

pineburr@smcc.edu

November 22, 2024

Serving SMCC Since 1940

Volume 80, No. 2

Campus Events

Monday, November 18

First Day for 4- Week

WBB vs Southern

Shreveport @ 5:30

MBB vs Southern

Shreveport @ 7:30 @

Summit

Tuesday, November 19

WBB vs LSU-Eunice

@ 5:30

MBB vs Baton Rouge

CC @ 7:30 @ Summit

Friday, November 22

Residence Halls Close

@ 3 for Thanksgiving

Break

Monday, November 25

Admin Offices Close

Sunday, December 1

Residence Halls Open

@ 4

Monday, December 2

WBB @ LSU-Eunice

@ 6

Residence Hall

Meetings

Tuesday, December 3

MBB vs Louisiana

Knights Post Grad

Acad. @ 7:30 @

Summit

Thursday, December 5

WBB vs Coastal

Alabama @ 5:30

MBB vs Mississippi

Delta CC @ 7:30

@Summit

Christmas Stage Band

Show @ 7

Friday, December 6

WBB vs Holmes CC

@ 6 @ Summit

Christmas Stage Band

Show @ 7

Saturday, December 7

MBB @ Pensacola

State @ 5

Christmas Stage Band

Show @ 2 and @ 7

Sunday, December 8

Christmas Stage Band

Show @ 2

Monday, December 9

Final Exams

Tuesday, December 10

Final Exams

Wednesday, December 11

Final Exams

RN Graduation @ 10

Graduation Practice @

2

Residence Halls Close

@ 3

Thursday, December 12

WBB vs Delgado CC

@ 5:30 @ Summit

above: The “Most Beautiful 2024” and top five beauties: Mallory Martin, Ruth Bishop, Josi Spears, Lily Gaskin, “Most Beautiful 2024;” Jacie Douglas, and Malley Chase Faulkner pose for the photographer.

photos by Chuck Barnes

Lily Gaskin reigns as Most Beautiful

By Natali Moore and Lorelai Davis, Co-editors

Thunderous applause echoed throughout the auditorium as young ladies walked out on stage during the Parade of Beauties pageant. Eighteen young women competed for the crown as they modeled their evening gowns with grace and ease, and the judges made tough decisions in regard to who would win. Competing in the pageant were Bethainee Guzzardo, Lauren Dunaway, Loran Pigott, Malley Chase Faulkner, Ainslee Jergins, Natalie Fleming, Mary Katharine Gray, Avery Chisholm, Ruth Bishop, Jacie Douglas, Presley Yoakum, Madison Turner, Mallory Martin, Lily Gaskin, Teeralyn Faust, Josi Spears, Bethany Graves, and Savannah Arnold. At the end of the night, the 2023 Most Beautiful, Mary Claire Johnson, crowned Lily Gaskin the 2024 Most Beautiful. While the judges narrowed the finalists, the Stage Band held a special performance, and afterward the Freshman Class Favorites, the Sophomore Class Favorites, the Campus Beaus and Most Handsome, the Campus Favorites, Mr. and Miss SMCC and the SGA officers were announced and presented on stage by Blake Brewer. Freshman Class Favorites included Gracie Amacker, Savannah Arnold, Ruth Bishop, Lily Gaskin, Bryan Walsh, and Addison Ward. Sophomore Class Favorites included Matthew Brister, Madison Carraway, Kailea Dillon, Bella Gaskin, Caleb James and Grace Speights. Campus Beaus included Matthew Brister, Evan Brumfeild, William Cedotal, Jabari Garner and Colby Terrell. Caleb James was nominated the Most Handsome. Dana Pena and Jeb Robison won as Campus Favorites. Olivia Goldman won as Miss SMCC and Jaden Pierre won as Mr. SMCC. SGA officers voted in the freshman category were Joseph Kenny as President, Ruth Bishop as Vice-President, Emily Caston as Secretary, Josi Spears as Treasurer, and Savannah Arnold as a Delegate. Voted in the sophomore category was Madison Carraway as President, Kailea Dillon as Vice-President, Dana Pena as Secretary, Bethany Graves as Treasurer, and Malorie Dreher, Mary Katharine Gray and Aysha Hare as Delegates. The crowd held its breath while Gabe Harthorne opened the night with the National Anthem, and again when Aly Lynch sang “I Dreamed a Dream.” At the end of the night, everyone cheered for the Most Beautiful and all the young ladies who participated. The winning beauties were Mallory Martin, Ruth Bishop, Josi Spears, Jaci Douglas, and Malley Chase Faulkner. Lily Gaskin was crowned Most Beautiful 2024 by the previous winner, Mary Claire Johnson, and presented roses by Dr. Steve Bishop. Lauren Woodworth and the SGA sponsored the event.











above: Lily Gaskin sweeps across the stage; top: Isabella Conn and Brit Vine perform for the audience; top right: Lily Gaskin smiles at the crowd as she accepts the title; middle right: “Most Beautiful 2023” Mary Claire Johnson and Dr. Steve Bishop present Lily Gaskin with roses; right: Mary Claire Johnson embraces Lily Gaskin.

Dual Enrollment Leadership Conference

By Ella Pattie, Editor; Lorelai Davis, Co-editor

On the morning of November 13, 2024, Southwest held its first annual Dual Enrollment Leadership Conference on its campus. The event was directed by Karinlee Brister, Academic Recruiter, and Megan Ivy Jones, Dual Enrollment Counselor, with assistance from the SMCC Bear Trackers. The conference hosted local high school students taking dual enrollment courses online or in-person through Southwest. President Steve Bishop and Blake Brewer, Vice-President of Student Affairs kicked off the morning by welcoming the students onto campus and sharing what leadership meant to them. Dr. Bishop stressed the importance of leadership and being an active member of the community, leaving a resonating notion in the minds of the students as their day of fun began. Following the introduction, the students from the numerous schools in attendance were split into groups. Each group consisted of a mix of students from each of the schools, so that the students could make new connections with unfamiliar faces. Once divided up, the students set off on an exciting scavenger hunt challenge. Each starting with an initial clue, they ventured off around campus to complete tasks to earn their next clue. These activities fostered team building and cooperation between the students, while also familiarizing them with the campus in new ways. The tasks included but were not limited to, completing freehanded disc golf throws, a hula hoop pass, and a word puzzle. Inspiring a healthy dose of competition, the campus was home to an immense amount of joy and laughter as the day went on. When the scavenger hunt was completed by all teams, the students attended a panel featuring some of Southwest’s freshmen and sophomores. On the panel sat Madison Carraway, Brayden Green, Ruth Bishop, Ariel Brown, Lorelai Davis, Madeline Rabalais, Savannah Arnold, and Michael Dillon. They answered numerous questions such as their favorite things about Southwest, how they were a leader on campus, what advice they’d give to incoming students, and general questions about life as a college student. Giving great advice, the students on the panel gave the high participants’ confidence as they prepare to transition from one chapter of their life to the next. The day ended with lunch in the cafeteria, where the prospective students got to fill the shoes of college students and enjoy the much beloved Taco Tuesday. Overall, the event was a positive experience for both those attending and those presenting it. There was something to gain and learn all around. Everyone involved was reminded that it is always a great day to be a Bear.



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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, Cameron Leon, Dylan Meyers,
Allisen Moore, Karen Wimberley
Advisor.....Joyce Mabry

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Joyce Mabry

pineburr@smcc.edu

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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: Balancing the Holidays

As the end of the semester approaches, it is important as students that we learn to balance our scholastic and personal lives. It's the busiest time of the academic year between finals exams and deadlines, yet our attention and time is often drawn in by holiday festivities and time with friends. So, how do we prioritize these special moments with loved ones while simultaneously fulfilling our academic responsibilities?

In my opinion, the biggest factor is time management. It is crucial that you set scheduled time apart from friends and distractions to study and get work done. Personally, I cannot accomplish anything besides napping and talking to my friends in my dorm room. Instead, the moment I get

out of my last class for the day, I head straight to the library. This has helped me eliminate the temptations to scroll on my phone, take a nap, or hangout with my friends all day.

My next tip is to start studying early. I know you've heard it a million times, but do not cram an entire month's worth of information into one night before the test. This is undoubtedly going to cause unnecessary stress and lead to displeasing test results. Alternatively, begin studying the material as it is given to you. This will naturally break up the information into manageable amounts, which will take up less of your time and energy. Plus, many math and science based subjects build on previous material.

