. Brand consistent. The carrot bits, corn, and the green bits are a nice touch. Aside from the texture of the corn, it doesn't really enhance the flavor much. I plated this one, but realized that might've been a mistake. I'll keep the next one in the cup the whole time to see if that could possibly make a difference.



This one is The. Classic. It's got the satisfying weird 70s feel to the logo and the handy dotted line on the top that's a marker for how far back to pull the top before pouring the hot water in. Noodles are nice and springy. It actually tastes like chicken. Leaving it in the styrofoam cup helps a lot. This is what winning tastes like.



This comes in three separate pouches. Fancy. Okay, so, not noodles at all. As it, clearly, states in its name it's Wonton Soup. Once made there's not a whole lot of soup to be had, but it's cute. So I would call this the quirky part of the adventure, but since it's not a noodle, it's going to be its own honorable mention.



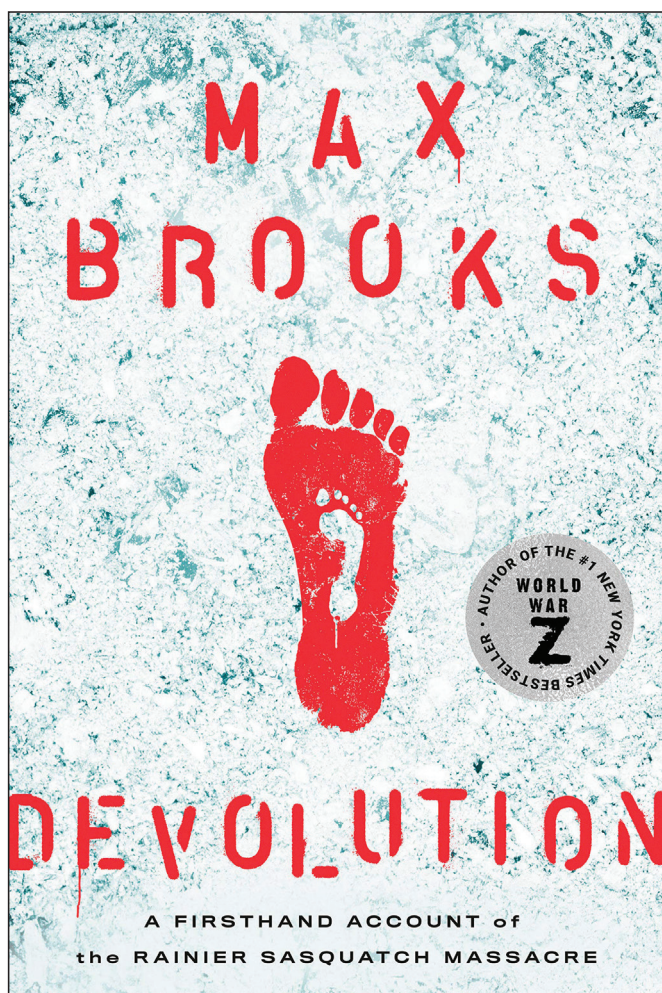
Going to say this right off the bat, kind of underwhelming. The noodles were a little bit longer which was nice and the spicy kick to it was pleasurable. But the only other additive was some cabbage and that ended up kind of globing itself together into one big mush. The seasoning was its strength, but it's not enough to save it in the end.



The Winner?

Nissin Cup Noodles Chicken!
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Bigfoot legend comes to life in tale of survival



'Devolution' makes even a skeptic believe in this epic battle for survival between man and beast.

BY DOC ANDERSON
Staff Writer

As a child, I was infatuated with all things paranormal. From the Loch Ness Monster to little green men from outer space, I was obsessed. But, I questioned the plausibility of these supernatural entities. How could, logistically speaking, an enormous sea-dwelling dinosaur exist in the confines of a man-made lake? If extraterrestrials do exist, what is with all the probing? They obviously have vastly superior technology. Why resort to such a remedial investigation technique? None of these monsters fascinated me more than Bigfoot. The reason? Bigfoot was the most reasonable of the bunch. I mean, we discover new species of animals all the time. Max Brooks' epic novel, "Devolution" sets the stage for Bigfoot's entry into the mainstream. Bigfoot does exist, and she is not alone. "Devolution" is told through the eyes of an investigative journalist who is researching the fictional events of "the Rainier Sasquatch Massacre." Mount Rainier is located in the western part of Washington state. It is an active volcano that is consistently covered in snow at its peak. I have personally visited Mt. Rainier and if Bigfoot exists, she definitely resides in the Pacific Northwest. The forest is incredibly dense, with lots of shaggy overhang and unkempt verdant

underbrush that would provide many perfect places to hide. The book takes place during the fictional eruption of Mt. Rainier when the tiny five-house town of Green Loop is cut off from the rest of the world. Green Loop is home to 11 souls, all from different walks of life and much like the movie "The Breakfast Club," each resident brings their own set of experiences to the table. The only problem is, much of their experiences are as academics. All but two of the residents are totally useless in this survival situation. Stranded, afraid and forgotten, the town tries to ration and cultivate their food supply. Little did they know, another displaced group was heading their way, and all of its members are survival experts. Much like the town of Green Loop, the Bigfoot troop, led by their female leader Alpha, are forced to adapt to survive. Following deer, rabbits, and mountain lions, they inadvertently stumble upon the humans. The recounting of the ensuing battle is told through the journal of one of Green loops residents, Kate. The final battle culminates in an epic showdown between the town of Green Loop and the Bigfoot troop. I was unable to suspend disbelief as the author described the reactions of the townspeople to their ancient and much stronger foes. The majority of the people in this town were more concerned with harming the

newly discovered primates than they were with their own survival. I agree, people in our country are concerned with the wrong issues right now. But, hunger and survival changes people. If you deny someone food, water, or safety long enough, they will become animals and fight tooth and nail for these basic necessities. Naturally, I put myself in this situation. Since bias is in the eye of the beholder, I was yelling, out loud, at these fictional characters. I would have immediately begun to craft weapons, reinforce the perimeter and set traps. They did not. After talking the scenario over with a few friends, I realized I am a crazy person. Not everyone thinks the way I think. With that in mind, I went back to the book and began to sympathize with the characters. Imagine being told your whole life, that Bigfoot is not real. Then, imagine seeing with your own eyes, not one, but seven Bigfoots. Bigfeet? You know what I mean. All they had was their intellect and the ability to deny, deny, deny. And denial can be very comforting. "Devolution" is an excellent read. Chock full of intelligent fight scenes and high levels of improvisational warfare. Sometimes, in order to survive, you must put aside your civility and become the primitive animal that resides in us all. Like Shakespeare wrote, "Cry havoc, and let slip the dogs of war."

FEATURE



COURTESY PHOTO

Above, a young Swann poses with a classmate in his Spanish Club at Winnsboro High School in 1960.

Right, Swann takes time to enjoy the scenery while visiting Costa Rica. He said the wagon was “beautiful” and “rustic.”



COURTESY PHOTO

Live, laugh, language Spanish professor recalls life of international culture

BY ETHAN WIMS
Staff Writer

It was 1987 and James Swann was at a crossroads in his life. Having lived in Mexico for 10 years with his wife, Vickie, he knew it was time to come back to Texas, but he wasn't sure exactly what he was going to do once he returned.

He thought about getting back into education, but remembering the first year he taught high school students in Anahuac, outside of Houston in 1966, he feared teaching would remain a challenge for him.

After a year back in the states, Swann started working at Northeast Texas Community College managing bilingual grants and teaching Spanish classes part time.

Then in 1994 he became the full time Spanish instructor. It was then that he truly felt that he was finally able to be a good teacher.

“There’s a lot of theater in teaching, like you’re on a stage,” he said. “And I finally felt like I had some stories to share, and the stories were true and really happened to me, and they pointed out important things about language learning.”

Growing up outside of Winnsboro in a small farming community, Swann first started learning Spanish in high school. He recalled always feeling drawn to the Spanish culture, with Mexico being so close to Texas, and because he thought learning the language would be something that he would enjoy. Swann found that he not only enjoyed it, but also came to understand the Hispanic culture as a whole.

“I have a hard time separating the language from the culture because the language kind of carries the culture,” he said. “Within the language you find the entire psychology and the cosmology of a people.”

