

WINTERGLOW MAKES A JANUARY DEBUT



A UCO student volunteer participates in activities at WinterGlow, helping children color and craft on Nov. 30, 2012. Photo by The Vista Archives.



UCO students sing carols for WinterGlow on Nov. 30, 2012. Photo by The Vista Archives.

Kanesha Brown

Staff Writer

For the first time in 16 years the annual Winter Glow event was rescheduled to 6 p.m. this upcoming Friday at Broncho Lake on the UCO campus.

Originally, the event was scheduled on Dec. 6, 2013, but due to inclement weather, Assistant Director of Campus Activities and Winter Glow Advisor Courtney James said UCO President Don Betz closed the campus and all activities.

Though Christmas is over, the theme will not change.

"It's still A Central Story...it's a winter carnival not a Christmas carnival," said James.

There will be no photos with Santa Claus, said James. According to the UCO website, the children will be able to take photos with Buddy the

Broncho.

Instead of the usual Christmas crafts, there will be more crafts such as snowmen, snowflakes and penguins that are centered on winter-time. In addition to the crafts, there will be "Make Your Own Comic Book Cover," said James.

The Winter Glow Schedule, according to UCO website will be:

- The Holiday Light show will begin at 6 p.m. by Broncho Lake.
- Events in the High University Center will start at 6:15 p.m.
- The winners of the contests will be announced at 7 p.m.
- At 9 p.m. Winter Glow will conclude.

Winter Glow activities, according to the UCO website, will include: Winter Wonderland Craft Area, Letters to the Troops Benefiting Blue Star Mothers, Face Painting, Games, Photo Booths,

S'mores and more.

Contests, according to the UCO website, will be a Coloring Contest, Your Central Story Phrig Contest, Holiday Tree Decorating Contest, and the Office Decoration Contest.

Forms for the contest can be found on www.uco.edu/student-life/winter-glow/contests.asp.

Winter Glow is listed as one of the top five events to go to this weekend in Oklahoma, said James.

Winter Glow first started after UCO gained huge crowd when they use to host only the lighting show by Old North, said Winter Glow Chair Amanda Davis.

Each year is bigger and better and they hope to have a great turnout as before, Davis said.

James said in the past three years the themes were Polar Express, A Night of the Nutcracker, and A Miracle on 2nd St.

UCO partners with WFF for a cleaner, sustainable campus



By partnering with WFF, UCO will improve the sustainability of the products used on campus. Photo by Brooks Nickell, The Vista.

Natalie Cartwright

Staff Writer

The University of Central Oklahoma signed a new custodial contract with WFF Facility Services, Jan. 1, to provide and disperse Green Seal certified cleaning products throughout UCO's campus.

WFF is a privately owned corporation based in St. Louis, Mo. For 35 years, WFF has provided custodial, grounds, and maintenance services to colleges and universities across the country.

According to Jonathan Campbell, WFF facility services president, they currently provide green certified cleaning products to several campuses around the metro, including Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma Christian and Oklahoma City Community College.

"We want to become a part of UCO's campus," Campbell said.

Campbell said WFF's goal is to partner with physical plant directors to provide a clean and safe environment for their customers and their consumers, the students. WFF sources their products from Hillyard, a cleaning distributor based out of Missouri. Hillyard Green Select products are formulated to minimize the impact on the environment, reduce the risk to human health, and at the same time, improve worker safety.

The new partnership with WFF is helping to further UCO's already green initiative on campus. UCO was awarded the Green Power Leadership award in 2011 and the entire campus is powered by wind energy. UCO also has recycling bins for paper, plastic, and aluminum cans across campus.

Greg Cordum is the director of custodial operations at UCO under WFF.

Cordum said the Green Sealed cleaning products are being replaced all around campus. Products include hand soaps, detergents, and new paper towels that are 80 percent post consumer recycled.

"We're currently changing out the internal guts of soap dispensers," Cordum said.

Green Seal is a non-profit environmental standard development and certification organization recognized nationally. The Green Seal is an eco-label used by manufacturers and services providers. The standards for a product to bear the Green

Seal are based on a life cycle approach, considering such impacts as those from raw materials extraction, manufacturing, use and reuse or disposal.