While studying is important, it is easy to get overworked and burnt out. Therefore, take time away from the stress of academics and exams to enjoy life and give yourself a break. There are many different ways you can spend this down time, such as going to get a coffee, taking a nap, going for a walk, etc.... All that matters is that you do something that refreshes your mind and spirit. As a result, focus and productivity are proven to increase while stress decreases.

My final piece of encouragement is to cherish every moment, as this year is soon to be over. New opportunities and a new year awaits, so soak up every moment with your loved ones this holiday season. Happy Holidays!



Ella Pattie
Editor

Southwest Female Student Athletes, Coaches praise Women's Wellness Seminar

By Travis Connelley,
SID

For many student athletes, they can deal with several issues while in college. Trying to excel in the classroom while simultaneously working to be the best on the fields or courts, can have its affects in multiple aspects including their physicality, mentality and social life. And while it can be a lot to deal with for male student athletes, it can be even more female student athletes.

In order to help them deal with the issues, Southwest Mississippi Community College recently hosted a Women's Wellness Seminar attended by Southwest female student athletes and female coaches, which included talks from professionals on a number of topics pertaining to mental health and physical health.

One of those professionals was Cassie Zayed, a licensed clinical social worker from the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Zayed, a former student athlete herself at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, said that she understands everything a student athlete goes through.

Zayed, who has a decades-worth of experience practicing counseling in numerous settings admits that this was her first time talking to a group of female student athletes. Heading into the talk, she did plenty of studying to determine how to address it.

"Leading up to it I already did a lot of research just on what is out there and what is being done at other universities," she said. "The NCAA puts out a really good report once a year on the stress being reported, how they deal with it and what is being reported. So, through that, that gives us a lot of information on what the approach needs to be."

One of the female student athletes who took plenty of knowledge away from Zayed's talk was sophomore softball player Malley Chase Faulkner.

"I know that everybody sees things in a different perspective, but for me, I have a personal experience losing someone, and (it's comforting) having someone take time out of their day to come

and talk about someone's mental health and making sure that they know that it is a priority," she said. "As a female athlete, I know that sometimes we forget that is a really important thing in our everyday lives."

Another professional who spoke was McComb OBGYN Nurse Practitioner Kappi Rushing. Like Zayed, Rushing said that this was her first time talking to a group of young ladies in this particular age group adding that she normally talks to adolescents about puberty and body changes in a 1-on-1 setting. She said that she was very happy to talk to the female student athletes.

"So many of these young girls, they get their medical advice from TikTok," she said. "It let me give them true medical advice in a non-threatening, informal environment and it let them be able to ask questions and to be in a comfortable setting amongst their peers and not just their peers but their athletic peers which added a twist to it."

Rushing added that she originally planned on talking about a certain topic but the discussion migrated over into further talk about something different.

"I had not planned on talking a lot about birth control with them," she said. "My initial plan was supposed to be about the emotional and physical dangers of sex. But then, they just had questions about birth control and it went from there."

In addition to the discussions, the seminar also consisted of a question and answer session in which the student athletes were able to submit questions via an index card if they wished to remain anonymous.

One female student athlete who learned more of the correlation between mental and physical health that evening is sophomore soccer player Gabby Venable.

"It was eye-opening to see just how the physical and mental aspects play into your health overall as a person because if your mentality isn't stable enough, your physical state will also go down with that," she said. "They really showed us how they

connect to each other and how they are co-dependent on each other. They helped us realize that we all have our little things but we are all going through pretty much the same thing. Every woman goes through a struggle whether it is how they play, perform or how they do in school. The way they explained it to us, I now believe I can give a full speech (on the topics).

Venable added that it helped her personally as she is dealing with several factors such as school, athletics and being recruited for the next level.

Fellow Southwest Women's Soccer teammate and sophomore Caroline Barcelona also took plenty of information away as well, including self-identity.

"It was definitely a great reminder that your sport does not define you," she said. "I am not Caroline Barcelona the soccer player, I am Caroline Barcelona the human first. It was a great reminder that you are in control."

Southwest Softball Assistant Coach Callie Venable, a former student athlete herself who was also present for the event, believes that the seminar was very beneficial for the female student athletes and checked many boxes as far as providing help and guidance on dealing with certain issues.

"I think that all of the speakers did a really good job of providing adequate information for the girls and answering some difficult questions that they don't always feel comfortable asking family members or even coaches who see them on a daily basis," she said.

Another coach and former student athlete who attended was Women's Basketball Assistant Coach Alissa Adams. She echoed the same thought as Coach Venable.

"I just thought that this was a good event that kind of highlighted topics that have stigmas with them, just breaking down those barriers and letting our student athletes know that we have resources here at Southwest and resources that are in our community to help with their mental and physical health, to continue to

grow while they are here and help them thrive," she said.

Like Coach Venable and Coach Adams, Southwest Women's Soccer Head Coach Nicole Cooper also played collegiately on the junior college level and understands the challenges the female student athlete faces regularly. She adds that the seminar was a huge help for everyone in attendance, especially her players.

"For us and our program specifically, it was such good timing because I think that we have been struggling with our performance," she said. "We have the talent but I think that a lot of it had to do with our mindset. That was one of the subjects talked about when they talked about the mental health side of things, I think it was spot-on and just what our girls needed to hear."

When asked about the event, Southwest Women's Basketball sophomore Ja'Kya Brown had two key words to describe the seminar, calling it "educational and inspirational."

Going off of recommendations for discussions concerning wellness for female student athletes, Southwest Athletic Director Ken Jackson put the event together. For him, he understands the issues female student athletes face not only from his current position but also personally as well.

"Having two daughters who were female student athletes, even though I coached males my entire coaching career, I saw that there is a difference in the way that you handle females," he said. "So I thought it was a good idea that our female student athletes be given an avenue to be given some help if they are dealing with physical or mental issues."

In addition to Mrs. Rushing and Mrs. Zayed, other professionals were also in attendance. Dr. Valerie Turner, D.D.S. and Megan Ivy Jones, Southwest Mississippi Community College Director of Academic Counseling and Dual Enrollment Coordinator were both recognized and both also provided additional supportive resources for the student athletes.



“Fun on the Field”

photo by Dylan Meyers



“On My Way to Class”

photo by Maci Haygood

Student Spotlight: Mansur Khajimuradov

By Lorelai Davis, Co-editor

Mansur Khajimuradov is a freshman tennis player from Kazakhstan. He began playing tennis at age seven and enjoyed recounting his walks from his home to the courts he learned to play on. He is majoring in Well Construction and plans to continue playing tennis at a university when he graduates from Southwest. Mansur’s best move on the court is his backhand. His motivation is his own competitiveness, which keeps him going even when things get tough.

Before this year, he had never been to the United States before, but he has come to like it. He finds the language barrier challenging, but he is overcoming it little by little. Mansur says that he mostly misses his friends and his mother’s food. He is inspired by his mother, who is a fitness coach, and his father, who works in well construction.

DECA: On the Move

By Natali Moore, Co-editor

Collegiate DECA made some noise as the organization welcomed new and senior members back from the break of summer. Monthly meetings focused on engaging members through community service and team projects. The most recent project being community service at WINGS Boutique in Summit, where members helped fold clothes, place items on shelves, and organize glassware to aid the business in moving over to their new building.

For the annual Homecoming parade, Collegiate DECA members decorated a float and threw candy to expectant bystanders, while other members walked beside in their cowboy boots and hats to match the ‘Wild, Wild Southwest’ theme.

Last spring, members had the incredible opportunity to compete at the Collegiate DECA state and international competitions. Events included professional sales, managerial accounting, hospitality and tourism, finance and entrepreneurship.

Some categories required competitors to complete written tests, while others showcased the members’ pre-made presentations. Collegiate DECA Bears conducted themselves with pride and professionalism during every event and activity as they finished another successful year.

Campus Events: Past and Future

By Natali Moore, Co-editor

Events throughout the year boomed with excitement from students and faculty alike. A pep rally kicked off the year with the cheerleaders and the band, and the events quickly led into Homecoming Week.

