

Campus Events

- Saturday, March 1
BB vs Florida Post
Grad, Summit, MS
@ 1:00
- Sunday, March 2
BB vs Lansing CC,
Summit, MS @ 12:00
BB vs Pearl River CC,
Summit, MS @ 5:00
Sunday Buffet
- Monday, March 3
WBB vs Northwest,
Summit, MS @ 5:30
MBB vs Northwest,
Summit, MS @ 7:30
- Tuesday, March 4
Mardi Gras Parade
@ 1:00
- Thursday, March 6
SB vs Lansing CC,
Summit, MS @ 12:00
BB vs John Melvin,
Summit, MS @ 2:00
- Friday, March 7
Residence Halls Close
@ 3:00 for Spring
Break
- Monday, March 10
March 14
Spring Break
- Tuesday, March 11
SB vs MS Delta,
Summit, MS @ 3:00
- Friday, March 14
Last Day for 4-week
Online Classes
- Saturday, March 15
BB vs Northeast,
Summit, MS @ 2:00
- Sunday, March 16
Residence Halls Open
@ 4:00
- Monday, March 17
First Day for 8-week
Online Classes
- Wednesday, March 19
SB vs Co-Lin,
Summit, MS @ 3:00
- Friday, March 21
Princess Ball
- Saturday, March 22
BB vs Coahoma,
Summit, MS @ 1:00
- Monday, March 24
Tennis vs Beville State,
Summit, MS @ 2:00
- Tuesday, March 25
Tennis vs Hinds,
Summit, MS @ 2:00
- Wednesday, March 26
BB vs East Central,
Summit, MS @ 3:00
- Thursday, March 27
SMCC Smackdown 3
@ 7:00



above: Kara Beth Addison, Leah Sterling, Braden Paulk, and Madison Lea Carraway pose for a photo by the lake on the beautiful campus.

photo by Chuck Barnes

SMCC: Hall of Fame

By Takhya Hunt, Staff Writer, and
Ella Pattie, Editor

We are proud to announce this year's newest members of Southwest Mississippi Community College's Hall of Fame, Kara Beth Addison, Madison Lea Carraway, Braden Paulk, and Leah Sterling.

Kara Beth Addison is the daughter of Luke and Robyn Addison of Smithdale, MS. She graduated with highest honors from West Lincoln Attendance Center, finishing third in her class. She excelled on her ACT with a score of 25. She was also inducted into West Lincoln's Hall of Fame and voted Miss West Lincoln. She is currently enrolled at Southwest for Kinesiology. She plans to use her degree to become a Physical Therapist Assistant to help people live more comfortable lives. She is an active member of Mt. Gilead Primitive Baptist Church. She relishes in basketball and watching true crime documentaries. She is a member of the Women's Basketball Team here at SMCC. She has been a dignified member of Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. She has been placed on the President's List both her freshman and sophomore years. She has also been gifted certificates of excellence for Sociology and Western Civilization II.

Madison Lea Carraway is the daughter of Stephen and Lisa Carraway of Smithdale, MS. She faithfully attends Olive Baptist Church where she helps with Camp Christ Alone, enjoys singing in the church's choir, and is an understudy for the church's pianist. She attends church regularly, lending a hand at events such as Vacation Bible School. She also delights in participating at the Baptist Student Union here at Southwest. In her free time, she enjoys creating string art and spending time with friends. She has worked part-time at Howell Motor Parts for the last four

years. She graduated from West Lincoln Attendance Center, where she participated in Student Council and received numerous awards for exemplifying what it means to be an upstanding citizen. She received the Citizenship Award, Bean Counter Award, and Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Good Citizen Award. She honored West Lincoln as Senior Maid, Honor Graduate, Mississippi Scholar, and a Mu Alpha Theta Member. She shot archery and captained the Robotics team her junior and senior years. She is attending Southwest as an Elementary Education major, although she will soon transfer to William Carey to finish her degree. As a freshman she was voted Class Favorite and Most Improved Percussionist. She played marimba and steel pans in the band. She sang in the choir and was inducted into the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. As a sophomore, she was voted Class Favorite, Sophomore Class President, and PTK Vice President. She became a Bear Tracker, Peer Tutor for the Student Success Center, and a Stage Band Instrumentalist. Additionally, she served as the Front Ensemble Section leader, where she plays marimba and steel pan. She also joined the Basketball Band.

Braden Paulk, the son of Gus and Angie Paulk of Ruth, MS. He graduated from Parklane Academy, where he received the John Phillip Sousa Award as a senior band member. Braden enjoys participating in Stage Band, where he sings, dances, and plays instruments. He is also an important figure at the Baptist Student Union where he leads worship and was appointed BSU President during his sophomore year, overseeing the Lead Team. Braden is an avid fan of Frisbee and disc golf, and enjoys drawing and origami. He is attending Southwest for General Studies, with plans to transfer to the University of Southern Mississippi to finish his studies.

During his freshman year at Southwest, Braden was inducted into the Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society. Most recently, he joined the cheer team, competing at nationals and won third place in the nation alongside them.

Leah Sterling is the daughter of Wesley and Lesley Sterling of McComb, MS, and Lana Rainwater of Centreville, MS. She is a dutiful member of St. Alphonsus Catholic Church in McComb, MS. Leah graduated from Parklane Academy with highest honors and she was a member of the MAIS Honor Society (2017-2022) and Parklane MAIS Mu Alpha Theta (2019-2022). She was also voted as Miss Parklane and Homecoming Queen of 2022. She is working toward her nursing degree here at SMCC, and will complete the ADN program in May. Following graduation, she will begin preparing for the NCLEX, so that she can work as a local Registered Nurse. She enjoys running, reading, and spending time with family. Leah also paints commission work for her small business. She has achieved many accomplishments at Southwest including: becoming a Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member, class president of the SMCC ADN Nursing Program, Student Nursing Organization (SNO) member, SMCC Student Government Association Freshman Class Vice President of (2022-2023), SMCC Bear Trackers member, SMCC's newspaper editor of Pine Bluff, and a SMCC Tri Beta Club member.

These students have been studious and active in their communities, exemplifying the qualities that Southwest's Hall of Fame members should possess. They have made their time here at SMCC very meaningful, and we are extremely pleased to welcome them as we showcase their many accomplishments to motivate our fellow bears.



Kara Beth Addison fights for the ball.



Madison Carraway plays the steel pan.



Braden Paulk sings in the stageband.



Leah Sterling proofs *The Pine Burr*.

Southwest Mississippi Community College Number 1 in the State

By Ella Pattie,
Editor

Southwest Mississippi Community College took the top spot in the state overall and as the No. 1 best online college in Mississippi. It's ranked the No. 4 best online college in America and No. 14 among best community colleges.

Overall, the SMCC got an A and it ranked highly for value and campus life, with good scores in academics and diversity. Athletics and party scene weren't factored.

SMCC has rolling admissions with a 100% acceptance rate. The net price is \$4,253 per year, which is lower than the national average of \$15,523 for colleges across the U.S. About 94% of students get financial aid, and the average total aid awarded is \$6,852, which is a little below the national average of \$7,535.