Campbell said, "All of our products are toxin free, except for the disinfectant."

Accessibility and affordability is becoming more abundant for green products, he said, allowing UCO to sign a 3-year contract with WFF with the option of a two-year extension.

"We really believe that if we can create a clean environment, then people tend to keep that environment cleaner," Campbell said.

A new technique WFF introduced to the UCO custodial services is a two-sided cleaning bucket that minimizes water usage by filtering the dirt from one side of the bucket into the other, Campbell said. WFF also uses microfiber towels for cleaning. These cloths minimize chemical and water usage and reduce cross contamination by their color coded uses.

According to UCO's Sustainability Coordinator Tim Tillman this partnership was a perfect fit.

"Anytime a firm comes in and says 'we want to provide this service and this is our ethic,' and their ethic matches ours, that's a great partnership," Tillman said.

Campbell believes that building processes and systems for the custodial team will develop into natural habit.

WFF is not only bringing green cleaning products to UCO, but they are also training and educating their team of employees, their "Ladies and Gentlemen," in the new green processes. Campbell said he believes that by educating his employees, they will feel better prepared, empowered and motivated to fulfill their duties. Sixty-nine WFF employees have now been through orientation and training.

"By educating employees about the process, they better understand the bigger picture, and that is that, they are creating an environment that benefits the community," Campbell said.

Tillman believes that the newfound partnership with WFF is going to be beneficial to the university and its students.

"To have this group of experts who know so much about sustainable practices," Tillman said, "is a huge benefit to the student population."

State capitol statue sparks monumental debate in Oklahoma

Josh Wallace

Staff Writer

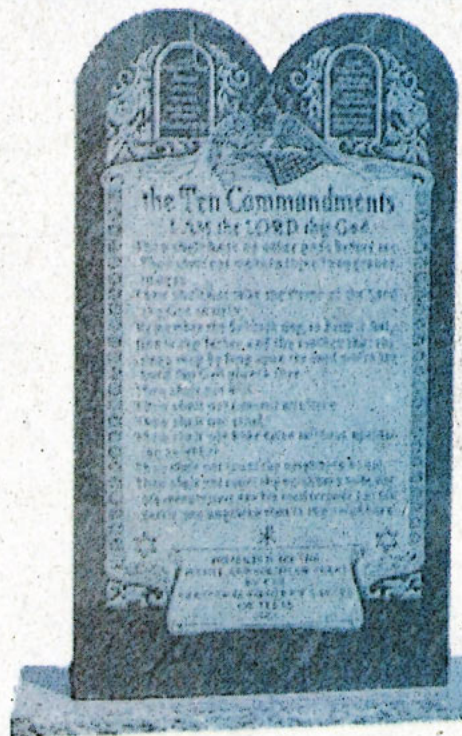
In Nov. 2013, the New York-based Satanic Temple proposed to the Oklahoma Capitol Preservation Commission (OCP) the installation of a donated monument to be placed on the State Capitol's grounds. If approved, it would be the second such religious monument erected at the capitol, with a replica of the Ten Commandments installed in 2012 preceding it.

The 15-member OCP is

tasked with authorizing and overseeing "the display of art objects in public areas of the State Capitol building."

In his letter petitioning the OCP, Satanic Temple Spokesman Lucien Greaves said, "We believe that all monuments should be in good taste and consistent with community standards. Our proposed monument, as an homage to the historic/literary Satan, will certainly abide by these guidelines."

See State Capitol Statues on Page 4



The Ten Commandments monument was added to the state capitol grounds in 2012. Photo: Public Domain.



THE VISTA

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The Vista encourages letters to the editor. Letters should address issues and ideas, not personalities. Letters must be typed, double-spaced, with a maximum of 250 words, and must include the author's printed name, title, major, classification and phone number. Letters are subject to editing for libel, clarity and space, or to eliminate statements of questionable taste. The Vista reserves the right not to publish submitted letters.

Address letters to:

Editor, The Vista, 100 N. University Dr., Edmond, OK 73034-5209, or deliver in person to the editor in the Communications Building, Room 131. Letters can be emailed to vistauco@gmail.com.

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The Path Least Taken

Editorial by: Sarah Neese (Editor-in-Chief)

As I always do, while searching for ideas for an editorial, I perused the front page of CNN.com for something newsworthy on which to give my opinion.