“Wild, Wild Southwest” was the theme for Homecoming, and the annual parade displayed creativity from all of the campus organizations. For the annual themed days, Bears dressed for Pajama Day, Western Day and Southwest Day, where everyone donned their favorite campus merchandise. The Student Academic Support Center hosted Lunch-N-Learns to publicize how they could help students with their studies, and a Game Night, where students played fun games like Jenga. Events coming up for this next spring will have bears roaring in anticipation, like the Mardi Gras parade. Campus organizations will create their own floats and decorate trucks and trailers to showcase their group, while throwing trinkets, candy and Mardi Gras beads. Bear Necessities Day is a fun field day for all students to compete in before the summer break, and the crowds drawn and the students competing always brighten everyone’s day.



TriBeta: Robin Kuntz, advisor; Hannah McKennon, Co-President; Lorelai Davis, Co-President; Grace Speights, Vice-President; Bailey Arnold, Co-Treasurer; Dana Pena, Co-Treasurer; Shelby Fortenberry, Secretary; Miranda Dunaway, Historian; Dr. Alana Gabler, advisor

photo by Joyce Mabry



Color Guard: Madison Turner, Brookelynn Breaux, Erin Davis, Savannah McCollough, Hannah McKennon, Abigail Thomas, Dana Pena, Breanna Godbold, Macie Breckenridge; second row: Madison Turner, Da’Shara Hannon, Krystalynn McKinney, McKenzie Hatfield, Cassidy Donaho

photo by Chuck Barnes



Women’s Soccer Team: Mia Encinia, Arley Diaz, Ava Benton, Amari Simmons, Josi Spears, Kiera Schwartz, Abby Davis, Tristan Byrd, Maylee McLeod, Bryanna Andrews, Gracie Amacker; second row: Dalton Cooper, Assistant Coach; Mary Grace Bilello, Addie Stanford, Tiaona Frick, Makenna Williams, Evie Peet, Gabby Venable, Holly-Bo Dunning, Mallory Martin, Mary Claire McCurley, Kayla Martin, Caroline Barcelona, Janae Lewis, Manager; Nicole Daigle Cooper, Head Coach

photo by Chuck Barnes



Men’s Soccer Team: Cooper Powell, Brian Sanchez, Ivan Martinez, Froylan Texoco-Rodriguez, Tate Little, Cayden Powell, Orlando Hernandez, Sergio Padin, Dews Jussely; second row: Brayden Green, Nico Fischer, Joel Bastida, Justin Ruiz, Jesus Leon, Giovanni Duarte, Jeysson Cruz, Tyler Godshaw, Jamie Settles, Zach Rhynehardt, Daniela Cervantes Flores, manager; Terrell Johnson, Volunteer Assistant Coach; third row: Zach Mills, Head Coach; Robert Miller, manager; Kendric Johnson, manager; Raul Alegre, Jason Dykes, Jack Boyd, Carson Lee, Jaden Sones, Ty Deshotel, Rhett Brewer, Roberto Garcia Gomez, Aubrey Rayborn, Elliot Fisher, manager. Not Pictured: Denver Bankston, Assistant Coach

photo by Chuck Barnes



Energy Operations Process: Alexander Roberts, Christian White-McCoy, Ernest Allen, Luke Milestea; second row: Jim McKinley, Instructor; Quin Parker, Ryan Purdy, Ace Sellers, Keller Bailey, Miller Lloyd

photo by Joyce Mabry



Diesel EquipmentTechnology: Damain Jenkins, Anfernee Clair, Jamichael Conerly, Corey Gatlin, Ethan Owens, Russell Slater, Rayce Mullin, Kevin Bennett, Instructor; second row: Ramsey Brown, Samuel Morris, Caden Manton, John Ruston, Jachin Prestenbach

photo by Joyce Mabry

Student Spotlight: Nico Fischer

By Ella Pattie, Editor

Nico Fischer is a sophomore from Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he began playing soccer at age four. Nico played club soccer for ten years, beginning at age eleven, before arriving here in the United States. He credits his mother as his biggest inspiration, because of the sacrifices she has made for him as well as her consistent support throughout his life. It’s a wonder how out of all of the places he could have chosen, he chose to continue playing soccer in Summit, MS. He explained that he knew someone who played at Southwest in the past, and they put him in contact with the coach. Nico later sent videos of himself showcasing his excellent skills, and the coach was immediately interested in his talent for soccer. Now, Nico is a key contributor to the men’s soccer team.

Since being at SMCC, Nico has traveled to many different college campuses across multiple states, but he says that southwest has the most beautiful campus of them all. The biggest differences between Argentina and Mississippi are the food, the language, early morning training or practices, and playing on turf fields as opposed to grass. His favorite and most missed dish is Milanesa, which is pan-fried meat coated in seasonings and breadcrumbs. Argentina defeated France in the World Cup final in 2022, granting Nico bragging rights for four years and unforgettable memories that will last a lifetime. He has a tattoo on his right arm that reads “IMPOSSIBLE 18-12-2022” to commemorate this special moment for his country. After Southwest, he plans to attend a university and pursue a degree in business.

The Power of Curiosity: Asking “Why” Matters

By Cameron Leon, staff writer

College is more than just classes and grades- it’s a time to unlock your potential, and curiosity is key. As children we asked endless questions, but somewhere along the way many of us stop. What if we brought that curiosity back? Asking “why” not only deepens our understanding of academic subjects but also opens the door to personal growth. Some of the world’s greatest discoveries began with someone asking tough questions. Curiosity encourages us to explore new fields, meet, and connect ideas from different disciplines.

Whether it is taking a class outside your major or joining an unfamiliar club, stepping outside your comfort zone can lead to unexpected opportunities and innovations. In college, it is okay not to have all the answers. Embrace the unknown and let curiosity guide you toward new experiences. This mindset will transform your college years from a simple list of accomplishments to a journey of discovery, setting you on a path of lifelong learning. So ask more questions. Your curiosity could lead you to something extraordinary.



SMASHVILLE

By Ella Pattie,
Editor

Out of all of the sporting events I have been to in my life, one of my absolute favorites was a Stanley Cup Playoff game. My friend and I were in Nashville for a concert when I couldn't help but notice the many signs and billboards that read "SMASHVILLE!" It was at that moment that I realized I was going to be in the same city as an NHL playoff game and, as a huge hockey fan, I could not let this opportunity pass me by. So, I immediately whipped out my phone and checked for ticket availability. After nervously scanning Ticketmaster, I finally come across two tickets. Without even thinking, I typed in my card information and purchased the tickets. Then I called my entire family to notify them that I was going to be in the same building as the Nashville Predators and the Colorado Avalanches. Over the next 24 hours, I could feel the excitement and anticipation building up, and it felt like every fiber of my being was going to explode at any moment. As we were riding to the game, my eyes were glued to the backseat window. I loved seeing everyone decked out in their blue and gold heading towards the rink or a watch party. As we entered through the doors of Bridgestone Arena, chaos erupted as fans began to race to the concessions and to their seats. Naturally, I was lost and could not locate our section number, so I asked an employee for guidance. She led us to our seats, which were settled in the upper portion of the lower bowl. My jaw dropped when I realized that my \$70 had bought me seats that close to the rink. The Nashville Predators' mascot, Gnash, was suspended from the ceiling as smoke machines and flashing lights welcomed the players onto the ice. Then came the puck drop, a moment I had anxiously waited for what felt like forever. Within the first two minutes of the game, Andre Burakovsky of the Colorado Avalanches, opened scoring up with a rather unique goal. The puck rapidly entered the top of the net and ripped through the netting, causing it to exit and look like a no goal. However, after further review, it was ruled a goal. This gave the Avalanches' an early lead, but the Predators would even up the scoring with a goal by Yakov Trenin late in the first period. Trenin's goal sounded the goal horn as well as the Predators' goal song, "I Like It, I Love It" by Tim McGraw. During the first intermission, esteemed actor and musician Chareles Esten, of Outer Banks and his band performed for the audience. Late into the second period, defense-men, Cale Makar ripped a shot from the blue line that went bar down to boost the Avalanches' to a 2-1 lead. Once again, Yakov Trenin is there to tie the game with a wrist that was fired off a spin from the right circle. This concluded the second period, but the scoring was just getting started. As the third period began, hopes were high that the Predators might be able to pull off a win despite being down 3-0 in this playoff series. This was heightened by a Predators' goal scored by none other than Filip Forsberg, shortly into the third. Forsberg scored this goal off of a feed from the front, in which he dished the puck in from the back-side. Unfortunately, Nashville's 3-2 lead lasted only a moment. Over the next ten minutes, the Avalanches' would net three goals by three different players: Devon Toews from the left circle, Valeri Nichushkin, and an empty netter from Nathan MacKinnon. This would not only end the game but Nashville's season as well. Despite this gut-wrenching loss, I had a blast. This game had everything from weird goals, to scrums, and players that will be future hall of famers. Perhaps the coolest part of this whole experience was watching Colorado as they moved forward in the play-offs, eventually becoming the 2022 Stanley Cup Champions.