Swann remembers growing up as a young farmboy, he found the Hispanic culture to be exotic. That aspect is what first inspired him to learn all he could about Mexico.

By the time he enrolled in college, he knew that he wanted to major in Spanish. He finished his degree and began teaching in Anahuac, but struggled as an educator and only taught for one year.

“I felt it was a failing on my part as a teacher, not the students’ ability to learn,” Swann said.

He gave up teaching and went back to school to work on his master’s degree at Texas Tech. It was during this time that Swann took part in a sponsored trip to Mexico. There he was able to cement his fluency by being completely engaged in the language.

“That was my first long term immersion in the Spanish language,” he said. “The rule of the trip was that if you were caught speaking English you would receive a failing grade, so I had no choice but to completely rely on my years of studying the language before the trip.”

While the challenge was difficult, it was just the push he needed.

“Being able to bring together this verb and that pronoun in a nanosecond is hard,” he explained. “It takes time on task. And the immersion is the task that you need to go through.”

Swann lives what he preaches, believing total immersion in a language is necessary to become fluent. He even remembers the first time he had a complete thought in Spanish that was unintentional.

“I was out in a field somewhere doing some work and this Spanish phrase ran through my head,” he said. “And I thought ‘Oh that’s interesting.’ You finally get to the point where you’re fully involved with the language to where you can think in that language. And then speaking in that language becomes second hand because you’re also thinking in that language.”

He suddenly realized that Spanish was truly becoming his second language and not just a skill he was trying to learn.

“Before that you’re still having to translate from English to Spanish in your head and you can do that really fast, but when you start

thinking in that language that you’re going to use, that’s the big difference,” Swann said.

In his last year in college at Texas Tech, Swann also got into publishing, which merged two great passions in his life, the Hispanic culture and writing. He became active as the managing editor of *La Voz de los Llanos* newspaper. He and his staff not only wrote and published stories, they also became advocates for the Hispanic community.

“It was a bunch of youngish people striving to turn out an 8 to 12 page weekly bilingual paper,” he said. “We wrote stories, went on marches, and initiated some lawsuits related to the treatment of the Hispanics in the public schools in the western side of the state.”

It was also during that same year that he decided to apply for a Rotary International Cultural Exchange Program. He left the paper for three months to go to Chile as the journalism representative for the selected six-man group.

“It was a lot of fun,” he said. “Chile has a marvelous culture, great food, phenomenal wine and lovely people.”

After receiving his master’s, Swann then tried his hand at a couple of different business ventures over the next few years. It was during this time that he met his wife, Vickie.

“I saw her at the wedding of a cousin of mine,” he said. “She was tall, slender, red headed. What else could a young man want? We set up the first date for early December in that year. One word to describe it: Smitten. We have been married since Oct. 11, 1981.”

Swann eventually started selling Mercedes Benz as a way to make some business connections. He felt that those who came in to buy the high-end cars were probably successful people. That’s where he met business entrepreneur, Paul Spinning.

“He was largely in the petroleum business, but he had gotten into timeshare condominium marketing at *Islas del Sol* right on the beach in Mazatlan, Sinaloa, Mexico,” Swann said.

A month after meeting him, Swann started working for Spinning as a salesman but admits he got off to a rocky start from day one.

“The airlines lost all my luggage, eventually paying me \$1,200 for the lost items, and I had to go to the local stores and buy a new wardrobe,” he said.

That first Sunday, Swann went down to the beach in his new clothes and started talking to a few tourists from Chicago.

“I sold a \$100,000 penthouse package,” he recalled with a sly grin on his face. “A year later, I formed a partnership with two nationals and took on the marketing and sales of *The Inn at Mazatlan*.”

Swann’s experience in education served him well since he also used his language and teaching skills to train Mexican national sales representatives and the administration staff. But in the late ‘80s, Swann and Vickie felt the pull toward home and decided it was time to come back to Texas. He went to work at the college the next year and has been sharing his love of the Spanish language ever since.

NTCC President Dr. Ron Clinton fondly remembers taking Swann’s class early on in his first years as a teacher.

“He just made his classes fun,” Clinton said. “I also learned so much about the English language too. One of the things I enjoyed most about his class was the etymology of words, the derivation of words, and he’s just an encyclopedia of not only the Spanish language, but also the English language.”

Former NTCC student Stephania Juarez said Swann brought so much more to the classroom experience because of the heart he has for students.

“Mr. Swann has been a great, great teacher. He’s a person who has so much love for teaching and he inspires all his students to be better,” Juarez said. “I always wanted to be a teacher but Mr. Swann has inspired me beyond that. The love he has for his students is too much. He’s just one of those teachers who leaves a mark on



COURTESY PHOTO

Swann and his wife Vickie donned their traditional Hispanic outfits for NTCC’s annual Scare Affair back in 2009.

a student’s life that lasts forever.”

Associate Vice President of Arts and Sciences Anna Ingram also holds a special fondness for Swann’s abilities as a teacher and as a former boss. She recalled when Swann, division chair for communications, approached her several years ago about taking a temporary faculty position at NTCC.

“He told me it was just a one-year interim position and not to get my hopes up that it would become a full time position, and I said ‘I know, but you never know what it may lead to,’” Ingram said. “We still laugh about that together because I’m still here.”

Ingram said she also views Swann and his wife Vickie as close friends.

“We’ve been on several travel trips together, and they’re a great couple. Over the years we’ve developed a really strong friendship.”

Juarez, former president of NTCC Amigos Unidos Spanish Club, agreed saying that she also felt a close connection with her former teacher.

“He motivates and inspires students. I’m very grateful that I had Mr. Swann’s class because he has been more than just a teacher for me, he has become part of my family,” Juarez said. “He has always been there for me, to help me, to guide me. I’m very thankful for him.”

Swann said he values these types of friendships and looks at them through the lens of the Hispanic culture.

“Relationships there run very deep, and that’s an aspect of that culture that I enjoy very much,” he said.

Juarez said as a friend and a teacher Swann makes an impact on students’ lives.

“He has given his students the most valuable treasure,” she said. “He gave us something that no one can take away from us which is education and knowledge.”

As Swann celebrates 33 years at NTCC, he still feels that there is more to teaching Spanish than just the language. Language and culture combine together to inform or express the culture.

“It’s about teaching the culture. A word or a phrase doesn’t have a lot of power in just the word alone. But in the context of the culture it lives in, that’s when it becomes powerful,” he said.

Swann said that something as simple as a traditional meal can hold a powerful meaning.

“Take food for example. When you talk to a Spanish person about *arroz con pollo*, you aren’t simply talking about a rice and chicken dish,” Swann said. “There’s smiles involved when you talk about it, there’s memories involved when you talk about it, there are good times involved when you talk about it. And you see all that when you talk to someone about something as simple as *arroz con pollo*.”

Reflecting on the way the Spanish culture has shaped his life, Swann thinks back to that early childhood connection that he never could quite explain.

“I had spent a short lifetime observing Spanish and English and how many similarities there are between the two idioms,” he said. “I often say that I have fallen in love and fallen out of love in Spanish. I have drunk too much and also sobered up in Spanish. It has been a large and integral part of my adolescent and adult life.”

LIFESTYLE

City folk *still* don't get it

This is the second installment of the "City folk just don't get it" trilogy. To begin Ethan's journey, read the first article in The Eagle's prior issue, published at ntceagleonline.com.

By ETHAN WIMS
Staff Writer

Upon my first night here, I did some exploring. I mean, that's what you do at your grandparents' house right?

First thing I noticed was many familiar trinkets from my childhood, but not as many as I initially thought. Most things that aren't here anymore are items that various family members have been given or requested to keep, so some of what I found weren't exactly what most people would call treasures. At least not if you don't try to see them in a different way to make them special. Let me explain.

In a desk drawer, I found a Nokia cell phone that was popular in the early 2000s. These were all the rage before smartphones and, as I expected, it's still intact.

Yes, dear friends, I'm talking about one of those kinds of cell phones. The ones that could probably survive being thrown against a wall or even an atomic blast.

Why is it a treasure you may ask? Because I had a very similar one in high school and right away, it brought me back to my 16-year-old self who didn't understand why you'd "text" someone when they were in the same room as you. Why not just talk to them out loud instead of wasting your minutes or whatever it was that texting used up?