The main thing that I discovered was that Justin Bieber dominated most of the website for a few hours. I decided to give up on writing about the news. However, I stopped to really think about what it all really meant.

After the house of one of Bieber's neighbors appeared to have been hit with eggs, a group of law enforcement officials executed a search warrant on Bieber's property, targeting him as the main suspect.

A media frenzy began surrounding the story and appears to still be going strong.

First of all, why would anyone need a search warrant to investigate an egging? It seems to me that someone has nothing better to do than to follow up on a hunch, trying to catch an egg-launching rebel-rouser after a night of two many yolks.

Secondly, why in the world does the American public, or any other public for that matter, need to know the intricate criminal processes of nabbing a suspected egger in Los Angeles County, specifically in a neighborhood that likely has more value than the entire city of Edmond.

In addition, I'm sure there are heaps of other news story that could have taken the place of Bieber's fame being promoted once again. The fact that this story ran in the "Top Stories" section of the website seems to be much less than appropriate. Syria, Russia, Iran, North Korea, Israel, South Sudan, Haiti and Japan, at the very least, are all experiencing social issues and major newsworthy events.

But Sarah, those aren't in the United States. Oklahoma, Colorado, Illinois, New Jersey, California, New York, Texas and Washington D.C., among other states, also have quite a few events that could have taken Bieber's place.

Thank you CNN.com for never failing to capture anything remotely close to something semi-newsworthy. I applaud you for your time and effort to bring me the stories of this generation. A millionaire pop star, younger than myself, suspected of throwing eggs at the house of an equally rich millionaire, a house bigger than my wildest dreams, is at the top of my priority list for this week.

Let's all take a moment to thank CNN for their award-winning news reporting and free public relations work for Just Bieber and his "bros."

CAMPUS QUOTES

A federal judge declared Oklahoma's ban on gay marriage unconstitutional. What is your opinion on this?

ASHTON CLEER

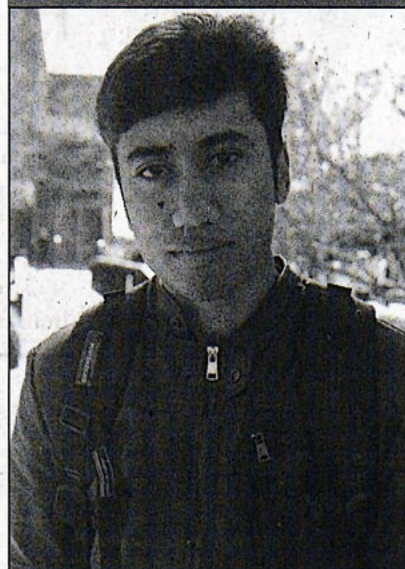
Musical Theatre - Freshman



"That's great. Everyone should be treated equally."

PRABIN KHATRI

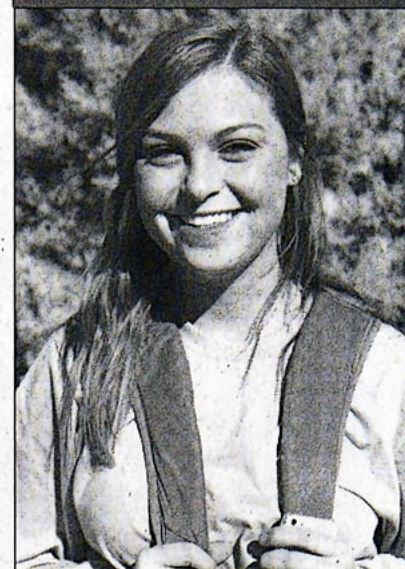
Computer Science - Freshman



"I didn't know about it."