Thank you is extended to the administration and Board of Trustees for the hard work that goes into making Southwest No. 1. The administration: Dr. Steve Bishop, President; Andrew Alford, Vice-president of Financial Affairs; Dr. Addie Boone, Vice-President of Career and Technical Education; Blake Brewer, Vice-President of Student Affairs; Matthew Calhoun, Vice-President of Instruction; Dr. Kimberly Henning, Vice-President of Admissions and Records. The Board of Trustees: Reggie Jones, President, Amite County; Bobby Nelson, Vice-President, Pike County; Dr. Robert Vick, Secretary, Pike County; Stephanie Carr, Pike County; Debra Jackson, Pike County; Symeria Thompson, Pike County; Lee Wilson, Pike County; Bettye Foster Fenn, Amite County; Chris Hollis, Amite County; Jeffrey Lewis, Amite County; Kellee Smith, Amite County; T.W. Bearden, Walthall County; Jimmy Lowery, Walthall County; Treva Reid, Wilkinson County.

Spring Break

By Ella Pattie,
Editor

The most wonderful time of the semester is right around the corner—Spring Break. From March 10 through March 14, you have the entire week to relax and recover from midterms. For those staying home, go outside soak up the sun, catch up on the sleep you missed while studying, and make memories with your friends. Whether you're heading to a tropical vacation or recharging at home, we hope your spring break is exactly what you need to come back and take on the rest of the semester.



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The Pine Burr

Editor.....Ella Pattie
Co-editors.....Emily Caston, Anna Comeaux, Lorelai Davis, Olivia Ellison, Natali Moore
Staff Writers... Lauren Coon, Maci Haygood, Charlie Harrell, Takhya Hunt, Cameron Leon, Dylan Meyers, Allisen Moore, Karen Wimberley
Advisor..... Joyce Mabry

The *Pine Burr* is published during regular academic sessions. Views expressed in the newspaper are not necessarily those of the faculty and administration. Writers express themselves under their by-lines. Offices are located in Kenna Hall, Room 29; the telephone number is 276-3843. The staff invites readers to submit opinion columns and letters to the editor. *Pine Burr*, Kenna Hall, Summit, MS



Joyce Mabry

pineburr@smcc.edu

Southwest Mississippi Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, or disability in its programs, activities or employment practices. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries and grievances regarding the non-discrimination policies: Rhonda Gibson, Director of Disability Support Services, 601-276-3885; 1156 College Dr., Summit, MS 39666.-



BEAR AWARE

In order to effectively communicate emergency information to SMCC employees and students, SMCC has implemented a rapid alert and notification system developed by SchoolCast. BearAware is a service that allows employees and students of SMCC to receive alerts, news, or other emergency information via text, email, or by phone. Participation in Bear Aware is not mandatory but encouraged. At this time, the only information entered into the SchoolCast database is the student's "smcc.edu" email address.

Please read the following because our procedures for handling Bear Aware have changed. An email has been sent to all current students, faculty, and staff with their login information for Bear Aware. Students, faculty, and staff no longer need to request this information by emailing bearaware@smcc.edu.

Dear Students,
You should have received an email with your Bear Aware Login Information on August 2024. An additional email will be sent to your email account at 9:00 AM with your login information. It's basically the same email that was sent on August 2024. If you have already logged in and set up your account, no additional action is required on your part. We will be sending more of these login information emails on the 20th of each month this semester to encourage participation in the system. Again, if you have already set up your account, no action is required on your part. We do recommend logging in to Bear Aware at least once a month and verifying the accuracy of your information. Please read the login information email in its entirety. It will explain why your password may be represented by asterisks (*) and what to do if you cannot log in or if you forgot your password.
If you have any questions, send them to bearaware@smcc.edu from your SMCC email account. We cannot communicate about Bear Aware accounts from other personal or business email accounts you may have. You do not have to contact bearaware@smcc.edu for your login information unless you don't get a login information email.

Editorial: Beyond Dieting: Returning to Whole Foods for Health

Fellow friends,

Stop calling it a diet. Choosing to eat whole foods over ultra-processed and engineered foods should not be considered a diet. It should be considered normal, and in most countries, it is. However, many Americans associate dieting with eating whole foods because the Standard American Diet relies on large portions and artificial foods that have little to no nutritional value. As a result, when someone eats in a way that promotes health, it is often seen as extreme and temporary.

Whole foods are those that are minimally refined or processed, preserving most of their natural nutrients. Examples include fruits, vegetables, high-quality proteins and dairy, whole grains, and legumes. In contrast, ultra-processed foods are derived from food substances and often contain additives such as emulsifiers, fla-

vors, preservatives, stabilizers, gums, trans fats, and processed sugars. It is no surprise that eating these highly processed, mostly artificial foods increase the risk of heart disease, obesity, diabetes, and other health issues. On the other hand, eating more whole foods supports the body's ability to fight and prevent these diseases.

Historically, our bodies have evolved on whole foods, and many cultures around the world developed cuisines using fresh ingredients that have sustained generations. It was not until the 1980s that ultra-processed foods became a staple in everyone's diet, disrupting these traditional eating habits. These foods are also linked to mental health issues and cognitive decline. Not only are they associated with depression and anxiety, but they can also be addictive. The ingre-

dients in ultra-processed foods are designed to trigger the brain's reward centers in ways similar to alcohol and nicotine. This leads many people to turn to these foods for emotional comfort and stress relief.

In conclusion, choosing whole foods over ultra-processed options should not be seen as a temporary diet but rather a return to normal, health-promoting eating habits. While the Standard American Diets relies heavily on artificial, nutrient-poor foods, consuming minimally processed whole foods offers benefits, including better physical and mental health. By prioritizing whole foods, we can prevent diseases and support overall well-being, just as many cultures have done for centuries. Shifting away from ultra-processed foods is not an extreme choice but a necessary step toward healthier living.



Ella Pattie
Editor



Pictured above: Melanie Bishop, Arthur Bishop, Eleanor Bishop, Ruth Bishop, Katherine Bishop, and President Dr. Steve Bishop

Review of the Year: Dr. Steve Bishop continues to keep Southwest Mississippi Community College at the top

By Lorelai Davis, Co-Editor

Dr. Steve Bishop continued his excellent leadership of Southwest Mississippi Community College, completing his fourteenth year as president. He continued to serve as Chair and President Liaison for Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and worked closely with the SMCC Alumni Association and SMCC Foundation.

Dr. Bishop was committed to the continued improvement of Southwest's campus, programs,

courses, and general environment. His vision and passion for the success of Southwest was evidenced by multiple improvement projects and upgrades throughout the campus. During the year, the college celebrated the construction and completion of a Soccer Field House, a tennis complex, and an outdoor pavilion. Charlie's Grill underwent a comprehensive renovation that enhanced the dining experience for students and employees. The renovation of

Charlie's Grill and the addition of a coffee shop provided a vibrant space for socializing, studying, and relaxation. Additionally, construction of a new Women's dormitory and construction of a new baseball stadium and press box were completed. In response to the evolving educational landscape, significant strides were made in the college's digital transformation efforts through the implementation of a new website, a single sign-on system, and an

electronic diploma system.

Dr. Bishop continued to place heavy priority on student life and activities. Dr. Bishop's encouragement and participation in these activities showed how truly passionate he was for the students, the community, and SMCC. His dedication inspired individuals on and off campus. He, along with all the faculty and staff of SMCC, continued to build a better future for the college, community, and state.