PTK Fall Inductees: Mary McElveen, Jazmyn Smith, Piya Khurana, Cheyenne Uhle, Alyssa Lynch, Annabella Gaskin, Jordan Cox, Ashlyn Brewer, Chaz Breckenridge, Rebecca Morgan; second row: Dana Pena, Alecia Mitchell, Jer'Nyla Magee, MaChaya Magee, Kinley Coleman, Kaylea Kimery, Rylee Shell, Baylie Ford, Randaija Holmes, LaKen Gatlin; third row: Emily Hall, Michael Faust, Ian McEwen, Britton Vine, Bryanna Hughes, Brooke Carpenter, and Zavien Tenner

photo by Manuel Scott



SMCC Hall of Fame: Bo Milton, Sports Hall of Fame; Dr. Tomekia Luckett, Almuna of the Year; Anthony L. Williams, Sports Hall of Fame; Dr. Steve Bishop, SMCC President

photo by Manuel Scott



Soccer Field House Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Southwest Mississippi Community College (SMCC) proudly celebrated the grand opening of its new soccer field house with a ribbon cutting ceremony on Saturday, October 19th, at 2:30 PM. The event took place on the SMCC campus. The new soccer field house is designed to enhance the training and support of student-athletes. This state-of-the-art facility features locker rooms, team meeting spaces, and

amenities that benefit both the men's and women's soccer teams and the entire SMCC community. The ribbon cutting ceremony featured remarks from college officials, a tour of the facility, and refreshments for attendees. Community members, alumni, administrators and faculty of the college joined in the celebration of SMCC's latest campus addition.

Pictured: Gina Stutzman, Dr. Addie Boone, Loran Gerald, Martina Troncoso, Daniela Cereantes Flores, Leanne

Andrews, Dr. Kim Henning, Sarapha Dugas, Vanessa Mills, Athletic Director Ken Jackson, Board of Trustees Member T.W. Bearden, Head Men's Soccer Coach Zach Mills, President Dr. Steve Bishop, Mack Wilson, Board of Trustees Member Bobby Nelson, Head Women's Soccer Coach Nicole Daigle Cooper, Board of Trustees Member Stephanie Carr, Maylee McCleod, Jamie Jackson; second row: Melanie Bishop, Katherine Bishop, Orlando Fernandez, Froylan Texoco-Rodriguez, Blake

Brewer, Matt Calhoun, Nathan Wells, Gus Paulk, Dr. Lorrie Stringer, Joe Elliott, Dr. Wendy Smith, Lauren Woodworth, Jack Edmondson, Julie Robinson, Elise Gatlin, Holly-Bo Dunning, Gabby Venable, Evie Pete, and Assistant Soccer Coach Dalton Cooper; third row: Michael Godshaw, Juan Manuel Riano Cifuentes, Robert Miller, Leigh Ann Gibson, Jamie Newman, Michael Gunnell, Brent Harris, Andrew Alford, Calvin Phelps.

Fiction: Whippoorwill Song

By Karen Wimberley,
Staff Writer

Liza was sitting on the wooden deck behind the Williams farmhouse looking out over the yard, the garden, and fields. As Liza sat there letting the scene and smells that surrounded her flood her memory. Faces of all the lives that had been touched, changed, and started here seemed to surround her. Liza closed her eyes and listened to the Whippoorwill as he began his song. She drew in a deep breath, not wanting to let her emotions flow, not now with a house full of family and visitors. Today marked another passing, another change, this one has been the hardest of all. Today it was her own daddy who had passed away. Today the deep love and admiration she felt for him was solidified. Liza thought of all the wasted time arguing with him. Every time they disagreed her first instinct was to respond calmly, or not respond at all, not letting the volume of her voice attempt to overpower his. A theory that had recently been proven would have worked to diffuse the strong emotions that stood between them. Just before the ambulance was called, and a mere hour before, he told her he would not be coming home this time. That morning Liza's Dad was loudly and strongly expressing to Liza's 10-year-old grandson why it was wrong for him to cry when things said to him tore at his

heart. Liza had interrupted her dad to try and avert his attention to her instead of her young grandson's tender heart. Her dad had been explaining to Isaiah that his own dad had been a "tender" and let his emotions make him soft, lazy, no good. Liza calmly explained to her dad, to her the man which he spoke of was to her, just a grandfather and it was not important to her when she was young or now as an adult if he had been soft, lazy, no good, to her he had been a hero, a friend, a teacher, her grandfather. She had tried to explain to her dad that is all she ever wanted for her grandchildren to remember him. Not his loud bellowing of things that neither of them had control over or could change. Tears again tried to escape her eyes. Quickly standing and drawing up her fist, pushing back the flood emotions that so desperately wanted to escape. "Liza? Are you ok?" Her brother's familiar voice broke into the swirling thoughts that surrounded her. "Yes, I will be fine, I am just really feeling the reality of death, the change of things, life circumstance in the space of a breath. Can't stop time as it marches on, or runs, past us no matter how hard we try to control it. I was just thinking how we have laid to rest other family members as recently as a month ago, and the very deep pain of it all. But nothing has split my heart and soul like this." Her brother

interrupted her. "Listen we can't stop death; it is just part of life." he said softly. "Now you sound like pawpaw Smith, Liza said. When mawmaw Ruby died, he said something exactly like that. I was so torn up over her death I could not breathe, we were standing in line for her funeral services. I was crying so hard I could not catch my breath, he was standing just in front of me, paw paw turned around and told me "Cry but don't let something that is so natural to take the life out of you." As her brother moved closer and laid his hand on Liza's shoulder, he said, "And he is right, remember how much dad poured himself into his work, and how he never ever let us go without. It was the only way he could show us just how much he loved us." Just then Liza heard the whippoorwill singing again. Bringing a smile to her face, it made her feel like her dad was listening to them, wanted to reassure her. Liza's smile broadened, thinking of how her dad was the first to point out this evening song she now listened to. The song that always brought on the memories of the many things that he had given her, not the material things, but the real things of life. Her talent for playing music on any instrument she put her mind to, enjoying the cool of the morning, profusely sweating from a good day of hard work outside, her ability to write, not just write but

to move people with her words, and one of her favorite things, her enjoyment of dancing in the rain. As the list grew, Liza, without any warning broke into a run. Running through the gate, down into the pasture, quickly breaking into a sweat from the extreme Alabama heat, that even now, in the late evening, had not dropped one degree below one hundred. Reaching a line of trees her dad had planted a few years ago, she grabbed a tree limb lowering herself to the ground and there she screamed as she finally allowed the splitting of souls, the tearing away of her daddy's presence take hold of her. How would she ever get through a week without hearing his voice again, never again would she be able to hear him sing, or play the piano, never again would she be able to admire the way he so confidently walked into a room. After what felt like an eternity Liza looked up and realized that the sun had almost completely set. As she stood and turned to walk back up the hill toward the house, it began to rain. Smiling to herself she stopped removed her shoes and danced in the rain spinning, face to the sky and arms outstretched, Liza let the rain wash over her, washing away the tears that streamed down her face as she enjoyed the Whippoorwill song and one last dance in the rain with her daddy.