Needless to say, younger Ethan was very naive. However, being transported back in time to such a specific memory instantly was almost like seeing an old friend again. A version of myself that I haven't thought about in a long time.

Next came the garage where my Pa kept his "toys." Maybe you've already guessed what I found? If you thought the answer was power tools, then you'd be right.

Nothing extravagant, mind you, but enough items to allow me to make a vinyl record box with some scrap wood to store my collection in. Excuse me, I'm sorry, I think the popular term used nowadays is "repurposed wood," not scraps.

Creating something out of nothing by using the same tools that my grandfather used was a treasure in and of itself, because it made me feel connected to him in a small way. I'd have the same sensation if I knew how to sew and used my grandmother's old sewing machine, but at the time of writing this, I am still just a humble vagabond when it comes to needle and thread.

These items helped my grandparents fill their time and engaged them creatively, which I greatly admire. As fun as it was to find these treasures, they



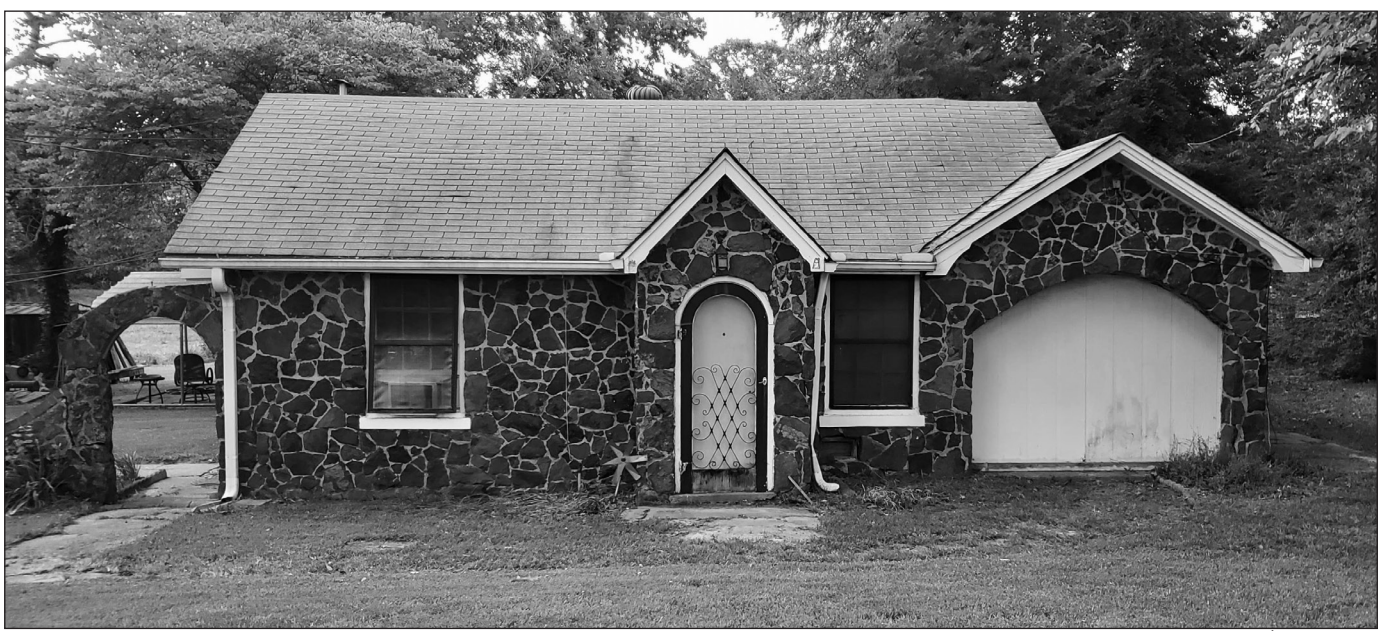
COURTESY PHOTO

A young Ethan plays in the kitchen of his grandparents' house.



STAFF PHOTO | ETHAN WIMS

Ethan's prized treasure find was a Yashica-A camera.



STAFF PHOTO | ETHAN WIMS

Ethan's childhood memories of his Granny and Pa's "Rock House" are even more special now that he calls it home.

just weren't, well, something of myself, if that makes any sense. They weren't things that made me stop and think, "Wow, they were just like me."

Scoping out their bedroom, which I still feel I'm not allowed to go in by the way, a peculiar box caught my eye. It was a small, rectangular box covered in leather with a broken strap. I was surprised at the weight of it when I picked it up and saw that there was a flap that I could open. And that's when I saw myself in my grandparents.

One of my hobbies is photography, and I found an old film camera that sent electricity through my veins inside the leather camera case. The camera is a Yashica-A which was first manufactured in 1959.

It's the kind of camera that you hold

down by your waist because it is a top-down viewport camera. If you look at any movies or TV shows from the '60s you'll easily spot one. What made me super excited about the camera is that, aside from the aperture mechanism not adjusting when you move the slider, everything still seems to be in working order!

And that's when the idea struck me that my task had been presented to me. Fix the camera and capture the world through it, just like they had.

To see the world through the camera's iris like my Granny did, or to beam with pride at a fresh photograph of my children captured by the analog device like my Pa would have is something that truly excites me. It's a passion that I've developed on my own away from them.

In a sense, the camera could be seen as a bridge between my life and theirs, regardless of space or time.

Now, I hate to burst everyone's bubble, but sometimes finding a treasure isn't always a good thing. Just ask the people who discovered King Tut's tomb back in 1922.

I'm sure they'd tell you that they found marvelous things, were they not also petrified at the perceived reality of the curse that was said to lay upon those who disturbed the departed king. And while I didn't find anything shiny and valuable like that, I did find something equally as terrifying.

Keep an eye out for the next issue of The Eagle to read the last installment of the story.

A plunge into the pool of righteous living: a faith story

By N'JOSHUA CONAWAY
Guest Writer

Wassup to whoever's eyes this so happens to catch.

My name is Josh Conaway. I suppose I'm acutely aware my name will be printed somewhere in this article, so I guess providing my name is just me being formal.

I'm not sure who this article will come by, but on any other occasion I wouldn't have even told you my name. But this in some fashion is a special occasion.

What special occasion might that be? One, the fact that I'm writing. Two, the fact that I'm doing anything extracurricular. And third, and most importantly, this article is me being Spirit led and obedient to the Holy Spirit.

I'd usually save something like this for a deep heart-to-heart conversation with just about anyone who I felt was sincere, and I was comfortable with telling my "up to this point" life story.

After moving to Mount Pleasant from Dallas in 2017 to attend Northeast Texas Community College, I've learned two facts about myself that I didn't know before that I guess I need to know now.

First off, by what the few folks down here that I've grown close to have told me, I'm a "City Boy." Not sure how this directly applies or affects me, but I guess it seems important because I've added it to this column and I have heard that statement repeated a lot in the past four years.

The second fact that I learned about myself was that I was headed down the wrong path and it took some separation from my accustomed hometown to truly see that about myself.



STAFF PHOTO | JOELLE WEATHERFORD

I know a lot of people can relate to this type of situation in their younger days, being kicked out of school, alternative schools, facing some jail time, just living the life of a delinquent.

All the while doing all this pain to a single-parent household where my momma did the best job any child could ask for.

But even with me having all this in mind,

I still needed something else because I was barely budgeting. Still doing the same stupid stuff that would've undoubtedly put me inside a prison cell soon down the line.

But I got my motivation. I got my shove off the top of the diving board that would ultimately plunge me into the pool of righteous living. God was the one who pushed me, and boy was he strong.

I arrived here in 2017 and had the confidence that I would be able to keep living the same life that I was accustomed to. All I had to do was find some more friends who did the things I did, and I'd be able to keep my lifestyle. All it would take was a little effort on my end.

Well, that plan completely backfired. It was as if I was almost in a foreign land with people who shared almost everything I liked to do except those things that got me in trouble. Where's the fun in that?

The only place where I without a doubt felt I was at home was at a place that I didn't want to do the back home things. A church. Why? Of all the places where I felt I could be complacent, it just had to be a place where everybody is smiling and joyful and calls you sweetheart although they had just met you 15 minutes before.