"Chemistry Test"

photo by Ella Pattie



"You Should Have Studied"

photo by Lorelai Davis



"We Need a Break"

photo by Ella Pattie

Art is making a Big Splash

By T Hunt, Staff Writer

Southwest has recently added to its art department a new teacher, Mrs. Kayla Walker, and she is making momentous changes with hopes of bringing the art department by cultivating new expectations. Mrs. Walker recently hosted an art show complementary to the Christmas Stageband Show highlighting visual and performance arts together for the first time. The show began December 5th through the 8th displaying student art to the public. The student art show displayed art from 3-Art Appreciation classes, Drawing I-II, Painting I-II, Design I-II, 3-D Design, and Art for Elementary Teachers. Over 100 Southwest students took part, both art majors and non-art majors alike. Mrs. Walker said, “It was a joy to see the non-art majors excited to show off their work to fellow students, teammates, family, and friends.

I foresee art shows becoming a long tradition displaying the hard work and talent within the SMCC art department. We plan on hosting two art shows per year in conjunction with the Stageband Show. The Christmas show will remain an atmosphere of a classy gala, while the Spring show will be spunkier and fun with black lights and glow-in-the-dark art.” Mrs. Walker is extremely excited to be renovating the Art Department with new easels. Plans are to host an art competition for local high school students as well as community partnerships, and local working artists painting plain air is in the works. I believe that Southwest’s art department will benefit greatly from Mrs. Walker’s tenacity; I am personally excited for what is to come as a fellow art student. So, keep your eyes out April 3rd -6th for Mrs. Walker has promised more to come.

Sing! Sing!

By Shelby Travis, Staff Writer

This year’s choir sings masterpieces in every show they sing. Under the direction of Joe Elliott, Director of Choral Activities all individuals sing their heart out with their uplifting voices. They evoke much emotion with the sense of unity they create, and their contagious amount of enthusiasm on stage inspires the audience at every concert. It is evidently clear how wonderful an example the choir is of how music can bring people together. The size of the choir is one of the biggest we have ever had at SMCC. A large amount of them went to the choir festival at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College.

Assisting is Mrs. Carolyn Fenn, who accompanies the choir by playing and teaching the piano. Dr. Lorrie Stringer helps with the sopranos, while also helping is Christopher Hart, minister of music at Centenary United Methodist Church. Additionally, Mrs. Allison Pannell from Navilla Baptist Church works with the altos of the choir.

The choir represents the student body well with their community involvement and with their student organization involvement too. Many choir members are included in the band, and the two groups had a concert together on March 4th. The organization is consistently impressive and never fails to amaze their audience. It’s so obvious how much work and dedication the choir puts into their practice and performances. They always make Southwest Mississippi Community College exceedingly proud.



Steel Pans: Tahlaya Royal, Evana Martin, Addison Ward, Alaric McDowell, Laci Cooper, Cheyene Simmonds, Skylar Bush; second row: Greg Haskins, instructor; Devin Williams, Kaylee Stringer, Amber McAlister, Jeb Robison, Ramirez Jennings, Kody Hewitt, Danielle Wallace, Madison Carraway



Tennis Team: Martina Transcoso, Kayla Eby, Malorie Dreher, manager; Jacey Jones, Tammy-Ann Lombardt, Anna Comeaux; second row: Manan Kumar, Mansur Khajimuradov, Will Knight, Jay Magee, Thomas Simpson, Juan Riano Cifuentes, Cameron Leon

photo by Chuck Barnes



Baseball Team: Trace Roy, Jackson Hawsey, Dawson Richard, Darius Dampier, Robbie HoKamp, Lane Steinwinder, Jake Meilstrup, Bruner Rushing, Cameron Bolden, Jonathon Miller, Zayne Landry, Peyton Perdue; second row: Gage Hinnant, Noah Russ, Will McLeod, Cooper Lewis, Rhyson Carroway, Jax Albritton, Hunter Parker, Alden Spencer, Easton Boyte, Davis Knight, Cody Presley, Matt Newman, Andrew Burgess, Camp Segrest, Brody Walker, Carter Hathcock, Justin Domiano, Garrison Shows, Tanner Moore, Cru Bella, Nik Carney, T.K. Davis

photo by Chuck Barnes



SoftballTeam: Tye Boone, Skye Sharp, Camren Strittman, Layla Chavarria, Maggie Wilks, Malley Chase Faulkner, Erin Acey; second row: Abbey Pevey, Allie Ladnier, Corin Talbot, Kate Clements, Alyssa Leggett, Gabby Carr, Taylor Dunbar, Lauryn Roebuck, Liberty Gillihan



Golf Team: Jay O’Hern, Coach; Jaxson Johnson, Daillon Kryzanowski, Tayt Culpepper, Caden White, Reece Stallings, Ethan Legg; not pictured: Ben Adams and Devin Boom

photo by Chuck Barnes



Softball: Erin Acey makes the throw.

photo Chuck Barnes

BSU attends Conference at MS State

By Ella Pattie, Editor

Thirty members of the Baptist Student Union (BSU) attended the annual spring conference hosted by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board on February 21-22. Held at Mississippi State University’s BSU in Starkville, the event gathered over 800 students from across the state for weekend of spiritual growth, worship, and fellowship.

One of the most meaningful moments of the conference was the commissioning of 146 students, including two from Southwest, who will dedicate their summers to both international and domestic missions, as well as those serving during spring break. This ceremony highlighted obedience of these students to Jesus’ command to go and make disciples.

The conference featured three worship sessions led by musician Cory Carr and a series of teachings from speaker Paul Worcester. For many attendees, Worcester’s message from Matthew 9:36-38—emphasizing the plentiful harvest and the need for more workers—left a lasting impression. Students were challenged to move beyond being habitual Christians and embrace their role as missionaries, both in daily life and globally. Throughout the weekend, Worcester equipped students with scripture and resources to help them live out their faith actively.

It was clear that God moved in the hearts and lives of BSU members, deepening their faith and sense of purpose. The spring conference not only strengthened the relationships among the attendees but also deepened their relationship with God. As students return to their everyday lives, they carry the message of Matthew 9:36-38 with them, committed to making a lasting impact both on campus and abroad.

Tennis teams defeat Coastal Alabama-North

By Travis Connelley, SID

It was a good day all around for the Southwest Men’s and Women’s Tennis teams at home Saturday against Coastal Alabama – North as both recorded wins. The Lady Bears shut out the Lady Coyotes 6-0 while the Bears defeated the Coyotes 6-3.

“I just got done telling the team, everyone contributed,” Southwest head coach Dean Clower said. “If you don’t enjoy picking up and motivating your teammates, then you need to play individuals and don’t need to be on a team.”

On the women’s side, the Lady Bears (1-4) got things going early in doubles play. The No. 1 team of Martina Troncoco and Anna Comeaux won their match 8-0 while the No. 2 team of Kayla Eby and Jacey Jones took their match 8-1.

In singles play, singles No. 1 Troncoco and No. 2 Comeaux each won 6-0, 6-0. No. 3 singles Jones won her match 6-2, 6-0 while No. 4 singles Eby picked up a 6-2, 6-3 win.

On the men’s side, the Bears (4-2) also got off to a strong start as the No. 1 doubles team of Mansur Khajimuradov and Manan Kumar won 8-2 followed by the No. 2 team of Juan Cifuentes and Cameron Leon taking an 8-4 victory.