Student Spotlight: Martina Tronsco

By Emily Caston,
Editor

Martina Tronsco, an international student from Talca, Chile, is a freshman tennis player. She chose SMCC because of the opportunity to combine her studies with her love for sports. Martina has played tennis since she was three years old, and it is still her biggest passion. She is a talented player and loves her new team here at Southwest. Since moving to Summit, Martina has made many new friends, and her favorite part about SMCC is getting to spend time with them. According to Martina, there are plenty of differences between Talca and Summit. The language barrier and humidity changes are just a few of the challenges she has faced, but she likes living in a small town since her home in Chile is a big city. At Southwest, Martina is majoring in kinesiology so that she can one day work in Sports Rehab. Martina can be very shy at first around new people, but she comes out of her shell around her best friends. If she's not on the tennis court or spending time with friends, you can find her with a good book. Her favorite pastimes are reading and hiking. She believes the most difficult thing about being an international student is getting homesick, and she really misses her family's Chilean food. As advice to her fellow international students, Martina says, "Don't be afraid to change."

New Football Coach: Les George

By Travis Connelley,
SID

Les George has been named the new Head Football Coach of the Southwest Bears. The Southwest Mississippi Community College Board of Trustees approved the hiring during a board meeting Tuesday night. George, a veteran coach of 14 years, is no stranger to the Mississippi Association of Community Colleges Conference. He most-recently coached as an assistant at Holmes and prior to that at his alma matter Mississippi Gulf Coast. George said that he is excited for the opportunity to lead the Bears. "As a player and a coach, I've been blessed to have been a part of some successful community college football teams," he said. "And I look forward to taking that experience and using that to lead the Southwest Mississippi Community College Football program." George and his wife Chelsey are the parents of three daughters, Lucy Louise and Laura.



Bears beat Hinds in a hard fought battle



By Travis Connelley, Sports Information Director

September 26, 2024

The Bears entered Thursday's contest at No. 15 Co-Lin hoping to right their wrongs and pull out the win over the rivals. But mistakes and inconsistent play did Southwest in as the Wolves walked away with a 42-16 win.

"We turned the ball over too much and we didn't get anything going offensively," Southwest head coach Cliff Collins said. "We had some spurts but turnovers came at the wrong moments again."

The Bears (0-5, 0-3 MACCC South) went on defense first looking to make an early statement, but it was the Wolves who lit their side of the scoreboard up first with a short TD pass putting Southwest down 7-0.

Later in the quarter, the Bears punted back to the Wolves but the ball was touched by the Co-Lin returner and quickly pounced on by Southwest giving the visitors new life.

And they took advantage of the great field position. Following a 12-yard pass from Quez Goss to Jordan Scott and a 23-yard scamper by Goss, Jalen Williams capped the drive with a four-yard touchdown run. Lyndell Boatman added the extra point, tying the game at 7 at the 7:37 mark of the opening quarter.

The Wolves answered back with a long drive that ended with a score putting the Bears down 14-7.

After Southwest was unable to answer, Co-Lin added to its lead in the second quarter with a short run.

Leading 21-7 the Wolves threatened to score another touchdown, but Gary Bailey Jr. made a key play, snagging an interception in the end zone not only stopping the Wolf drive but also giving a bit of momentum back to the Bears.

Southwest took advantage driving the ball down the field with just over 4:00 left before halftime. The drive came to a halt in the red zone but a 24-yard field goal by Boatman inched Southwest closer at 21-10 at the half.

Things unfortunately didn't get any better for Southwest in the second half. A blocked field goal early in the third quarter halted a promising drive. Not long afterward Co-Lin got a pick-six pushing the Southwest deficit to 18 at

28-10.

The Wolves added one more score in the third quarter on a 72-yard touchdown pass making it a 35-10 game.

Another promising Southwest drive came to a halt early in the fourth when a fumble gave the ball back to Co-Lin at the Wolves 17-yard line.

The Southwest defense tried to slow down the Co-Lin attack but was unable to as the Wolves moved down the field and scored on a 1-yard run.

Later in the quarter, Henry Brewer led an eight-play, 58-yard drive that culminated with a 2-yard touchdown pass to Marcellus Jackson making the score the eventual final.

Goss finished 14-of-28 for 131 yards and one interception. Brewer completed 11-of-17 passes for 114 yards and one touchdown. Jackson led the receiving corps with six catches for 100 yards and a score.

Defensively, the Bears were led by Jeffery Polk Jr who had 11 tackles including one for a loss. Koren Harris had eight tackles while Steve Mboumoua had five and a sack.

October 10, 2024

After displaying arguably their best defense thus far this season, struggles on the offensive side hurt in the end as the Bears lost in heart-breaking fashion to visiting No. 7 Northwest Thursday, 23-20. The Rangers got a go-ahead touchdown with under 1:00 to go, dashing the hopes of the hosts who were unable to respond.

"We out-played them tonight," said Southwest head coach Cliff Collins, who had high praise for his kids. "I told my kids not to hang their head. The record doesn't speak for itself. We will get this right."

The Bears (0-6) found themselves down 6-0 early after the first two Northwest drives ended via field goals while the Southwest offense could not find the consistency that it needed.

The third Ranger drive ended with a positive for the Bears as a fumble was pounced on by Jaylon Price giving Southwest ideal field position at the Northwest 31.

Despite moving the ball inside the Northwest 5-yard line, the Bears unfortunately came up short on a 4th and 1 giving the ball back to the visitors.

The disappointment of not converting turned into frustration as the Rangers orchestrated a lengthy drive that resulted in a 29-yard passing touchdown putting Southwest down 13-0.

Even though the ensuing Bear drive ended via an interception, special teams stepped up and gave the offense great field position. Jeffrey Anderson Jr. blocked a Ranger punt which was downed at the Northwest 28. On the third

play of the ensuing drive,

Quez Goss found Marcellus Jackson from 27 yards out and with the Lyndell Boatman PAT, the Bears got on the board and cut the Ranger lead down to six at 13-7.

Early in the third quarter, the defense shined once again, this time with another takeaway as Kam Carter snagged an interception at the Northwest 45-yard line before returning it down to the 14. Three plays later, the Bears found the end zone once again, this time on the ground as Chris Hunter plunged in from two yards out giving Southwest its first lead of the night at 14-13 with just under 8:00 to go in the quarter.

Southwest got another takeaway later in the quarter as Danarius Hilliard stepped in front of a Ranger pass giving the ball back to the hosts. However, it did not result in any scoring as the Bear offense could not capitalize.

In the beginning stages of the fourth quarter, Northwest regained the lead following a 25-yard field goal making it a 16-14 game.

That score stayed true as time ticked away for the Bears. With just under 2:00 to go, Southwest got its home run play on an 80-yard pass from Goss to Jackson bringing the many Bear fans in attendance on their feet with excitement.

The ensuing two-point try was no good and despite having the lead, the Bears found themselves in trouble as a penalty resulted in the kickoff taking place from deep in Southwest territory.

The location of the kick followed by the ensuing 13-yard return gave the Rangers prime field position as they looked for the go-ahead score. And unfortunately for Southwest, Northwest got it on the fifth play of the following drive on a 17-yard touchdown pass putting the Bears down 23-20.

With one final opportunity, the Bears looked for more magic and the go-ahead score but it did not come as the Rangers escaped with the three-point win.

Goss led the Bears completing 22-of-34 passes for 273 yards and two touchdowns. Jackson led the receiving corps with four catches for 138 yards and a pair of scores. Defensively, Hilliard and Jeffery Polk Jr. led the Bears with nine tackles apiece. Hilliard added one tackle for loss and one interception.

October 14, 2024

After a promising start in the first half of Thursday's road finale against Jones, the Bears lost momentum in the second and could not recover, falling to the Bobcats 37-21.

"It was just miscues, we are giving up big plays on defense, not blocking, not blocking well

enough offensively," Southwest head coach Cliff Collins said. "We let one slip. They wanted that one more than we did. I'm just disappointed."

The Bears (1-7, 1-4 MACCC South), struck first towards the closing moments of the opening quarter. The Bobcats were attempting a 40-yard field goal but it was blocked by Kameron Carter before Gary Bailey Jr scooped the ball up and ran it in from 66 yards out. Lyndell Boatman added the extra point giving Southwest a 7-0 lead.

But the momentum was short-lived as Jones scored on the first play of the ensuing drive on a 72-yard touchdown pass, tying the game at 7.

At about the midway point of the second quarter, Southwest grabbed the lead once again. A 10-play, 85-yard drive wrapped with a two-yard touchdown run by Chris Hunter who rushed for 31 yards on the drive. His score made it a 14-7 game in favor of the visitors.