So since I feel complacent in this place, I figured I might as well see what the fuss was about. And from that decision on, God took control. I no longer wanted to do the things I wanted to do. I didn't want to go to the places I eagerly wanted to go every weekend. He came in and literally flipped my world upside down. I instantly substituted those things for things that God wanted me to do.

Instead of smoking and doing drugs, I started reading and praying. I would've laughed if I had heard myself say these things a few years back.

And that's how I know it was God.

I'm not sure who was supposed to hear this, but God just said that it's for someone. If you could truly know the horrid wretch that I was, then you'd truly know the amazing grace of our Heavenly Father.

ENTERTAINMENT

Forget Superman, Clark has his own problems

New CW series envisions future of classic tale

BY ELISABETH LIVELY
Editor-in-Chief

Spoiler alert: Clark Kent is Superman. Now that you're up to his speed, we can move on.

As Lois Lane (Bitsy Tulloch) said in the first episode, "No one ever dreams about the problems, but every life has them. Even the extraordinary ones." That's what this new series is all about. Superheroes have personal problems too, and it's about time they get addressed.

"Superman & Lois" is special among its peers on the CW channel in a sense that it is not a reboot, neither is it another retelling of the classic story. This series envisions the new generation of the Kents as Clark and Lois grapple with parenthood and actual adult responsibilities.

For once, it's not about Superman and Lois' glory days. Their story has been told time and time again, and the CW acknowledged that it was time to move on. However, the original storyline remains partially present to avoid overwhelming or disappointing classic Superman fans.

Each member of the Kent family pulls the series along in their own way, starting with Clark (Tyler Hoechlin).

Pressure from the military has Superman focusing on the national security issues at hand, while Lois is reminding Clark that their family deserves just as much attention. Meanwhile, all his sons know is that he's never around.

But after a string of events prompt the Kent family to relocate to Smallville, Clark reveals to his boys his true Kryptonian identity. But Clark's superpowers can't save his sons from the problems of the real world.

A heavy focus in the series is the fraternal Kent twins, Jonathan and Jordan, who are about as similar as Superman and Batman. Jonathan (Jordan Elsass) is the football star with perfect

hair and a go-get-em attitude. Meanwhile, Jordan (Alex Garfin), who was diagnosed with social anxiety, though it appears to be more of a case of awkwardness and a quick temper, spends his time being moody and withdrawn from his family, while he plays video games and blasts music.

But once he begins to display Kryptonian abilities, Jordan becomes the center of attention in his father's eyes, as his newfound powers lead him to take on a new set of skills that outshine his brother at home and school. But as it turns out, uncontrollable emotional outbursts and alien superpowers don't mix too well. Who knew?

While the series focuses on all four members of the Kent clan, Lois seems to take up the most screen time. Her new story begins when she learns that her boss, billionaire Morgan Edge (Adam Rayner), wants to reopen the Smallville mines to provide more jobs in the shrinking town. However, Lois suspects he has a hidden agenda.

I've seen journalists misrepresented or act over the top many times in the past, which is why I was surprised when "Superman & Lois" primarily got it right. While some journalist characters have a need for digging deep and finding information to the point that it's obnoxious, Tulloch

portrays Lane as someone who seeks to make a difference that can only be

done through someone with a big heart and intense investigative skills.

The frustration viewers watched flare in Lois' eyes after her article was tampered with prior to publishing was accurately portrayed, and as a student journalist, I was annoyed. She exposed one too many truths, and her work was rewritten without her consent because of it. That's not something too often accurately portrayed on screen. However, her thorough investigative reporting seems to lie a little too heavily on the FBI detective side.

Unlike many Superman films and series, "Superman & Lois," is more worldly than outer-worldly, if you catch my drift. It's littered with talk of diminishing jobs, reverse mortgages (whatever those are), small town drama, among other not-so-fantasy issues.

In this real-world story as a whole, Superman is a mere side character, despite the name of the series. When the details are stripped away, "Superman & Lois" is about the residents of Smallville and all their problems hidden behind closed doors and their "small time charm," served with a side of superpowers.

"Superman & Lois" is better than other DC comic series on the CW for one

reason: it's personal. Other CW superhero series focus on the hero side of the character, along with constant strategy-talk and hero-villain conflict. Some of those series are practically half animated due to the mass of special effects from whatever magical, supernatural or alien event is going on in each episode.

In other CW series, everything works out at the end of every episode, because as superheroes, it's their job to ensure the villain is defeated. But Clark and Lois aren't heroes.

They're parents and employees, trying everyday to make the best decisions for themselves and their children. Knowing that one of them is secretly Earth's most powerful superhero is just the icing on the cake.

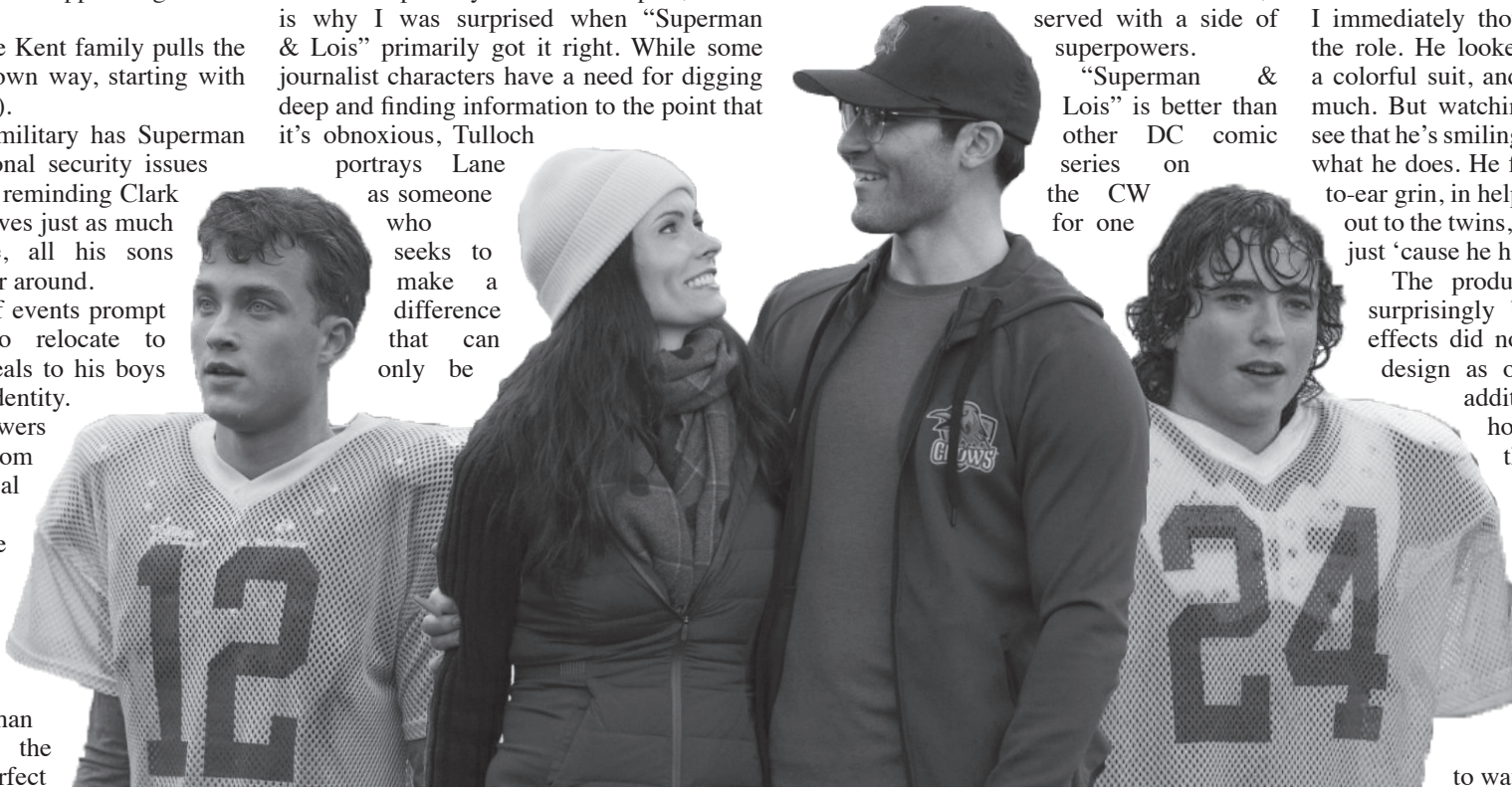
In the past, viewers see Clark Kent's nerdy and weak persona as means to elude the public eye from his true identity. However, in this series, we see that Clark is not acting. He's a legitimate dork that gets excited like a little kid when he gets interested in a topic.