In the singles matches, the No. 1 single player Khajimuradov took home a 6-0, 6-2 win. Afterward, Khajimuradov said that he was glad to get the win adding that the teams knew the level of importance the match carried despite it being non-conference.

“I was focused to win today because it was a very important match, not only for me but for the whole team,” he said. “We needed to get back on the right track in order to prepare for the next match which is conference against Northwest.”

Also picking up men’s singles wins was No. 2 Kumar who won 6-1, 6-2; No. 4 singles Leon who won 7-6, 6-4 and No. 6 singles Thomas Simpson who claimed a 6-0, 6-4 win.

Go Bears!

BSU: Serving Others

By Ella Pattie, Editor

The Baptist Student Union served as a place for Christian students to gather and grow in their relationship with Christ as well as each other. The BSU was under the direction of Trey Hess. Worship services were held on Monday evenings as well as Bible study on Tuesday nights, which helped equip students to boldly live for Christ. Every Wednesday afternoon, they hosted “Noonday,” where a local church provided a meal and dessert in exchange for a small donation. The donations collected at “Noonday” helped support BSU members as they shared the gospel both locally and nationwide through mission trips.

Throughout the year, the doors of the BSU remained open for all students to go in and fellowship. Whether it was playing a game of ping pong or pool, watching Monday Night Football, or using the study rooms to isolate from distractions, it distinguished itself as a hotspot for students. Throughout the year, they hosted events such as a Luau, movie nights, and a prayer walk to help foster community among the student body.

Bear Trackers: Southwest Recruiters

By Lorelai Davis, Co-Editor

The Bear Trackers, a group of students representing the very best of the college’s leadership, hospitality, and reliability, aimed to serve the campus in a multitude of ways. Each Bear Tracker was carefully selected, ensuring they would embody the spirit of the college. Focused on community impact and the enhancement of campus, they were dedicated to their goals. They were sure to flourish under the leadership of Karinlee Brister, Academic Recruiter.

Over the course of the year, the Bear Trackers cultivated their involvement campus, whether it be by leading or assisting group tours, hosting fundraisers, or attending countless events. Leading up to the year, the Bear Trackers tackled orientation of new students, set across three days over the summer. They were responsible for leading groups of students around the most vital places on campus, helping the students to complete tasks necessary before the start of the semester and showing them the lay of campus. The highlight of their year was the annual Princess Ball, a fun-filled night for fathers and daughters to enjoy. Together, the Bear Trackers served as an example of the best and brightest the college had to offer, leaving an impression for years to come.



Christmas Dorm Door Winners: Top: First place suite 216: Kearia Dawson, Akebia Lacking, Jara Smith, Michelle Dillon, Montayviah Davis and Kierstin Givens; Middle: Second place suite 201:Aly Lynch and Jordan Nellum; Above: Third place suite 113: A'terriShowers, Jer'Nyla Magee, Qytishiya Francis, Tyteyanna Barnes; not pictured: Raquera Dangerfield and Kaylen Purifoy photos by Joyce Mabry



Editors complete the yearbook: Natali Moore, Yearbook and Newspaper Copy Editor; Lorelai Davis, Yearbook Editor and Newspaper Co-Editor; Ella Pattie, Newspaper Editor and Yearbook Co-Editor; Joyce Mabry, Yearbook and Newspaper advisor. These students receive Journalism Scholarships sponsored by Jack Ryan, Editor of the *Enterprise-Journal*, and faculty who support the Journalism Department.

USA Defends Gold at WJC

By Ella Pattie, Editor

If you are not familiar with the World Juniors Championship (WJC), allow me to introduce you to my favorite winter break tradition. The International Ice Hockey federation (IIHF) tournament begins on December 26 and wraps up in the first week of the new year, with a new world champion. World Juniors features the top ten U20 teams from around the world, giving the competitors an opportunity to showcase their talents to NHL scouts while fiercely battling for a gold medal and representing their country.

As far as competition goes, the WJC hosts player from various backgrounds. Some have already been drafted into the NHL or even made their professional debut, while others are doing their best to solidify their position in that year’s draft rankings. Some will go on to be hockey legends and become one of the view that gets to hoist the Stanley Cup. However, for many, this is the biggest stage they will ever compete on.

Ottawa was given the honor of hosting the tournament, with group A preliminaries taking place at the Canadian Tire Centre (home to the Ottawa Senators) and Group B at TD Place (home

to the Ottawa 67s and Ottawa Black Jacks). Group A consisted of the United States, Finland, Canada, Latvia, and Germany, while Group B featured Sweden, Czechia, Slovakia, Switzerland, and Kazakhstan.

The United States entered the tournament as the defending 2024 Gold Medalist, where they defeated the host country Sweden in a 6-2 final. Ten players from the 2024 gold medal roster returned for the 2025 competition, with five given leadership roles on the team. Ryan Leonard (Boston College/ Washington Capitals) was named Captain, and four others were named alternate captains: Oliver Moore (University of Minnesota/ Chicago Blackhawks), Danny Nelson (Notre Dame/ New York Rangers), Zeev Buium (University of Denver/ Minnesota Wild), and Gabe Perreault (Boston College/ New York Rangers).

The Americans kicked off the preliminary rounds with two consecutive victories: a 10-4 win against Germany and a 5-1 win over Latvia. However, Finland posed a challenge as the U.S. lost 4-3 in overtime, but they closed the preliminaries with a 4-1 victory over Canada. Team USA then defeated Switzerland 7-2 in the quarterfinals, advancing to the semifinal against Czechia. The

Czechs have always been an underrated team, so I was concerned going into this game, but there was no need to fear—Team USA cruised for a 4-1 win. This brought us to the gold medal game: a rematch between Finland and the United States.

Finland grabbed and early lead in the first period with a low glove-side goal by Jesse Kiiskinen (HPK/Detroit Red Wings). Shortly after, Team USA tied the game when Ryan Leonard’s shot attempt was rebounded in the crease by James Hagens (USNTDP/ 2025 draft prospect) for a goal. The last goal of the first period came when Finnish player Tuomas Uronen (Kingston Frontenacs/ Vegas Golden Knights) scored a high wrist shot. Five minutes into the second period, two U.S. defenders collided, resulting in another wrist shot by Finnish player Emil Pieniniemi (Kingston Frontenacs/ Pittsburgh Penguins), giving Finland a 3-1 lead. Team USA’s Brandon Svoboda (Boston University/ San Jose Sharks) brought the Americans back to 3-2 with a shot that bounced off of a Finnish player and hit the goal post, eventually finding its way to the back of the net. With 28 seconds left in the second, Cole Hutson (Boston University/ Washington Capitals) split two Finnish players and scored the

tying goal. The second period ended tied 3-3, and heavy defensive action in the third period pushed the game into overtime.

In IIHF tournaments, overtime in the WJC Gold Medal games consists of twenty-minute sudden-death periods played until one teams nets the winning goal. Each team is allowed three skaters and one goal tender on the ice. Eight minutes into overtime, Team USA’s Teddy Stiga (Boston College/ Nashville Predators) scored the golden goal, giving the U.S. a 4-3 win over Finland. This marked the first back-to-back gold medal for the U.S. in their World Juniors history.

With the goal horn blasting in the background, gloves, helmets, and sticks flew through the air in what seemed like slow motion as the players rushed to the ice to celebrate. This was followed up by Finland receiving their silver medals, and the U.S. receiving their gold medals.