However, a touchdown followed by a field goal on the next two Jones drives, the latter of the two scores coming as time expired in the first half, put the Bobcats back on top at 17-14.

Still well-within striking distance at the beginning of the third quarter, the Bears looked to get back into the contest. But their first three offensive drives ended in a turnover, a punt and a missed field goal. Following the miss, Jones increased the deficit for the Bears with a rushing touchdown putting Southwest down by 10 at 24-14.

After both teams traded possessions that ended via interceptions, the Bears moved closer on their next series when Jordan Mills found Jordan Scott from 28 yards out once again pulling the visitors within three at 24-21.

But the rejuvenated Jones offense continued to give the Bears problems as the next two Bobcat drives both ended in touchdowns making the score the eventual final.

Hunter led the offense with 76 yards and a touchdown on 12 carries. Scott had a big night with six catches for 108 yards and a score. TJ Johnson also had six grabs for 51 yards.

Jeffery Polk Jr was the leading tackler with 10 on the evening. Steve Mboumoua also had a huge night with eight tackles including one for loss. In addition to his blocked field goal which led to a score, Carter also shined on defense with two interceptions to go along with two tackles.

October 19, 2024

The excitement and good vibes that came from the 2024 Homecoming Ceremonies all week were capped off with one more positive Saturday night as

the Bears grabbed an early lead and never gave it up, picking up a 34-20 win over the visiting Hinds Eagles marking the first win of the season for the Bears.

"I'm just happy to get a win, wins are hard to come by," Southwest head coach Cliff Collins said. "We have a great football team. We went out and put up 34 points in the first half. Things were clicking."

After the defense of the Bears (1-6, 1-3 MACCC South), made an early stop on Hinds' first two drives, the Southwest offense followed suit on its second possession. A five-play, 58-yard drive wrapped with a 21-yard rushing touchdown by Chris Hunter who had three carries for 41 yards on the drive. After the game, Hunter gave high praise for his linemen.

"Really, up front, the offensive line, big shout out to them," said Hunter who finished with 23 carries for 121 yards and a score. "The offensive line helped me out a lot, they got to the second level and blocked the linebackers, and they opened the gaps up for me."

On the ensuing drive, the defense stepped up again. Vinay Singh kicked off his huge night grabbing the first of three interceptions in the contest. The change in possession also shifted the momentum back to the home side as the Bears drove down the field before getting three points on a 23-yard field goal by Lyndell Boatman making it a 10-0 lead.

The momentum didn't last for long, however, as the Eagles got on the board on the ensuing drive on a 68-yard touchdown pass cutting the Bear lead down to three.

Not letting the Hinds score affect him and his offense one bit, quarterback Quez Goss led the Bear attack down the field once again on a 10-play, 53-yard drive which culminated with a Goss 1-yard touchdown run pushing the Bear lead back to 10 at 17-7.

Later in the quarter, another drive for Southwest ended with positive results as Goss found Marcellus Jackson in the end zone from two yards out on a 4th and goal increasing the lead to 24-7.

Another big defensive stop on the ensuing drive came on a takeaway as a Jaylon Price sack resulted in a fumble which was pounced on by fellow defensive lineman Steve Mboumoua giving the Bears the ball at the Eagle 34-yard line. Southwest unfortunately couldn't put the ball in the end zone but Boatman connected on another field goal, this time from 31 yards out as the Bears grew their lead to 27-7.

The ensuing kickoff was returned 97-yards for a Hinds touchdown cutting into the Bear lead but Southwest got one last laugh in the first half as Goss connected with TJ Johnson on a 34-

yard touchdown pass making the score 34-14 with just under :30 to go. The offensive possession came after Singh snagged his second interception giving the Bears ideal field position.

Leading by 20 in the third quarter, a couple of chances to add to the lead fell short for the Bears as a kick return by Jackson and a Gary Bailey Jr. interception return, both for scores, were called back to due to blocking penalties. The Bears were unable to capitalize on either of the ensuing drives.

In the fourth, the Eagles inched a bit closer following a 63-yard touchdown pass making the score 34-20. Hinds tried to move even closer on its next offensive possession but once again, Singh shined with his third interception on the night. After the game, he spoke about making the change from linebacker to safety a recently and how it has paid off.

"The coach put me in the right position to make those plays," Singh said. "They put me at safety two weeks ago because they felt that I can make the plays to help the team. I capitalized on a lot of those passes. I have to thank my cornerbacks and my linebackers and my d-line for putting pressure on the quarterback."

The third and final Singh interception came with 1:07 to go and helped seal the win as the Bears went into victory formation to run the remaining time off of the clock.

After the game, Goss said that he was proud of the way that his team came together in the days leading up to the game against the Eagles.

"I feel like we settled in as a team and did some team-bonding," said Goss who completed 23-of-36 passes for 238 yards, two touchdowns and one interception. After the game he said the win could be a turning point in the season for the Bears who have two games remaining on the schedule. "I feel like it is time for us to play now, this is a new half of the season. We got the win, and we need to get two more, we need to finish 3-3," he said.

As far as pass catchers, the Bears were led by Damarcco Blanton who hauled in eight balls for 59 yards. Jackson caught five for 68 yards and a score while Johnson had three catches for 79 yards and a touchdown.

Defensively, Tory Morgan led the charge with eight tackles including three tackles for loss for 16 yards, two of which were sacks for a total of 15 yards. Danarius Hilliard had seven tackles including one for loss and one fumble forced. In addition to his three interceptions, Singh also had five tackles.

Ruiz sets new record as Bears pick up win over Holmes

September 27, 2024

Despite putting up a fight, the Lady Bears could not find the consistent offense needed Friday night against No. 5 Holmes as the Lady Bulldogs walked away with the 5-0 win.

After the match, Southwest head coach Nicole Cooper said that despite the score of the game, her girls played better, getting out of a recent funk.

"Honestly, the past two games have not been our top performances, and we have talked about changing mindset and mentality, and I think that the girls did that today," she said. "I am happy with what we did because we should find success in the rest of the season."

The Lady Bears (3-5-2, 0-4 MACCC) came out looking to make the first statement, but it was the Bulldogs who struck first with a goal in the 6th minute putting Southwest down 1-0.

Southwest pressed on, looking for the equalizer but couldn't get its offense going. Holmes added two additional goals in the first half in the 19th and 37th minutes, respectively, increasing the Southwest deficit to three.

The Lady Bulldogs added two more goals in the 74th and 81st minutes as the Lady Bears could not provide an answer.

Ruiz sets new record as Bears pick up win over Holmes

When it came to Friday's home contest against Holmes, there wasn't much that went wrong for the Bears at all as they got a complete team effort including a record-breaking performance from sophomore Justin Ruiz in a

6-1 win over the Bulldogs.

"We were back playing like we should," Southwest head coach Zach Mills said. "It is a great feeling. We knew that we needed to come out (ready). Honestly, before tonight, we haven't played as a team really, really well since our Texas trip."

While the Bears (5-4-1, 1-2-1 MACCC) shined as a team, sophomore Justin Ruiz stole the show. He finished with one goal, but set a new school record with four assists in a game.

"I didn't even know (about the assist record), hopefully I can break it next game," said Ruiz jokingly. He added that Coach Mills delivered a clear message prior to the match against the Bulldogs. "Before the game, Coach put in our heads that we had to win the game so we just came out here calm and relaxed and it showed on the field."

Ruiz's big night started in just the third minute of play when he scored his goal on an assist from Roberto Garcia Gomez giving the Bears a 1-0 lead.

Unfortunately didn't last as the Bulldogs battled back and drew even 10:00 later with a score.

The Bears surged ahead and jumped back on top in the 23rd minute when Froylan Texoco-Rodriguez found himself in the right place at the right time, sending a rebound on a shot from Jeysson Cruz in the net making it a 2-1 game.

Southwest followed that up about 15:00 later with a goal from Jamie Settles. His make came on a rebound off of a shot from Ruiz marking Settles' first goal and

Ruiz's first assist of the night.

Leading 3-1 at the half, Southwest carried that momentum over to the second half. Raul Alegre got into the act in the 51st minute getting an assist from Ruiz before finding the back of the net increasing the Bear lead to 4-1.

Not even 10:00 later, Ruiz served-up his third assist on a goal from Jack Boyd making it a 5-1 game. In the 65th minute, a Ruiz corner kick was knocked in via a header from Settles pushing the lead to the eventual final.