When Hoechlin debuted as Superman in the season two premier of "Supergirl," I immediately thought he was unsuited for the role. He looked like an average guy in a colorful suit, and he was smiling way too much. But watching "Superman & Lois," I see that he's smiling so much because he loves what he does. He finds true joy, with an ear-to-ear grin, in helping others. As Lois points out to the twins, "Your dad's not Superman just 'cause he has powers, you know."

The production of the series was surprisingly believable as the special effects did not share the unconvincing design as other television series. In addition, the violin, French horn and soft choir score at the start of the pilot was one of the features that had me glued to the screen.

So far, "Superman & Lois" only released only four episodes and a spring finale. The remainder of the season will be distributed starting in May.

Episodes are available to watch free on cwtv.com.



Is Marvel's new super duo just another superhero show?

BY SKYLAR FONDREN
Staff Writer

"The Falcon and The Winter Soldier," Marvel's new series on Disney+, has been releasing one episode every Friday following the conclusion of "WandaVision."

After the incredible experience that was "WandaVision," many fans have wondered if "The Falcon and the Winter Soldier" would have a similar creative storyline or simply be another superhero series that has more villain-fighting than character development.

Now that the first three episodes have come out, we have some idea of how the show compares to its predecessor. Before we get started, I must warn you, there will be some very minor spoilers for "TFATWS."

Within the first few minutes of episode one, we already get a sense of how this series is different from "WandaVision," and I must admit, I was initially uninterested in watching "TFATWS," but as a hardcore Marvel fan, I knew I was going to watch it nevertheless. However, while some may disagree, "TFATWS" is really good so far, with just a couple of annoyances and plot problems that I want to mention.

Hands down, the best thing about this show is the character development. I have never felt any connection or sympathy towards Bucky (the Winter Soldier) until I watched this series.

Similarly, Sam Wilson had just been a minor character used for filling in the silence with sarcasm and dumb commentary.

In "TFATWS," they both come alive. They are not just the comic relief or a part of

a sob story, they are people with lives and families and struggles that you can relate to.

We find Bucky having been pardoned for his crimes as the Winter Soldier and taking mandatory therapy, while Sam is doing superhero work with the Air Force and trying to keep his family business afloat, literally (they own a shrimp boat).

This show is a chance for these side characters to become main characters. We get to see how being snapped out of existence for five years can affect someone's mentality, on top of their horrific experience of coming back from the dead and fighting in a huge battle against tons of foes and then watching your best friend die.

If that sentence felt like a lot, just imagine how it

actually felt to go through all of that.

Going back to Sam, not only is his family having financial struggles, Sam has to make a tough decision regarding an important item- Steve's shield.

If you haven't seen "Avenger's Endgame" then you might not know that Steve Rogers (Captain America) gave Sam his shield in hopes that he would take up the mantle.

In the first episode, Sam makes a decision regarding the shield that he has already come to regret, but ultimately I think this choice will only prove that Sam is ready to become the next Captain America.

A lot of other crazy things have happened in the first three episodes and this is just the beginning of the

chaos. However, despite the craziness there is one major critique I have with this show. My problem with this show come in the form of it's "villain."

Every superhero show/movie usually has its arch-nemesis or evil being that they must defeat, and while those villains have become more complex and developed over the years, no good story is without conflict, so "TFATWS" should not be any different. And yet, it is.

There is a "villain," but that villain is more like a group of vaguely threatening people with an ambiguous goal that makes no sense when you analyze it with any depth.

Now, the story is still playing out as of right now, so I can't verify that this villain is going to continue to be the main conflict or not, but so

far, I see no reason for all the worry this conflict seems to be causing.

-One Week Later-

Update: The villain is not who I thought it was. Without giving anything away, I'll just say don't trust the imposter.

Also, the ambiguous villain is still the main villain, but another person is proving to be extremely untrustworthy (not that they ever were very trustworthy in the first place). Essentially, besides Sam and Bucky, trust no one.

In episode four there are two brilliant scenes that really capture everything great about this show. One is a scene that gives us insight on Bucky's time in Wakanda, and one is related to the imposter.

This series definitely has a lot of undertones relating to problems we're seeing

in the real world, and while some may not like that and wish to use these shows as an escape from reality, I think it is an important message to be spread and will allow people to understand a viewpoint they might not otherwise consider or think about.

Overall, this series is amazing. With only two episodes left, I absolutely cannot wait to see what comes next and where Sam and Bucky will end up.

Besides the confusion on the "bad guy" of the show, there really isn't much to criticize.

It has the right balance of fight scenes and dialogue, which is serious and carries the story while also being hilarious and sarcastic.

Grab your tissues for the latest episode, and I'll see you at the end of the line.



COURTESY PHOTO

'The Falcon and the Winter Soldier' debuted on Disney+ after a one week break following the conclusion of Marvel's other recent series, 'WandaVision.'

OPINION

Eagle Eye

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF NTCC'S WIFI?



"It sucks in some places and it's good in some areas. It's weird, cause like in the art building it doesn't let me log in, and then in the cafeteria it kinda jumps off and on. But yeah, it's kinda like a fifty-fifty shot whether it works or not."

- Erik Garcia

"I mean, it's better than my friend's so it's average. It does have issues because of so many people, but that's always gonna be a problem. I don't really have any problems with it."

- James Porter



"Well, I really don't use it but I appreciate that we have it here. But whenever I forget my phone and I'm trying to use my laptop, I don't really appreciate that it's so slow. It disconnects and you have to reconnect it. Yeah, I don't really like it."

- Jaquelyn Torres

"It could use improvement. It's up and down and up and down like it's dial-up. This is the 21st century, we should have streamlined wifi, be it cable wifi, DSL wifi, or even fiber optic wifi."

- Tamara Kearney



"I really hate signing in every single time I have to get on the wifi, and it's so annoying. So then I go to the guest one where I can click accept instead which it's a little bit slower but it's fine. I haven't really had any issues with it. I do remember one time, I was in class and I had to sign in and I typed my stuff in and it didn't work and I was like, 'well that sucks.'"

- Savannah Lockler



Erasing homeschool myths

By SKYLAR FONDREN
Staff Writer

Homeschooled? Yep. Public Schooled? Also yes.

Until my sophomore year of high school, I went to public school. Then, I somehow convinced my parents to start homeschooling me.

It was a big change and took a lot of adjusting, but in the end, it was worth it. Most people make a lot of assumptions about homeschooling that keep them from seeing all of the amazing benefits that homeschooling has.

There are many stereotypes that homeschoolers are often grouped into, but most of them are incredibly inaccurate. For example, one stereotype of homeschooling is a large, Christian family that lives on a farm in rural Arkansas. However, the family just described are the Duggars, from "19 Kids and Counting."

My experience as a homeschooler looked nothing like this. So, while they may also homeschool their kids, they are not the model that all homeschooled families are based on. Though it's different for everyone, homeschooling was the answer to my struggles in school.

I was able to work at my own pace, learn what I was interested in, and still had time for activities outside of school since all of my work is technically homework.

Having experienced both public school and homeschool, I have a good understanding of the positives and negatives of both. For my parents, homeschooling was being able to make sure the material I was learning was what was best for me.

This is where a part of the stereotype of homeschooling comes into play since many Christian parents want to give their children a "Christian" education, and public schools are not allowed to teach according to any one religion.

However, my parents both had jobs, so personally teaching me was just not an option, but because I was old enough to work on my own and hold myself accountable, this was not a problem. This is a common problem that can arise.

If a child has ever been in public school, then they will likely have a hard time adjusting to homeschooling. In this case, it depends on the student.

Many make the assumption that homeschoolers never have any social interaction, whereas public school kids spend the day surrounded by at least 25 other kids and many teachers. While I did my schoolwork mainly at home, I still had many opportunities to be social.