With their gold medals around their necks and the American flag flying high in the arena, Team USA stood side by side with their arms locked around one another belting the “Star Spangled Banner.” Captain Ryan Leonard then presented the trophy to his teammates as “Free Bird” by Lynyrd Skynyrd echoed in the background.

Stageband Makes Some Noise

By Brit Vines, Staff Writer

I think it’s safe to say Stageband is an integral part of the Southwest Mississippi Community College campus and our communities as well. The Stageband Show is a massive event that brings thousands of people to our campus every few months. While many of us only see the shows on performance nights, there is so much preparation and practice that goes on behind the scenes. As a member of the Southwest Stageband, I believe it’s important to truly understand the work that all of us put in. I didn’t understand the magnitude either until I joined. I’m here to give you a quick inside look at what goes on in rehearsals and the roles everyone plays to help turn the wheels on this titan of a show.

Stageband rehearsals occur every Tuesday and Thursday at 10:50 and end whenever we get done with what we need to. Everyone does their own thing until Mrs. Lorin Lewis begins rehearsal. Now, I will preface by saying that every Stageband rehearsal is slightly different. Usually, the first few minutes of each rehearsal are spent figuring things out—costumes, songs, solos, music, and anything else that needs attention. As we get closer to the show dates, rehearsal gets more structured because most things are already sorted out. Once things are organized, singers usually go to the choir room to practice vocals with Mrs. Lorin, and dancers stay in the auditorium to practice choreography with Mrs. Laci Goldbold. After about thirty minutes of doing things separately, all members of Stageband will go back into the auditorium to practice choreography for whatever song we are learning. Some numbers require lots of dancing and coordination while others do not.

During this time, the Stageband crew usually works on the set, whether it is logistics or actual construction. As the show day approaches, they primarily focus on lighting and sound.

The crew plays a huge part in the show, and I honestly think they’re often overlooked. If you’re a part of crew and reading this, thank you! The show would not function without you.

After we’ve gone over everything that the directors feel we needed to for the day, we are informed of any upcoming events or extra rehearsals, and we are dismissed. As mentioned earlier, every rehearsal is different depending on who’s there, how close it is to the actual show, and what needs to be worked on. I hope this article gave you a new perspective and appreciation for how much work goes into the shows. Everyone does an amazing job helping everything come together by doing their part. It’s awesome to be a part of Stageband, and I’d highly recommend it for anyone interested.



Brent Harris gets 200th win as Lady Bears top Delgado



By Travis Connelley, Sports Information Director

December 13, 2024

A little over six years since the first milestone of 100 wins for Southwest Women’s Basketball Head Coach Brent Harris, he conquered another Thursday night, picking up win No. 200 following a 69-44 victory over Delgado, the same team who his Lady Bears defeated back on November 5, 2018 to help him reach the century mark.

“I’m happy and it is a nice milestone. Former coaches, current coach, former players, current players and administrators, they have a lot more to do with it,” said a humble Harris. “There are a lot of hands that go into this and I am proud.”

In addition to getting his 200th win against the same school, Harris added that earlier in the evening, he noticed another similarity.

“Somebody a plaque or a picture (after the 100th win) and I am wearing the same suit!” he said jokingly. “That may say something about me and I need to upgrade my wardrobe! I only looked at it right before I left my office!”

In the first quarter, the Lady Bears (10-0) got off to a strong start, jumping out to a 10-0 advantage as Bethany Graves and Moosie Walls baskets were bookends to 3-pointers from Kara Beth Addison and Mookie Lampley. Southwest led 14-7 at the end of the first quarter.

Even though Southwest continued to find success on the offensive end towards the early stages of the second quarter, as did Delgado as the Dolphins kept pace. In the final minute of the quarter, Addison and Lampley flashed their long-range shooting skills once again as each nailed a 3-pointer helping the Lady Bears finish the quarter strong and take a 33-19 lead into the locker room at the half.

The first half of the third quarter saw both teams struggle to find their offensive games. Kalea Williams broke the scoreless streak for Southwest at the 5:26 mark with a 3-pointer before Shanell Celestine took the reigns scoring the next six Lady Bears points.

“I feel like we definitely dominated in the post,” she said. “I felt like we took advantage of their post defense.”

In the closing stages of the third quarter, Ja’Kya Brown kept the Lady Bear offense pointing in the right direction, nailing a 3-pointer giving Southwest a 45-28 lead heading into the fourth quarter.

ter.

Addison splashed-in two baskets to open the fourth quarter scoring for Southwest as the Lady Bears continued to create distance between themselves and Delgado.

A little more than halfway through the fourth quarter, a 9-0 run gave Southwest a 65-41 advantage and built even more momentum that the hosts used to close out the contest.

After the win, Coach Harris was presented a special basketball from Assistant Coach Alissa Adams and Southwest Athletics Director Ken Jackson, commemorating his 200th win.

Addison led the Lady Bears with 16 points while Graves posted 14 and Celestine 10.

Despite leading for much of Thursday’s contest against Bishop State, a smothering defense combined with a rough outing from the free throw line hurt the Bears as they came up short against the Wildcats, falling the 97-92 on Day 1 of the Alabama/Mississippi Challenge.

“I just though that we didn’t handle their pressure good enough,” Southwest head coach Corey Schmidt said. “We had a lead for most of the game, but they picked up the pressure and we turned the ball over and that gave them some easy shots in transition.”

The Bears (6-6) were led in scoring by Tylik Weeks who had 24 points. LeVionne Lindsey poured in 20 points while Daylen Thomas posted 14.

Southwest led 45-38 at the half but lost its momentum in the second. Down the stretch, Jay Kennedy kept the Bears within striking distance, nailing two 3-pointers, but the Wildcats connected on key free throws in the closing moments to maintain the lead before sealing the win.

Southwest shot 21-of-37 from the free throw line.

January 16, 2025

If there was a word to describe the Bears’ play during Thursday’s conference opener at Co-Lin, resilient may be the most accurate.

Southwest battled back from deficits of at least six points on four different occasions including one with just over 6:00 to go in regulation before forcing two overtimes and pulling out a 95-89 win over the Wolves in the MACCC Conference opener. The win marked the fourth-consecutive for the Bears.

“There seems to be a lot of those (thrillers) against Co-Lin,” said an exhausted Southwest head coach Corey Schmidt following the game. “This was back-to-back years of overtime against Co-Lin. This was a back-and-forth game. They made some big-time shots and I thought that our guys did an amazing job responding, staying together and staying tough.”

Many fans jam-packed Mullen Gymnasium with many rooting on Southwest including the Bear baseball team who sat behind the

home bench and fired up their fellow Southwest student athletes.

“We had our whole baseball team here and I can’t say thank you enough to Coach (Jack) Edmonson! That’s incredible! That’s incredible for him to bring the whole baseball team up here at a road game. We had a ton of people behind us as well and you felt the energy when we made plays. I was super-happy about that.”

The Bears (10-6, 1-0) came out swinging right out of the gate. Hami Ndiaye and Josh Schonback both splashed-in 3-pointers before LeVionne Lindsey joined the fray with a basket giving Southwest a quick 8-0 advantage.

But the momentum was short-lived as the Wolves mounted a comeback. The hosts rallied to take a 20-13 advantage. And even though Southwest battled back and pulled within two following a make from Robert Flantroy at the 11:19 mark of the first half, Co-Lin rallied once more to maintain its lead.