MYKALA IRSIK

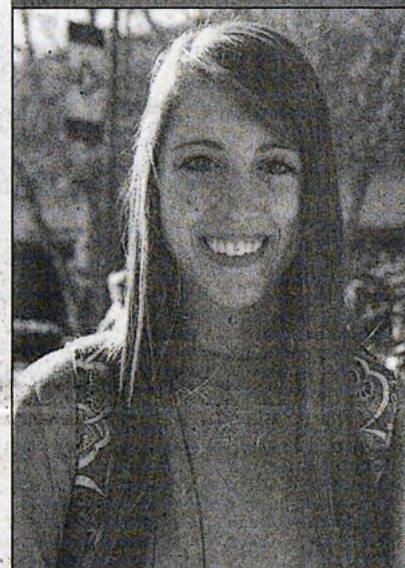
Business - Freshman



"I think it's a good idea for it to be put back on the ballot to allow others to maybe go and change their mind to maybe let gay marriage be okay, because why stop people from being with who they love?"

KAYLIE ABRAMO

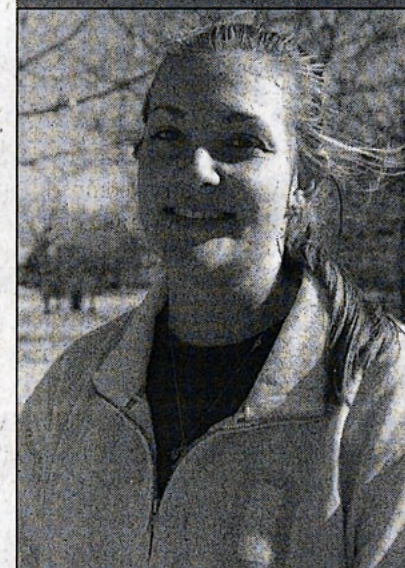
Elementary Education - Sophomore



"If you're going to spend your whole life with someone, you should be able to have the same rights and benefits as others. So for that reason, I think it's great."

LINDSEY FRIDRICH

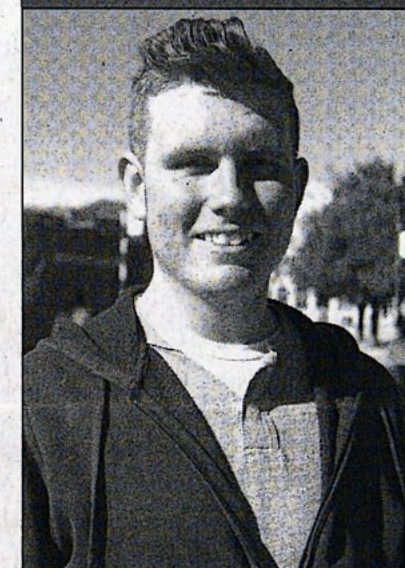
Accounting - Freshman



"I don't agree with the whole gay marriage thing, but I'm not going to treat people who agree with it any differently."