I was a part of a book club that met every Tuesday, went to church on Sundays and Wednesdays, and on Friday I attended Co-op where I had classes with other homeschoolers my age.

OK, but what about public school? I will admit, while I was still getting into the swing of homeschooling, I missed public school a lot. Public school has a reputation of exposing children to the world and the way people different from them think.

While homeschoolers tend to have close-knit groups that share similar beliefs, public schools usually have a variety of backgrounds, cultures, and religions. Both can be beneficial to a student, though it really comes down to the education they are getting. Public school caused a lot of stress and anxiety for me, with strict deadlines and pressure from other students to be the best.

In moderation, none of this is a bad thing, but when it starts getting overwhelming and making you stay up until midnight completing assignments, is it really healthy to continue in that kind of environment? For me, the answer was no.

Switching to homeschooling was a hard process of finding the best curriculum and determining a schedule to stay on track. Homeschooling didn't eliminate stress or take away the fear of deadlines or getting good grades, but it gave me a chance to decide what I wanted to learn and how I wanted to learn it. Suddenly I didn't have to follow a plan that was made for every student, I was following my own plan that reflected my goals. This is what gave me the opportunity to take only college classes as a senior in high school.

Ultimately, if you are willing and determined and you have a desire to learn, homeschooling is the way to go.

Who's Next?



CARTOON BY JADE WOODS

Newest smart phone feature: ball and chain

By JADE WOODS
Staff Writer

Do you remember the panicked feeling of the realization that you have left your phone at home?

Would we feel panicked about going somewhere without our phones if we were not so reliant on them?

We are losing the ability to be entirely independent of electronics, since we began relying on them for so much. If you go to any public place, be it a Walmart, McDonald's, etc., you are guaranteed to see people with their phones just inches from their bodies at all times.

They have them close to their faces if they are sitting at a table, or up to their ears while they are walking. Many teenagers even have music playing through earbuds or headphones. This is becoming a serious problem.

Having our phones so close, so often is causing a multitude of problems. I use my phone a lot. I almost cannot leave home without it. I most often use it for navigation.

People rely on their phones to get them to and from their work, school, or activities. While they can memorize a route if they drive it enough, they do not pay attention to their surroundings.

No one looks at maps anymore for more than a few minutes, and very few people could read an actual map, if they even had one. We would end up lost if the map were

to go offline, or if our phones died.

Our reliance on maps is problematic, but we also rely on our phones for communication with our jobs, our friends, and our families.

We get notifications, emails, and texts from our jobs on a daily basis informing us about different happenings.

We use them to communicate with our bosses and managers, and with our co-workers. And even use them to work.

We have been using electronics to communicate with our friends and family as well. Especially with the pandemic causing us to resort to zoom and texting to be with our friends, we are getting ever more comfortable using electronics to keep us in touch with the world, and with those we love.

We are missing out on the simple joys of life. Some of my most favorite pastimes are throwing the baseball in our front yard, playing games, and sitting around a fire with my family.

Watching television or scrolling through Facebook or Instagram takes away from any time we might have had to enjoy those things. We rarely even eat meals at the dining table anymore. Instead, we opt to eat in front of our TV.

We could stay at home for most of our lives, but we would be reliant entirely on our electronics and the internet. If it stopped working, we would be in a world of hurt. If the internet

stopped working completely, would we be able to function?

If we wanted, we could hibernate in our houses and only leave every once in a while.

Because of the advances of technology, we could get a degree online, work on our computers from home, buy all of our groceries online, or have restaurants deliver food.

We would have no reason to leave our homes, except to see friends and family.

But if the internet crashed, or our electronics crashed, we would have no communication, those whose jobs are completely online would be without a job. People would not know how to entertain themselves, and they would not be able to navigate to somewhere new.

If you could not get it in a store, you could not get it at all. Putting so much trust in something that could fail completely, may one day hurt us all.

We are slowly but surely losing our independence, by relying on our electronics, and missing out on some of the best parts of life. We are wasting our time scrolling through social media, or playing games. And we use them for every aspect of our lives nowadays.

They say time flies, so do not waste your time staring at a screen. I am going to take a week or two, and do as little as possible on my phone, and I encourage others to do the same, and see the difference it makes in your life.

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The opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the opinions of the faculty adviser or the administration of the college.
Questions? Comments? Email Mandy Smith at msmith@ntcc.edu or visit our website at www.ntcceagleonline.com

NEWS

Ag department hosts farm camp for kids



COURTESY PHOTO

Adjunct Cyruss Ragsdale teaches children about growing plants during the Life on the Farm kids camp this spring.



COURTESY PHOTO

Two girls show off the radishes they picked on the farm.



COURTESY PHOTO

A child holds a baby goat born on the farm in February.

SPECIAL TO THE EAGLE

Farm-based education is seeing a resurgence as a unique experience for families to learn more about where their food comes from. This is especially true for the Northeast Texas Community College Sustainable Market Farm.

“While as instructors we are happy to have helped create and inspire a new generation to have an appreciation and love of farming and animals, we do not claim responsibility for those kids who now want to add goats, chickens and gardens in their backyards,” McCracken said.

Professor & Director of Sustainable Agriculture Rene McCracken first learned of the “farm-based education” options at a farm conference in 2019 and became a member of the national organization, Farm Based Education Network, to share resources and learn how to incorporate experiences based content into the college offerings.

The NTCC Ag department partnered with the Continuing Education Department in 2020 to offer the first Life on the Farm Spring Break Camp, which had 10 campers and four days of activities that were held shortly before the COVID-19 lockdowns.

The camp was offered to students ages eight to 16 with an interest in gardening, farming or love of animals.

The continued partnership of Agriculture and Continuing Education produced a framework of Agriculture Community Education, or ACE, course options for the community with the added talents and skills of adjunct and Agriculture CE coordinator, Cyruss Ragsdale.

While the kid’s camp has received much attention, the true potential of the overall ACE courses and workshops are just beginning to be seen. Ragsdale has become known by his students to be inspirational.

Popular courses that were offered include Farmhouse Thanksgiving, Farmhouse Christmas Décor and Gardening CE.

In 2021, the spring break camp looked different than before due to COVID-19 restrictions, but the interest remained to host the second annual Life on the Farm Camp for Kids.

The camp was offered to area youth as an alternative option for spring break activities. The camp consisted of 14 kids from ages eight to 14. The children learned about raising backyard chickens, meat goats, as well as planting seeds and growing vegetables.

Ragsdale and McCracken served as instructors along with volunteer students and workcampers who made sure that each student made memories and not a mess on the NTCC Farm.

Parents were not left out and benefited from the camp as most chose the opportunity to have spring cleaning and others working while their kids “had the best time!”

Coordinator of Continuing Education Lisa York and McCracken are working to plan and offer just such an option during the Kids College series of courses being offered in June 2021.

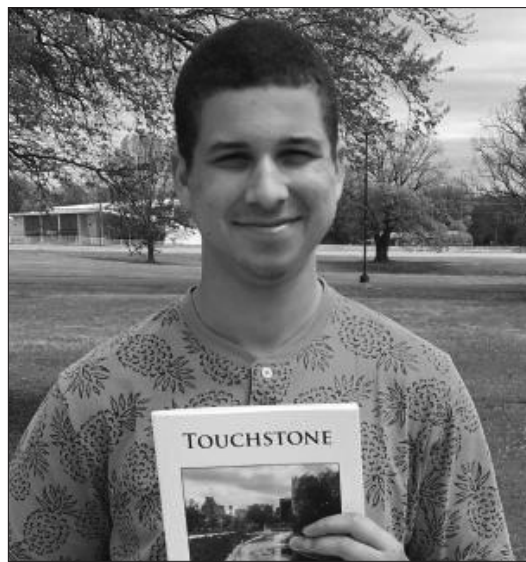
“Perhaps a happy consequence of COVID is the resurgence of interest in growing gardens and raising poultry and livestock,” McCracken said.

The two departments are now planning Summertime On The Farm camp for kids ages 8-14, where campers will learn how to care for farm animals and horticulture.

The camp will be held June 14 through 24 on Mondays through Thursdays at the Elizabeth Hoggatt Whatley Ag Complex.

Early registration is \$109 by May 7, and regular registration is \$129 is due June 4. Price is per child. E-mail continuinged@ntcc.edu or 903-434-8134 to register and visit www.ntcc.edu/continued for the full upcoming schedule.