As the first half wore on, Southwest stayed within striking distance and its perseverance paid off as a Ndiaye make with 3:08 to go gave the Bears a 35-33 lead. Flantroy closed out the period with a field goal at the buzzer putting the Bears up 39-37 at the half.

In the early stages of the second half, Co-Lin grabbed a 3-point lead at 46-43. But Tylik Weeks helped lead a Bear comeback with five points over a 1:30 span helping Southwest pull even at 48.

The Bears lost the momentum once more and trailed by as much as six at 55-49 with about 13:00 to go, however, they displayed a their resilience and rallied.

The turning point of the second half came with just under 7:00 to go in regulation. After a Ndiaye basket was answered with one from Co-Lin, the Bears rattled-off 10 of the next 12 points highlighted by makes from Weeks which acted as bookends to the run.

As Southwest held a 79-76 lead with just under a minute to go, their hopes of pulling out the win in regulation were dashed as Co-Lin connected on a 3-pointer and forced overtime.

After both teams went back and forth in the extra frame, a second overtime period was needed and even though they were tired, the Bears never quit.

With :40 to go and Southwest clinging to a 90-89 advantage, the Wolves went with a full-court press on defense and while Lindsey and Fazl Oshodi both had to battle the smothering defense, Tylik Weeks managed to get the ball and capitalized with an emphatic dunk causing the Bear fans to cheer loudly and make their presence known.

“I was in the corner and when Fazl had the ball in the middle I really wanted an alley (oop), but I

cut and I had to dunk,” said Weeks who added that teammate Shomari Jenkins predicted his dunk beforehand.

The dunk put Southwest up 92-89 and one more basket by Weeks :28 later helped give the Bears the win.

Weeks led the Bears, posting a double-double with 30 points and 10 rebounds to go along with six assists. Lindsey recorded 13 points while Ndiaye and Jaylen Haliburton each had 12.

The Lady Bears entered Thursday’s contest at Co-Lin, hoping to not only shake a three-game skid but also start off conference play on the right foot. But struggles from beyond the arch combined with costly turnovers hurt Southwest as it came up short against the Lady Wolves 57-53.

“A lot of things that we did wrong — I don’t know if it changes the outcome — are correctable,” Southwest head coach Brent Harris said. “We had the ball taken away from us and we didn’t shoot it well.”

The Lady Bears (10-4, 0-1 MACCC) went toe-to-toe with the Lady Wolves in the early stages of the contest. Moosie Walls helped lead the charge with six points including a pair from the free throw line. Her makes capped-off six-consecutive makes from the charity stripe for the Lady Bears who took a 12-10 lead at the end of the first quarter.

The back-and-forth battle ensued in the second quarter and even though Southwest grabbed a five-point advantage at 21-16, the Lady Wolves got into rhythm and clawed their way back putting Southwest down 26-25 at the half.

It was more of the same in the third quarter as the Lady Bears once again took a five-point lead only to have the Lady Wolves answer right back. This time, however, Southwest finished the third quarter strong with a 4-0 run consisting of a Gracie Miller make followed by a pair of free throws from Kara Beth Addison.

In the fourth, the tussle continued with neither team taking more than a two-point advantage through the first half of the period. With just under 5:00 to go in the contest, a pair of misses for Southwest at the free throw line was answered on the other end by a Co-Lin basket, putting the Lady Bears down by four. From there, the Lady Bears couldn’t get the consistent offense it needed as the Lady Wolves held on for the win.

Bethany Graves led Southwest with a double-double scoring 17 points and pulling down 12 rebounds. Miller posted 12 points while Addison and Walls each had eight. Walls also tallied 11 rebounds.

January 27, 2025

Just two days removed from suffering their first conference loss in heart-breaking fashion at Holmes, the Bears quickly regained their composure

Saturday and overcame a tough task against a scrappy East Mississippi squad, hanging on for a 73-70 decision over the Lions.

“That was a fun one,” said a relieved Bear head coach Corey Schmidt. “I’m proud of our guys for figuring out a way to win. Every game the rest of the way is going to be tough. We are going to have to find ways and I am just proud of our guys for finding a way.”

For the first few minutes of the contest, both the Bears (11-7, 2-1) and the Lions tried to find their footing offensively. Trailing 9-5 at the 15:53 mark, Southwest rallied. The Bears put together a 7-0 run to not only take their first lead of the contest, but grab a 12-9 advantage.

Not long afterward, the Bears unfortunately lost momentum as the Lions put together a run of their own putting the hosts down 20-14 with just under 10:00 to go in the half.

The deficit for Southwest stretched to as much as nine at 29-20 but the Bears showed great resilience and narrowed the gap to just four at 35-31 at the half.

Just over 4:00 into the second half, the Bears once again grabbed the lead following a basket from Daylen Thomas making the score 38-37.

Both teams traded the lead on multiple occasions over the next 5:00 of play.

With just under 7:00 to go, a make from Tylik Weeks gave the Bears the lead once again, one they would not relinquish for the rest of the contest.

Even though the Bears watched their lead shrink to as little as one on two different occasions down the stretch, they never lost their cool.

With :11 to go, Southwest held a slim 71-70 advantage and following a miss by the Bears on the free throw line during a 1-and-1 attempt, the Lions grabbed the rebound but mistakenly called timeout with none remaining resulting in a technical foul against East Mississippi allowing Southwest two free throws attempts. Fazl Oshodi connected on both, helping us to seal the game.

Weeks led the charge for Southwest with 25 points while LeVionne Lindsey had 13, Josh Schonback 11 and Oshodi 10.

After the game, Weeks said it felt good to be playing back in Summit after opening conference play with two road contests.

“It definitely feels good to be home,” he said. “Playing for the crowd, a great environment, we just needed a win. We had a couple of road games (and) we definitely had to get a win.”

He added that he was proud of how his team turned things around just 48 hours removed from a tough loss.

“In the last game, we played hard but we couldn’t get it together in the end,” Weeks said. “Today, we fought back and that is the main thing. Coach teaches

and preaches toughness and we brought a lot of toughness today.”

The famous phrase, “There’s no place like home” from the movie ‘The Wizard of Oz’ rang true for the Lady Bears Saturday as their first contest inside the Bear Basketball Center since December 17 was a complete team effort as they shut down visiting East Mississippi 83-57 giving Southwest its first conference win and halted a five-game skid.

“That is what I told our team, we are the only team in a 15-team league that hasn’t played a (conference) home game,” Southwest head coach Brent Harris said. “It was good to be home.”

Southwest (11-5, 1-2 MACCC) grabbed the early advantage despite losing a key piece in Bethany Graves briefly to a lower leg injury very early in the contest. Her absence sent an immediate signal to fellow sophomore Kara Beth Addison to step up her game and help fill the void.

“I saw her go out and I said ‘it is me, I have to step up and do it,’” said Addison who led the Lady Bears with 22 points including a 6-for-6 performance from the free throw line.

Addison took the reins for the Lady Bears scoring nine of the team’s 15 first quarter points helping Southwest take a four-point advantage into the second quarter.

In the early stages of the ensuing period, Southwest ramped its game up going on a 13-3 run in the first five and a half minutes of the period as it began to pull away from East Mississippi. A big reason for the Lady Bears’ success during the rally was the play of freshman Akeelah Hobson who scored seven points. Graves also made her presence known, showing her toughness by returning to the floor despite her injury and getting an early basket during the run.