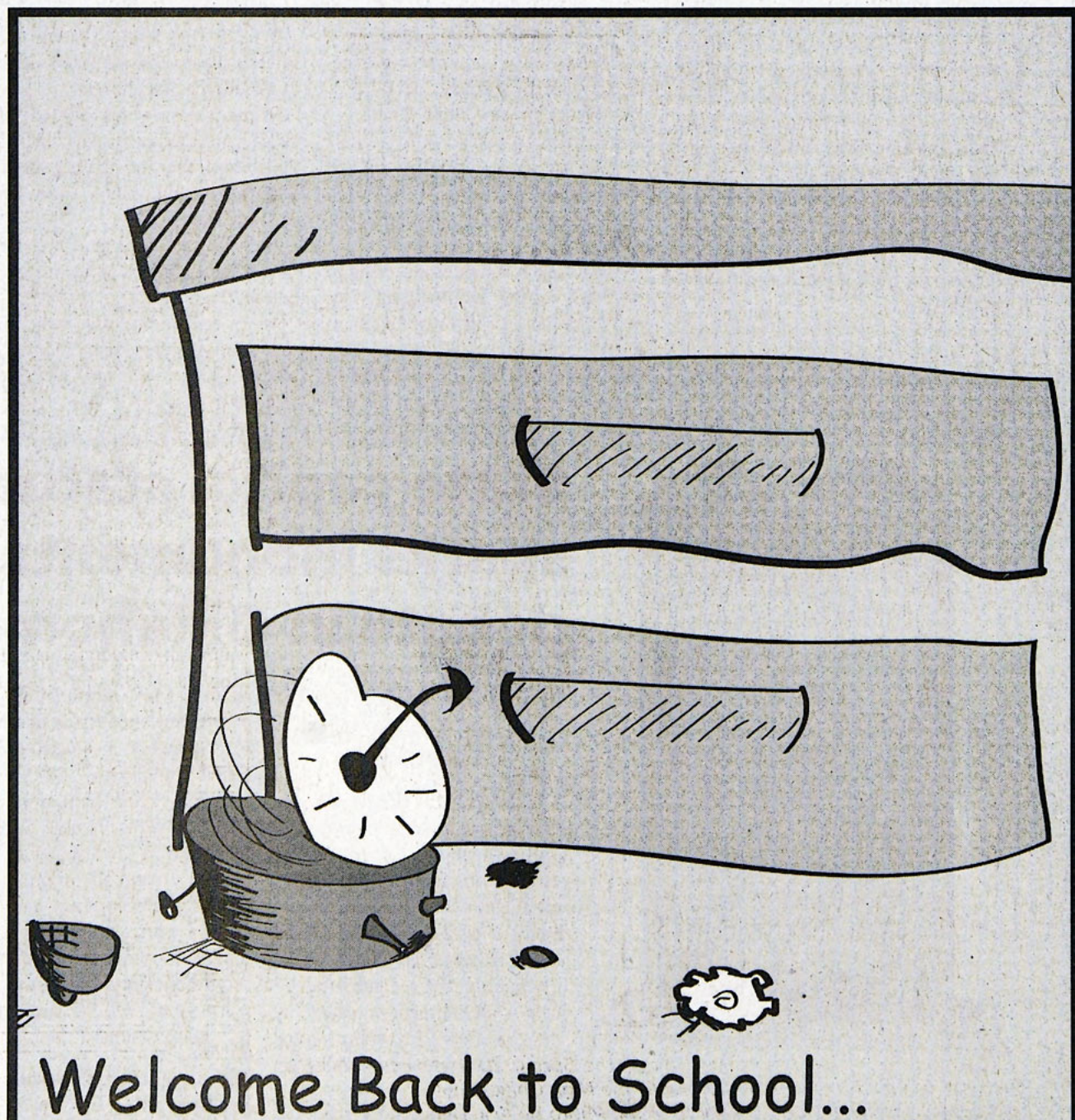
LANE SMITH

Petroleum Engineering - Freshman



"I don't have too much personal preference. It's whatever makes anybody happy, so if it works, it goes."

CAMPUS CARTOON

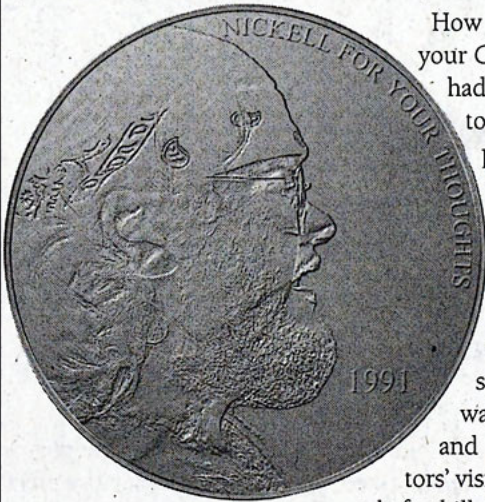


Cartoon by Matthew Gossom

Opinion

POCKET FULL OF SOCIAL CHANGE

By Brooks Nickell



How did you spend your Christmas break? I had knee surgery. A torn ACL four years past fixed and two weeks with some change spent on my parents' couch.

When I hurt my knee in high school, the gambit was run, X-ray, MRI and countless doctors' visits all added up to a hefty bill and really no results.

The doctor said, "It's partially torn and we could fix it, but if you don't plan to play sports in college, I wouldn't spend the money." Even medical doctors can be naive.

Four years out of high school and I exceeded that freshman 15, turned it into the super senior 40. I went from exercise to sedentary overeating and replaced hiking with videogames, and pick-up basketball with greasy fast-food sacks and television. So in the hopes of enacting a lifestyle change, I started to exercise again, beginning with running.

The lack of an ACL had me in the MRI tube once more, all the mechanical clicks and bangs reverberating off my bones.

This time, Doc said we should get that fixed. So Christmas break rolled around and that's exactly what we did.