NTCC Scholars publish essays in state journal



COURTESY PHOTO

English’s essay about the Webb Society was recently published in the Touchstone journal.

SPECIAL TO THE EAGLE

The pandemic had a way of delaying initiatives. But the 2020 issue of Touchstone, one of the most venerable undergraduate journals in the United States, finally has appeared in April, 2021.

Published by the Texas State Historical Association, Touchstone has appeared continuously since 1982.

Two former Presidential Scholars published articles in this issue, and the college’s current Whatley Scholar, Jaly English, published a ten-page Webb Society report.

The journal includes the first and second-place winners of the 2019 Caldwell Memorial Awards for the best freshman-sophomore essays in Texas history.

Olivia Griffin, the fourth member of one homeschooled-family in Pittsburg to enter Honors Northeast, received a first-place award, and has the first essay in the journal.

Her work on Americans-with-disabilities activist Justin Dart was the first to establish the Texas cultural context behind the passage of the ADA in 1990.

Recent Jack-Kent-Cooke winner, Daniel Landaverde also published his pioneering article on Mount Pleasant’s Hispanic community. This was the first published article to establish a basic chronology and story of an ethnic community that now comprises 55% of Mount Pleasant’s population.

Jaly English’s meticulous report covers a year in the life of NTCC’s Webb Society, particularly the making of its Caldwell-Award winning film on Barbara Conrad.

This essay features nineteen images, including pictures of over thirty NTCC Scholars, past and present, action shots of NTCC’s film-making, poster contest, and honors trips.

The essay also contains an extensive quotation of a winning poem of the Northeast

Texas Poetry Contest by Mercedes Collins. Appropriate to the historical slant of the journal, Collins’ poem described an old hall built by slaves between Cass and Morris counties.

The journal also includes other essays by collegiate scholars throughout the state. One essay by a San Antonio upperclassman about the Texas tick wars alludes to a violent clash between the Texas Rangers, and Cass County cow-owners in 1919, over the forced use of dipping vats.

Another article details the partnership of Marvin Watson and Lyndon B. Johnson. Watson, was a prominent citizen of Daingerfield in the 1950s, a Vice President of Lone Star Steel, and a Chief of Staff for President Johnson.

For additional information about current and former NTCC student essays published in the Touchstone magazine, contact Dr. Andrew Yox, NTCC honors director at ayox@ntcc.edu.

East Texas Men In Harmony to perform at Whatley Center

SPECIAL TO THE EAGLE

The Whatley Center for the Performing Arts at Northeast Texas Community College will host a concert by The East Texas Men In Harmony on Saturday, April 24 at 7:30 p.m. Seating is limited due to social distancing protocols.

ETMIH is a 501(c)3 organization, and is comprised of men from all over the East Texas area, representing 17 towns in the Greater Tyler area. The members come from all walks of life—medical professionals, engineers, aircraft mechanics and several guys who retired so long ago, they don’t remember what they did for a living! There will be three quartets singing for the Whatley Center event.

“Several of my dear friends sing in East Texas Men In Harmony and I am always blown away by the quality of their performances. You are likely to recognize quite a few faces from our area,” Carolyn Franks, director of the Whatley Center, said. “If you love a cappella and barbershop music, you don’t want to miss this one.”

The love of harmony, especially Barbershop Harmony, brings this group of gentlemen together at civic clubs, corporate parties, awards banquets and anywhere else people gather for an evening. The chorus is an affiliated chapter with the International Barbershop Harmony Society, which has more than 750 chapters and 24,000 members. The ETMIH members enjoy competing with other choruses in the society. They are especially looking forward to competing at the International level.

The chorus welcomes men of good character with a desire to improve their music skills to participate. A brief audition will let the music committee know where you fit in and the craft sessions work to blend the voices into an expanded unit sound. The group is directed by John Cavanaugh with Bryan Black serving as Assistant Director.

Tickets for the show are \$20 for adults and \$5 for ages 17 and under. They can be purchased by calling the Whatley Center Box Office at 903-434-8181. To learn more about ETMIH, visit their website at www.etmeninharmony.com



COURTESY PHOTO

East Texas Men in Harmony is a vocal group based out of Tyler. They will perform on April 24 at the Whatley.

SPORTS

Soccer struggles through spring season

By JOELLE WEATHERFORD
Editor-in-Chief

After having their season postponed last year due to COVID-19, the Northeast Texas Community College men's and women's soccer teams have finally been able to return to the field.

However, poor field conditions due to rain have been a major challenge for the teams to overcome this season.

The teams are still holding out hope for clear skies in the upcoming weeks as the men's team will be hosting Paris Junior College on April 23 and Coastal Bend College on April 27.

The women's team will also be hosting PJC on April 23 and will then travel to Blinn College on April 30.

The two teams, along with the NTCC softball, baseball and rodeo teams, will also be holding free camps for area youth in the coming weeks.

During the camps, young athletes will have the opportunity to meet the Eagle players and coaches and receive instruction in their specific sport.

The camps will take place after NTCC home games, giving the children a chance to watch the athletes in action and then attend the camps post game.

All camps with the exception of rodeo will be held on the NTCC Campus.

For more information contact NTCC Athletic Director Andy Morgan at amorgan@ntcc.edu or NTCC Assistant Athletic Director Justin Hargrove at jhargrove@ntcc.edu.

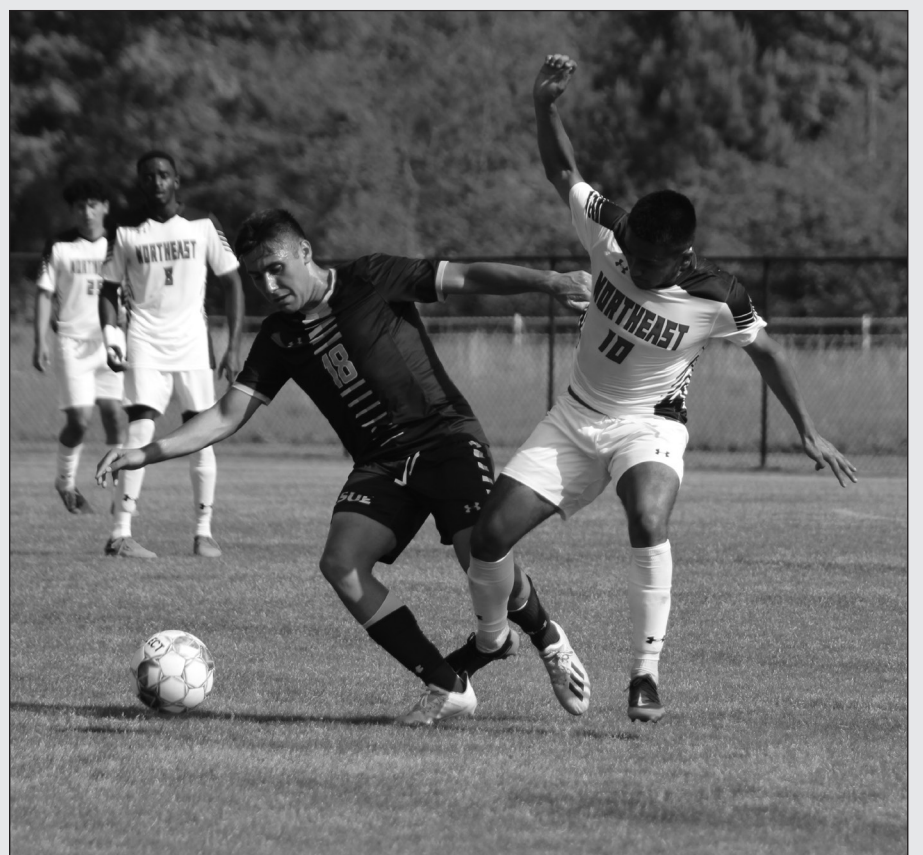


STAFF PHOTO | ELISABETH LIVELY

NTCC soccer player Anthony Freer fights to keep the ball away from an LSU-Eunice defender after he managed to take possession. The game ended in a 1-1 draw between the teams.



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Above, midfielder Carlos Quinones Martinez fights with an LSU-Eunice player for control of the ball during a recent home game.