For the remainder of the quarter, the Lady Bears kept their foot on the gas, building a 12-point advantage at 36-24 at the half.

It was more of the same in the third quarter as Graves kicked off the period with a basket followed by a three-point play before Mady Smith followed with a 3-pointer on the ensuing possession.

One key factor in the game for the Lady Bears was free throw shooting and it stood out in the third quarter as they connected on all seven attempts on their way to a 17-of-19 effort for the game. Southwest led 64-46 at the end of the third.

The Lady Bears kept their foot on the gas in the fourth as makes from Moosie Walls, Gracie Miller, Addison and Smith helped lead the charge. Coach Harris emptied his bench as well, giving reserves key playing time and Southwest didn’t miss a beat, finishing strong down the stretch.

Joining Addison in double-digit scoring was Hobson and Miller who each posted 11 points.

Baseball Team plays to win

February 17, 2025

Following last week’s split against Co-Lin in non-conference play, the Bears hoped to keep the arrow pointing in the right direction as they welcomed two more familiar foes to Summit Monday in Mississippi Gulf Coast and Meridian.

And despite putting up a fight, the Bears could not keep up falling 3-0 to the Bulldogs and 8-4 to the Eagles.

Against the Bulldogs, the Bears (4-7) fell behind in the third inning on a sacrifice bunt.

The 1-0 deficit for Southwest stayed true until the eighth when the Bulldogs added two more runs, one on a ground out and the other on an RBI single, two at bats later.

The Bears tried to answer but could not get into rhythm as the Bulldogs sealed the win.

Cam Bolden, Trace Roy, Lane Steinwinder and Zayne Landry all collected hits for Southwest.

In the game against the Eagles, the Bears fell behind 3-0 in the top of the first but answered right back in the bottom half of the inning.

Back-to-back singles from Bolden and Steinwinder were complemented by one from Cody Presley which scored Bolden putting Southwest on the board. Later in the inning both Steinwinder and Presley scored when Roy singled to center field, tying the game at 3.

Another three-run rally by Meridian in the second once again put Southwest down and this time, unfortunately, the Bears could not respond.

The Eagles added to the lead in the fifth with two additional runs.

The Bears scored their final run in the sixth when Cru Bella raced home following a passed ball, making the score the eventual final.

Steinwinder led the Bears with two hits while Roy had two RBIs.

February 21, 2025

Dawson Richard had arguably his best performance as a Bear Friday helping the Southwest close the day on a high note with a 3-0 shutout win over Wallace State in the nightcap of a pair of contests. In Game 1, the Bears unfortunately fell 2-0 to Kirkwood. Both games were played at East Central in Decatur.

“We played really, really good baseball all day today,” Southwest head coach Jack Edmonson said. “We gave up two runs in the first inning (of Game 1) and then we went the next 13 innings without giving up a run.”

In Game 2, Richard, went all seven innings for the Bears (5-8) giving up only two hits, and two walks while striking out 11. His 11 Ks was fourth most by a Bear in a single game.

Richard struck out three of the first five batters he faced as he set the tone early.

He got help from his offense in the second inning. Cody Presley

led off with a double and later touched home on a single from Landry putting Southwest up 1-0.

The Bears scored their second run in the fourth on a Carther Hathcock sacrifice fly to center scoring Cooper Lewis.

The third run came in the sixth when Jonathon Miller singled in Landry making the score the eventual final.

Richard shut the door on the Lions in the seventh retiring three of four batters, striking out two in the process.

Miller and Landry led the Bears with two hits and an RBI apiece with the latter also adding a run scored.

In Game 1, the two Kirkwood runs came in the first inning on a two-out triple to right putting the Bears (5-8) in an early hole.

Southwest scattered a few hits over the next few innings but could not get the runners home to respond.

Cameron Bolden, Lane Steinwinder, Gage Hinnant and Zayne Landry all had hits for the Bears.

February 26, 2025

Southwest got big contributions from a trio of sophomores in Darius Dampier, Cody Presley and Trace Roy, Wednesday, as the Bears scored early and held off a late rally from Hinds, sealing a 4-3 win. The game was the first of two played at Co-Lin. The Bears unfortunately fell to the Wolves 5-1 in the nightcap.

Southwest head coach Jack Edmonson agreed that the trio stood out in the Game 1 win but added that he was proud of the way the team did as a whole.

“Our guys played well and got some hits when we needed them,” he said. “I’m really proud of the way that we played there.”

Presley led the Bears going 2-for-2 with an RBI and two runs scored. Roy had a triple and two runs scored.

Dampier — who got the start — went 5.0 innings giving up only three hits, no runs and one walk while striking out three.

“Darius pitched five shutout innings and he did a good job,” said Edmonson who was very pleased with the outing of the sophomore left-hander, who notched his first win Wednesday.

While Dampier regained his composure and battled out of a bit of a jam with two runners on in the first, the offense of the Bears (6-9) got established in the bottom half of the inning and provided some help. Walks to Cam Bolden and Presley put two runners on. Bolden advanced to third on a defensive interference ruling before both he and Presley touched home during the ensuing at bat when Roy tripled to left-center putting Southwest up 2-0. “Cody (Presley) did a good job before me, drawing a walk and with two runners on, two outs and a 3-1 count,” Roy siad. “I was looking for something over the plate that I can get a barrel on and

he threw me a fastball over the middle and I was able to get my foot down, hit it well and it worked out for us.”

With the 2-0 lead, Dampier used that as motivation and settled down, being a thorn in the side of the Eagles over the next two innings which included not only keeping Hinds off the board, but also picking up two strikeouts in the third.

He got additional help from the offense in the bottom half of the third when Presley doubled to center and scored later in the inning on an error by the Hinds shortstop, making the score 3-0.

The Bears added to their lead two innings later when Cooper Lewis, who singled earlier in the inning, touched home following a Presley single to left increasing the Bear lead to 4-0.

The Eagles scored two runs in the sixth and rallied in the seventh, plating one run and loading the bases with one out before Bolden converted a huge 6-3 double play to end the game and preserve the win for Southwest.

In the nightcap against Co-Lin, Southwest once again made the first move, lighting up its side of the scoreboard first in the top of the first inning. Lewis hit a line drive double to left and scored three at bats later when Roy singled to center giving the Bears a 1-0 advantage.

The momentum, unfortunately, didn’t last as the Wolves answered with a three-run bottom of the

first with scores coming on a double and a two-run home run putting the Bears down 3-1.

Southwest once again swung the bats well in the second putting two runners on following singles from Davis Knight and Jonathon Miller, but they were unable to score. Co-Lin scored two runs in the sixth on an error followed by an RBI single, making the score the eventual final.

Roy led the charge in the game with a hit, and an RBI.



May Flowers

By TK Hunt,
Staff Writer

Ms. Ashley Weathers, Southwest’s criminal justice advisor, has been selected to give this year’s Mississippi Humanities Council Lecture. Although this accomplishment is one of many, as she will also gain her doctorate this spring from Mississippi State University; we are proud to announce that she will present excerpts from her research at the lecture to be held on February 28, 2025, at 1:00 pm, on the second floor of the Holmes Student Union. Ms. Weathers will address the barriers that exist in implementing Prison Education Programs in higher education in the state of Mississippi. She has recently helped to establish a Prison Education Program (PEP) here at SMCC.