In addition to Ruiz's big night Settles also shined with two goals.

October 15, 2024

Facing their longest road trip of the regular season, the Lady Bears got off to a good start to Tuesday's match at No. 18 Itawamba in Fulton. But they lost steam late, eventually falling to the Lady Indians 2-0.

"They are a pretty solid team. The most upsetting team is holding them (scoreless) for 82 minutes. We gave up a late goal on a set piece which corners are always very dangerous and very hard to defend, but it happens. The girls played hard, we battled."

The Lady Bears (5-7-2, 2-6 MACCC) played a tough defense throughout most of the match holding the Lady Indians in check. Despite this, the offense couldn't match the intensity as the game remained scoreless until nearly the end.

In the 81st minute, Itawamba struck, taking advantage of a corner kick to put up the match's first

goal. Even though they were down, the Lady Bears pushed on hoping for the equalizer.

However, seven minutes later, Itawamba dealt another blow to Southwest with a second goal, putting the visitors down with under 2:00 to go. Southwest could not respond in the closing minutes.

The Bears entered Tuesday's conference match at Itawamba, hoping to right the ship after a heart-breaking loss to Hinds on Friday. But a loss of momentum early on was hard to recover from for the Bears as they fell 5-0 to the host Indians.

"It was all about momentum," Southwest head coach Zach Mills said. "They got a goal early in the first half and that killed us."

The first goal by the Indians came in the second minute and put the Bears (6-6-2, 2-4-2 MACCC) behind the 8-ball early. Despite this, they kept battling but lacked consistency trying to get into rhythm despite being without key players.

In the 20th minute, the Indians added to their lead with their second goal on a penalty kick making it a 2-0 match.

In the second half, the deficit unfortunately grew as Itawamba added three more goals in the 51st, 77th and 80th minutes, respectively.

October 29, 2024

In the final contest of the 2024 season, the Lady Bears played an inspired brand of soccer but it wasn't quite enough as Co-Lin built momentum in the first half and rode it out for the remainder of the contest handing Southwest

a 3-0 defeat.

"It was a very emotional night for us," said Southwest head coach Nicole Cooper referring to Sophomore Night. "It's upsetting, giving up the goals not in play, there were two corner kicks and a penalty kick. It was unfortunate."

The Lady Bears (5-9-3, 2-8-1 MACCC) and the Lady Wolves tried to get their offenses going early but the opposing defenses shut down those opportunities. Co-Lin unfortunately broke through in the 25th minute with a goal putting Southwest down 1-0.

The Lady Bears tried to retaliate but a second Lady Wolf goal 11:00 later made it a 2-0 deficit for the hosts.

Trailing 2-0 at the half, the Lady Bears attempted one final push to try and get back into the contest but found themselves down 3-0 after the Lady Wolves rallied to score one more goal in the 74th minute of play.

Despite more aggressive play down the stretch, Southwest was unable to put one in the net as Co-Lin walked away with the win. Heading into Tuesday's regular season finale at home against Co-Lin, the Bears had one simple goal in mind, win and find themselves in the playoffs for the second-consecutive season.

And despite a tough and chippy bout with their rivals, the Bears fell just short in the end dropping a 2-1 heartbreaker to the Wolves, thus ending their season.

"The problem is that it (clinch-ing playoffs) should have happened already this season," Southwest head coach Zach Mills said. "We had a couple of games

that we should have won so this game shouldn't have been such an important one. Not having four starters just hurts."

The Bears (8-7-2, 4-5-2 MACCC) and the Wolves went toe-to-toe through the first half with neither offense being able to overcome the tough defenses put on display.

Not long into the second half, however, it was the visitors who struck first with a goal in the 58th minute.

The Bears pressed on, looking to pull even, and their aggressive play paid off 5:00 later when Sergio Padin scored on a penalty kick, tying the match at 1.

That score stayed true for almost another 8:00, but it was Co-Lin who jumped ahead on a corner kick which was headed in putting the Bears down 2-1.

Southwest tried to get back into the match and had multiple opportunities to do so, including two shots within a minute of each other that hit off of the crossbar. Despite their efforts, they were unable to climb back into the game as Co-Lin held on for the win.

Go Bears!

Flash Fiction: Life Skills

By Allisen Moore,
Staff Writer

Keeping a job was never a problem for May. Not that she was an exceptional worker. She worked hard, but she wasn't always on time, and sometimes her quick wit wasn't the kindest. Most employers would be on the fence about keeping her, since she didn't appear on the surface to be terribly kind, or respectful.

However, she had one, extraordinary skill.

The bell at the door rang as a young lady stumbled in. The smudges under their eyes and their pale complexion gave away just how little sleep they'd gotten the night before. May paused where she had been wiping down the counter, mentally prepping for the inevitable interaction. She'd been at this cafe for over twenty years. She could handle every customer that came her way. Still, the sleep deprived ones were typically wild cards.

The young woman shuffled up to the counter, one hand darting up to dash her greasy, uncombed hair out of her face.

"I- I need caffeine."

May's quick glance pegged the young woman for being well dressed, though her clothes were rumpled and her makeup wasn't done. This was likely a morning coffee stop to keep the young woman running for the rest of the day. May could already see the best options for her.

"I believe we serve that here," May said sweetly, moving to her station at the register. "What flavor would you like it in?"

The young lady blinked, her hand tightening on the strap of her backpack. It was a well-made brand, perhaps she was a college student.

"Um...sweet."

May huffed. "Honey, none of our coffee is inherently 'sweet'. I don't think any coffee in the world is. On the other hand, almost all of our beverages have added sugar. We have a menu of thirty-four different beverage options, and with 'sweet', you managed to knock two, no, three options off the board. Would you mind narrowing it down some?"

Hm. The young lady was giving her a blank stare, struggling to keep up. May would need to dial back on the monologue.

"Um...caramel."

The young lady looked like she was heading somewhere. At this rate, she'd be late to wherever she was going.

"Another stab at narrowing down the options." May sighed. "How about this, honey, do you want hot or cold coffee?"

"Hot," the young lady practically begged.

"Alright, how about our caramel mocha, our caramel cappuccino, or perhaps our caramel latte, those are our most popular hot caramel options. Although, you might like the caramel macchiato. It would probably serve you better."

"...serve?"

"It has more caffeine."

The young lady's eyes lit up. "Yes, please."

"And you'd appreciate an extra dash of sugar, I take it?"

"Yes, please. I need to stay awake."

Ah, the first coherent sentence.

"Coming right up, ma'am. I'll have it for you in a jiffy."

The exhausted smile the young lady sent her way let May know exactly how much the young lady appreciated the prompt service.

May moved off to start whipping together the order. She noticed a couple of her coworkers whispering between themselves in the door to the storage room. From the glances they kept sending her way, she could imagine them gossiping about her. They were just college students themselves, but it still always boggled her that they always saw her as an enigma.

Customer service wasn't even that hard. How could it be a dying skill?



Practical Nursing Class #70: Lakin Graham, Angela Green-Simmons, Olivia Dillon, Mya Evans, Shymirial Barnes-Washington, Chasity Cutrer, Sh'Tarionna Magee, Ashjaria Wheeler, Kizzy Van Norman, De'Neisha Barnes, Trinity McCord, Clyneshie Marsalis, Khylar Diamond, Abigail Schilling; second row: Lauren Jenkins, Jennifer Patterson, LaVonna Pounds, Contoria Toines, Dalton Bradley, Jewell Dykes, Scarlett Crouch, Kayla Cason, Mariyana Woods, De'John'Na Glover, Precious Williams, Layla Newman, Garrett Peterson; third row: Ayden Gautreau, LaTashea Crawford, Jamya Green, Courtney London, Dasia Blocker, Rebbecca Rutland, Te'Untay Ginn, Kiara Thomas, Tatanya Lenoir; fourth row: Katelyn Causey, Destiny Fairman, Steven Allen, Jr. *photo by Joyce Mabry*



Practical Nursing Officers: Angela Simmons, Assistant Treasurer; Chasity Cutrer, Assistant Secretary; Mariyana Woods, Treasurer; Tatanya Lenoir, President; Kiara Thomas, Vice President; Khylar Diamond, Secretary *photo by Joyce Mabry*