Left, NTCC soccer player Marissa Garcia defends the ball during the Eagle's recent game against LSU-Eunice player.

NTCC rodeo rides for local school children

By JUSTIN HARGROVE
NTCC Assistant Athletic Director

The Northeast Texas Community College rodeo team recently put on a rodeo for Titus County elementary school children.

The student athletes from the NTCC rodeo team held the event at the Mount Pleasant Priefert Arena located at the Mount Pleasant Rodeo Association complex on Greenhill Road.

The rodeo team was joined by announcer Bo Rester of Bo Rodeo Productions, Mark Evans clown, and Wing Rodeo provided the animal athletes to put on the event for area schools.

The students were treated to a full schedule of events including bareback riding, saddle bronc riding, tie down roping, breakaway roping, team roping, barrel racing, and bull riding along with entertainment from rodeo clown Mark Evans.

A few teachers from several of the local schools also got a chance to step into the arena and help entertain the students with the clown in between events.

The Eagle Rodeo Team has one collegiate rodeo left this season.

NTCC will be in Athens, Texas May 7-8 for the final rodeo of the year at Trinity Valley Community College.



STAFF PHOTO | JOELLE WEATHERFORD

Ty Roach ropes a calf during the tie-down roping event at the kids rodeo held at the Mount Pleasant Priefert Arena.

SPORTS

Baseball takes win over Panola College

By JUSTIN HARGROVE
Assistant Athletic Director

Northeast Texas Community College Baseball and the Panola Ponies finally met up for game one of the three game series after a few days of rainouts.

NTCC took down the Ponies 15-7 in a run ruled shortened game.

Mikel Howell started on the mound and looked sharp for the Eagles. Howell pitched five and two-thirds innings before giving way to Chase Richter to finish things out for the Eagles.

While the Ponies scored seven runs off Howell, just two of the runs were earned, on seven hits, four walks and six strike outs. Richter picked up two additional strikeouts in his one and one-third inning of work.

Both teams played quick the first two innings of play with the first runs for either team coming in the third. Panola managed five runs to take an early 5-0 lead.

NTCC answered back quickly with four runs in the fourth. Cole Modgling started things off with a triple that was bobbled by the centerfielder which allowed the speedy Modgling to turn it into an inside the park homerun.

Sawyre Thornhill reached via a walk and scored when the next batter up, Nico Baumbach, hit a homerun to left-center field to bring the game to 5-3 Panola.

The Eagles were not done and Cameron Loy reached base when he was hit by the pitch and advanced to third on a single by Jake Chapman.

Bryce Yosko hit a deep sacrifice fly to center to score Loy and cut the lead to 5-4.

The Eagles took the lead in the fourth inning when they plated three more runs to make the score 7-5. Modgling again led off the inning, this time with a walk.

Luke McBride singled to

right to move Modgling to third base.

Thornhill hit a sacrifice fly to center to score Modgling for the first of three runs scored in the inning. Loy continued his good day at the plate with a double off the wall in right-center field to score McBride.

Chapman followed that with a double off the left-center field wall to bring home Loy and make the Eagle lead 7-5.

Khalon Clayton singled in the bottom of the fifth and later score on a sacrifice fly by McBride to move NTCC ahead 8-5.

Panola tried to mount a comeback in the sixth, scoring two runs before Richter shut them down to get the Eagles out of the jam with an 8-7 lead.

A big seven run sixth inning for the Eagles proved to be too much for Panola to overcome. Back to back walks by Baumbach and Loy followed by an error when Chapman came to the plate started off the big inning.

Jett Forrest drew a one out walk to load the bases for the Eagles. Clayton singled to left to bring in Loy. McBride drew a two out walk and later score when Thornhill singled to right field to bring the score to 13-7 NTCC.

Baumbach continued his good day offensively when he drove the ball to right-center field to score McBride and Thornhill to put the Eagles ahead by 8 runs, 15-7.

Richter came out for his second inning of work and struck out the first batter. After walking the second batter, he induced ground outs to third base and then for the final out, a ground ball to short stop to end the game.

The conference has adjusted the remaining weekly schedule for the baseball teams and NTCC will be taking on Bossier Parrish CC on April 23 in Bossier. They will then play a double header at NTCC on Sunday at 1 p.m.



STAFF PHOTO | MANDY SMITH

Nico Baumbach hits a hard shot over the left-center field wall for a homerun during at home against Panola.



STAFF PHOTO | JOELLE WEATHERFORD

Catcher Kade Wood and pitcher Kaleb Wiznowski discuss strategy before one of the Eagles' recent home games.



STAFF PHOTO | JOELLE WEATHERFORD

Kade Wood slides in safe at second in a recent game against. The weather has affected the Eagles playing time during this rainy spring season.

Softball splits with Carl Albert State College

By JUSTIN HARGROVE
Assistant Athletic Director

Northeast Texas Community College Softball made the trip to Poteau, Oklahoma to take on Carl Albert State College in a non-conference matchup.

Carl Albert got the best of NTCC in an extra inning affair in game one by a score of 6-5.

Game two was another thriller with NTCC winning 4-3 with a dramatic game ending play when Hanna Allen threw out a runner trying to tie the game on a sacrifice fly to left field.

Allen's accurate throw to catcher Lauren Isbell would end the rally by Carl Albert for the Eagle win 4-3.

In game one of the series, Emma Farquhar led off the game with a triple to get things going for NTCC.

Kailey Hancock drove in Farquhar with a single to left field. Tasha Pierce hit her first of three homeruns on the day to bring the Eagle lead to 2-0 after one inning of play.

Both teams went scoreless in the second inning before NTCC plated another run in the third when Haylee Wilson singled to drive in Hancock who had doubled to lead off the inning.

Carl Albert cut into the lead in the bottom of the third when they scored two runs to bring the game to 3-2 NTCC.

Trinity Needham added the fourth run for the Eagles when she drew a walk and later scored on a single by Farquhar.

NTCC led 4-2 heading into the bottom of

the fifth, then Carl Albert scored one run to cut the lead to 4-3.

The Eagles hoped to put the game away in the top of the seventh when Hancock blasted a homerun to lead off the inning and move the score to 5-3 NTCC.

Unfortunately, Carl Albert scored two runs in the bottom of the seventh to tie the game at 5-5 and then scored in their half of the eighth inning to win 6-5.

Averie Ayers started and went seven innings before giving way to Halea Wells for the final inning. Ayers got six strike outs in her start.

In game two of the series, Emily Cole had one of her best games of the season, giving up just five hits and striking out four in her complete game win.

NTCC got on the board first in the second inning when Pierce hit her second home run of the day to give the Eagles the 1-0 lead. She stayed hot and in her next at bat in the fourth inning launched number three of the day to move NTCC ahead 2-0.

Hancock would not be outdone and hit a solo homerun in the sixth to move NTCC ahead 3-0. Carl Albert scored one run in the fourth inning to make the score 3-1.

The Eagles added the fourth and final run in the seventh when Wilson drove in Farquhar who doubled earlier in the inning.

Carl Albert attempted a comeback in the seventh, scoring two runs, but the attempt was denied by great Eagles defense.

Allen caught the second out on a pop fly to left field and then gunned the runner down at home as she tried to score ending the game with the Eagles on top 4-3.



COURTESY PHOTO

NTCC softball players Tasha Pierce and Kailey Hancock show off the five homerun softballs they hit during the games against Carl Albert State College.

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SPORTS



STAFF PHOTO | JOELLE WEATHERFORD

The NTCC rodeo team held their traditional kid's rodeo for Titus County elementary school children. The event, usually held annually, had been canceled and postponed the last two years due to schedule conflicts and COVID-19.

NTCC HOSTS ANNUAL

★ KIDS RODEO ★



STAFF PHOTO | JOELLE WEATHERFORD

Above, two future cowboys practice their roping skills during the rodeo.



STAFF PHOTO | ELISABETH LIVELY

Left, rodeo clown Mark Evans walks through the stands greeting the children and giving high fives.



STAFF PHOTO | ELISABETH LIVELY

Above, Jesse Young holds the American flag in the center of the arena during the National Anthem.



STAFF PHOTO | ELISABETH LIVELY

Right, youngsters eagerly reach through the fence to pet Keely Henry's horse following the event.