The program gives prisoners the opportunity to improve their literacy, gain life skills, and further their education with courses in their chosen major. Ms. Weathers has taught in SMCC’s program since the Fall of 2022 with courses including, but not limited to Introduction to Sociology, American National Government, and Introduction to Criminal Justice. SMCC currently works with Wilkinson County Correctional Facility staff to facilitate educational opportunities for incarcerated learners in which serves as SMCC’s liaison for the PEP. The PEP gives her opportunities to collaborate with other programs and resources available on the SMCC campus such as the Student Success Center where she collaborated with the PBI director to gain necessary technology helping with the educational process at WCCF. She along with other SMCC educators have helped impact the lives of many prisoners by aiding their integration back into society through quality education. This program has shifted these incapacitated individuals to a more rehabilitative state as they realize the potential within themselves. I believe we should all take a page from her book and extend them a bit more grace than we have in the past. The penitentiary was created to be a form of penance and reform, so at what point does the reformation begin? The punishments and deterrents for crime have long reigned over the rehabilitative stage, so this program is one of many imperative steps in the right direction. Therefore, I could not think of anyone more fitting to give the Mississippi Humanities Lecture, as she has shown compassion to those who so many have written off as unfitting of humanity; which is one of the most benevolent things a human can do. So, today we give her, her flowers before she graces the stage to lecture us all on how to be a bit more humane. In the words of Karl Schmitt, “To err is human, but to err on the side of compassion is humane.”

ANNOUNCEMENT!!

The Proctored Testing Lab will be open regular hours Monday through Thursday of Spring Break (3/10--3/13) and closed that Friday (3/14). Please remind students that if they are able to schedule using the Proctoring link that means the testing lab will be open even though the rest of campus is closed and regardless of what they might hear anywhere else. Let me know if you have any questions. Thanks!--Jude



BSU: Olivia Goldman, Tristan Byrd, Bella Gaskin, Trey Hess, Director; Kassidi Watts, Hailey Carithers, Caroline Barcelona; second row: Skyler Meyers, Braden Paulk, Ty Deshotel, Will Knight, Raynie Dunaway

photo by Joyce Mabry



Bear Trackers: Sara Beth Jackson, Kassidi Watts, Athletic Ambassador Co-Chair; Bella Gaskin, Fundraising Co-Chair, Olivia Goldman, Fine Arts Ambassador Chair; Bella Bryant, Athletic Ambassador Co-Chair; Lorelai Davis, Co-President; Madeline Rabalais, Co-President; Makayla Huber, Vice President; Addison Ward, Freshmen Membership Co-Chair; Ruth Bishop, Adah Whitaker, Tanijah Garner, Orientation Student Co-Chair; Jalyne Bates, Freshmen Membership Co-Chair; Karinlee Brister, SMCC Academic Recruiter and Bear Tracker Sponsor; second row: Lana Burkett, Ariel Brown, Da’Shara Hannon, Kylie Dunaway, Shy Martin, Savannah Arnold, Adelyn McGraw, Josi Spears; third row: Daniela Cervantes Flores, Lexi Johnston, Emily Caston, Ella Pattie, Olivia Ellison, Adrianna Hall, Sophomore Membership Co-Chair; Natalie Fleming, Dana Pena, Morgan Keene; fourth row: Jordyn Nelligan, Campus Visits Co-Chair; Kaylee Stringer, Bryce LeBlanc, Jake Rutland, Bryan Walsh, Jazmyne Smith, Madison Carraway; not pictured: Brayden Green, Athletic Ambassador Co-Chair; Sequoia McCray, and Brooklyn Spence, Sophomore Membership Co-Chair

photo by Manuel Scott

SNOW DAY!

January 21, 2025

Noah Russ, Jake Meilstrup, and Davis Knight

photos by Manuel Scott



PTK: In Action

By Natali Moore,
Staff Writer

Phi Theta Kappa Omicron Delta Chapter, an honor society formed on scholastic accomplishment and advised by Dr. Jennifer McLaughlin, consisted of students who earned a 3.5 GPA. One hundred sixty students were inducted into the organization. The officers worked hard developing their leadership skills and projects that were significant to our campus and community. We hosted our monthly PTK meetings with an average of 35 members attending, and we completed monthly service projects including writing cards for our local nursing home residents and collecting canned goods for our very own SMCC Pantry.

Throughout the year, the group analyzed the goals of increasing membership, creating engagement, and completing their College Project and Honors-in-Action project. The Honors-in-Action project, SMCC Baby Bears Publish A Book, was developed by researching how preschoolers tell their stories. The first stories preschoolers tell is through pictures. The members logged more 30 volunteer hours going to the preschool to work with the children and getting their story about their artwork. All artwork and dictation were collected and a book of the children’s stories was produced. The Omicron Delta Chapter’s College Project hit close to home this year. The officer team worked closely with SMCC Administration to develop the project. We found some students on campus have issues with meeting their basic needs, so our chapter hosted a Dental Hygiene Week and distributed 1,000 dental hygiene kits to students, and departments such as, housing, counseling, and the SMCC Pantry. The PTK members and officers had a successful year serving their campus and community.

Football: Next Level

By Travis Connelley, SID

Eleven Southwest Bear football players signed to continue their athletic career at four-year universities. Defensive lineman Steve Mboumoua, from Quebec, Canada, signed with the University of Alabama. Defensive lineman Maliek Robertson, from Donaldsonville, LA, signed with Delta State University. Defensive lineman Jeffrey Hobbs, from Mendenhall, MS, signed with Delta State University. Offensive lineman LaDamion Williams, from Centerville, MS, signed with Coastal Carolina University. Offensive lineman Hackman Pierre, from Quebec, Canada, signed with Western Kentucky University. Defensive lineman Jeffrey Anderson Jr., from Buffalo, MS, signed with Delta State University. Defensive lineman Jaylon Price, from Sunflower MS, signed with Tennessee State University. Offensive lineman Anthonee Dunn, from Terry, MS, signed with Delta State University. Wide receiver Jordan Scott, from Lynchburg, VA, signed with Florida State University. Wide receiver Damarcco Blanton, from Natchez, MS, signed with Arkansas State University. Defensive back Kameron Carter, from Natchez, MS, signed with Louisiana Tech University. We are proud of these student athletes and wish them success as they continue their academic and athletic careers.



Beach Duck

by Lauren Coon










Holiday Gift Exchange

by Lauren Coon



ADS



The Southwest Mississippi Community College
Bear Trackers present the

The 12th Annual



Friday, March 21, 2025

6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

at the SMCC Horance C. Holmes Student Union
for princesses ages 4 through 12


Tickets on Sale
MONDAY,
FEBRUARY 24TH

Important Information:

Tickets are \$30 per princess and \$30 per adult. Princess must be accompanied by adult.

Tickets must be purchased in advance in SMCC Student Services located in Kenna Hall.

Southwest Mississippi Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, or disability in its programs, activities or employment practices. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries and grievances regarding the non-discrimination policies: Mrs. Rhonda Gibson, Director of Disability Support Services, 601.276.3885 ; Mr. Blake Brewer, Vice President for Student Affairs and Title IX Coordinator, 601.276.3717 ; SMCC, 1156 College Drive, Summit, MS 39666




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