Practical Nursing Instructors: Tangela Edwards, Shelly Easterling, Joice McGowan, Cadreidre Stalling, adjunct; Mallori Bradley, adjunct; Brenda Wilson, adjunct *photo by Joyce Mabry*



Blood Drive: Georgia Thomas, ADN; Lauaren Campbell, ADN; Trinity Goldman, RN, help with the campus blood drive. *photo Joyce Mabry*



SGA Officers: Savannah Arnold, Freshman Delegate; Emily Caston, Freshman Secretary; Ruth Bishop, Freshman Vice President; Malorie Dreher, Sophomore delegate; Maddison Carraway, Sophomore President; Kailea Dillon, Sophomore Vice President; second row: Josi Spears, Freshman Treasurer; Joseph Kenny, Freshman President; Bethany Graves, Sophomore Treasurer; Aysha Hare, Sophomore Delegate; Mary Katherine Gray, Sophomore Delegate; Dana Pena, Sophomore Secretary

Missions: Olivia Goldman

By Ella Pattie,
Editor

Olivia Goldman, a member of the BSU lead team, dedicated her summer to serving as a Rec Squad Leader for Student Life Kids Camp. She was a part of a team that consisted of thirty college-aged students with the same goal as her, sharing the gospel. They traveled across the Southeastern region of the United States, hosting camps in new locations bi-weekly. As a Rec Squad Leader, she was responsible for leading kids in competitive outdoor games that not only promoted teamwork and fun but also tied back to the Bible. This ensured that the rec field was not just a place for activities and making racket during Squad Wars, but that it was a place for kids to encounter Christ too. Olivia experienced this firsthand, as she and her fellow leaders had the opportunity to help lead children to Christ on the rec field.

Women's Basketball Review

By Travis Connelley, SID

Lady Bears enter 2024-25 season hoping to build off of last year's success. Entering last season, the odds were stacked against the Lady Bears. A couple of season-long key injuries in Mookie Lampley and Shanell Celestine coupled with a low prediction in preseason polls only motivated the team even more.

And despite the challenges, the Lady Bears rose to the occasion, silencing the doubters to finish Runners Up not only in the MACCC Conference but also Region 23.

Fast forward to this season and the Lady Bears are hoping for even more success than the year prior.

"I'm excited, we had a good run last year," Lady Bears head coach Brent Harris said. "I think that we have enough coming back and some quality newcomers that we can be successful. Time will tell if we can make that kind of run but I like us so far."

Preseason polls entering this year have picked Southwest to finish 3rd and Harris, who enters year No. 13 as the Lady Bears' head coach, will use that as a motivation for his team.

"I'm going to use that to talk to them, saying 'hey, we wanted our respect and we have it, what are you going to do to defend that,'" he said. "That'll be our selling point this year. I am proud but also, we have to live up to it."

In order to better prepare for the very challenging games in conference play later in the year, Southwest will be tested early with several tough opponents on the radar. Among them are Panola College and Northwest Florida State. "Our schedule is extremely challenging, several teams who made the national tournament last year," Harris said. "It is different, we open at home. I don't know the math but I'm not sure if we have ever done that. It is on a Saturday so relatives and parents can get here."

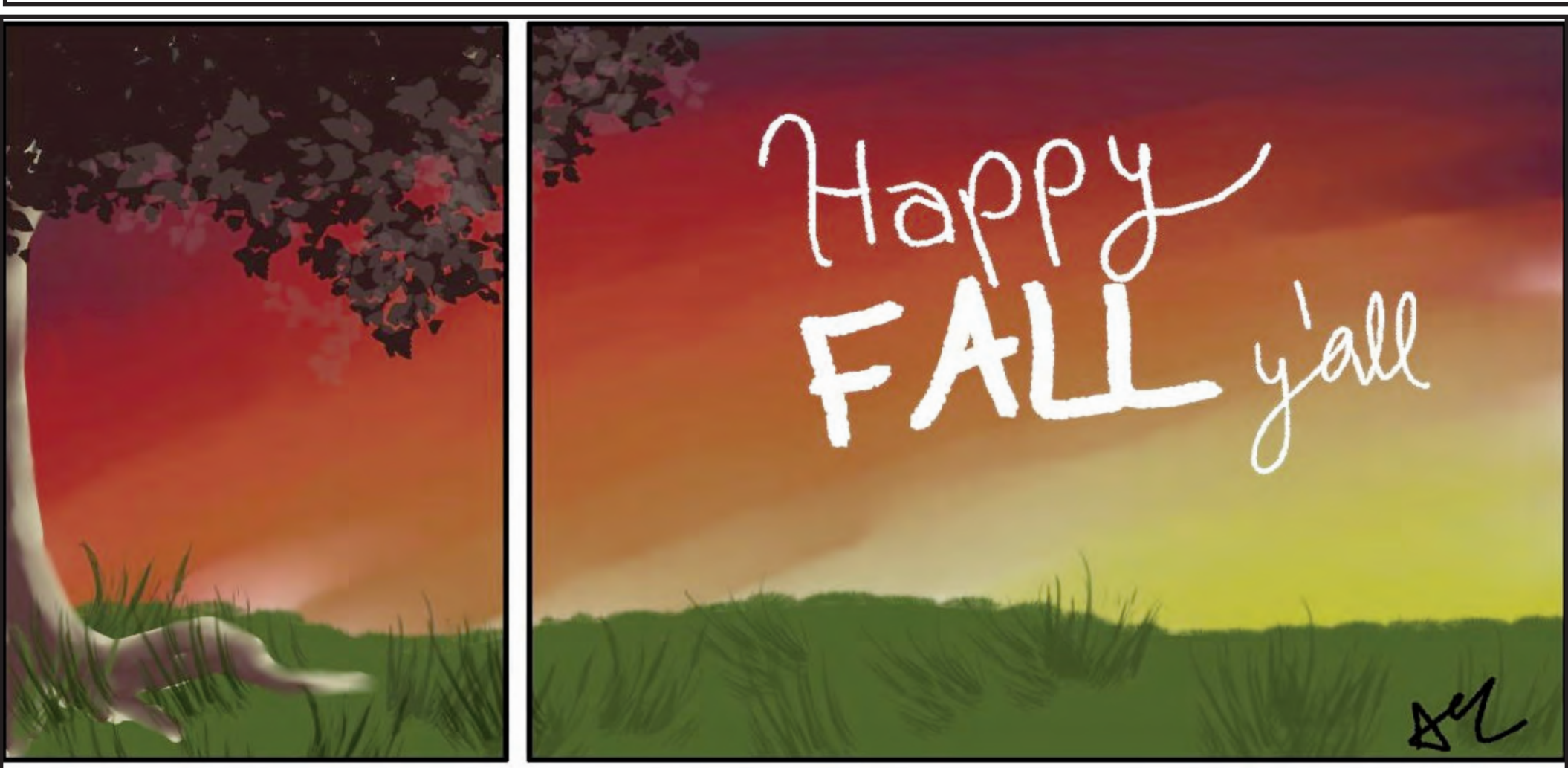
In order to make another run, the Lady Bears will have plenty of experience they can rely upon. Several names who stepped up last year as freshman will look to pick up where they left off.

Among them are guards Kalea Williams and Kara Beth Addison who stood out last season. Williams was called upon to be the starting point guard and handled it well averaging 3.4 points, 3.5 assists and 2.9 rebounds per game while appearing in all 30 contests. "We looked it up in January and we were really down to only one point guard and Kalea did an outstanding job," Harris said. "She hit a big shot in the end in the tournament." Also appearing in every game was Addison who averaged 9.5 points, 5.6 rebounds and 1.7 assists per contest. Fellow sophomore Ja'Kya Brown is another player who has experience and will be called upon this season.

Joining them in the backcourt is a slew of newcomers including Akeelah Hobson (Oakdale, LA), Mady Smith (Oxford) and Gracie Miller (Midland, LA).

Vote

by Anna Comeaux



Christmas with the Ducks

by Lauren Coon



Lauren Coon

ADS



A SOUTHWEST CHRISTMAS

DECEMBER 5-8

AYLENE ADENE HURST AUDITORIUM

DEC. 5TH	7 PM	DEC. 6TH	7 PM
DEC. 7TH	2 & 7 PM	DEC. 8TH	2 PM

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