A few other events beckoned my attention over the break. Colorado legalized marijuana for recreational use and the U.S. District Court ruled Oklahoma's ban on same-sex marriage to be unconstitutional.

I won't jump into the benefits of legalizing marijuana here. That's a story for a different day. And I'll only weigh in on same-sex marriage by saying, hooray for equality.

Instead, I'd like to touch on the nature of change. See, so many view it as detrimental. They feel that it's dangerous. I've even heard people call social change in America cancerous to our values. What values?

I think we're blinded by the fact that often times, change may appear to be harmful, when really it's just different.

I was running for three months before I had my second MRI. I had never felt better. I'm off the couch and crutches now, but it will be about three months before I can push my new knee to those lengths again.

Sometimes you have to do what inherently looks like taking a step backwards to head forwards, one step back and two steps forward. Often times, true progress comes from letting go of what you have been taught, what you've

become routine with, and searching out the new and the good.

I'll leave you with a quote.

"I am not an advocate for frequent changes in laws and constitutions. But laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths discovered and manners and opinions change, with the change of circumstances, institutions must advance also to keep pace with the times. We might as well require a man to wear still the coat which fitted him when a boy as civilized society to remain ever under the regimen of their barbarous ancestors."

-Thomas Jefferson-

Follow me on Twitter @JbrooksNickell

Office of Diversity and Inclusion hosts King Week Activities

Olanrewaju Suleiman

Staff Writer

The University of Central Oklahoma Office of Diversity and Inclusion will be hosting their annual King Week.

King Week is a week of activities where the campus celebrates the life of American civil rights activist Martin Luther King Jr.

MeShawn Conley, the director of Central's Office of Diversity and Inclusion, planned King Week at UCO.

"King Week here at Central is an opportunity to celebrate Dr. King and the movement he started, as well as civil rights," she said.

Conley believes that the celebration will allow the central community to move forward to a more just society.

The events begin on Jan. 20 with the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service. This is the only nationally recognized day of service.

Central students who participate will volunteer at sites in Edmond and the Oklahoma City metro areas. Interested students can visit www.orgsync.com to sign up.

On that same day, the Central community will participate in the 2014 Oklahoma City Martin Luther King Jr. Day parade.

It begins at 2 p.m. in the downtown Oklahoma City area. The theme for this year's parade is "Expanding the Dream."

On Jan. 21 an event called "Words that Changed the World" will be held.

"Words that Changed the World" is a new program that uses quotes from Martin Luther King Jr.," said Conley.

Five members of the Central commu-

nity will choose a Martin Luther King Jr. quote and give its history and context in 10 minutes. They will also talk about what it means in today's society and how it relates to the world that we live in.

It will begin at 1 p.m. in the Nigh University Center room 300 and refreshments will be served.

On Jan. 22 the Office of Diversity and Inclusion will hold the 4th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Enterprise Oratory Competition.

This year's theme comes from the Martin Luther King Jr. quote "Nothing in all the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity."

The oratory competition, which is sponsored by Enterprise Rent-A-Car, is one of the many highlights of King Week.

It will begin at 2 p.m. in the Will Rogers Room in the Nigh University Center. Refreshments will be served to all who attend.

The final event of King Week is the MLK Gospel Fest 2014. It will take place at 7 p.m., Jan. 23 in the Nigh University Center Constitution Hall

There will be performances from both UCO students and people in the community. It is a celebration of Dr. King's life through dance, music and spoken word.

Conley wants all members of the Central community to participate in King Week events.

"I want people to continue to make changes today and to be active in their communities," she said.

All King Week events and activities are free and open to the public. For more information, contact the UCO Office of Diversity and Inclusion at 405-974-3588. Information can also be found by visiting www.uco.edu/student-life/diversity.

UCO Music Students Win Statewide Competition



Fiona playing piano, Jan 13. Photo by Quang Pho, The Vista.

Rachel Brocklehurst

Staff Writer

UCO piano students Ying Wei and Buyun Li recently won in their classification categories at the Oklahoma Music Teacher Association (OMTA) Competition. Li won the undergraduate junior/senior category and Wei won the graduate category.

Dr. David Forbat, head of UCO's piano division, worked with Li last semester during the time she prepared for the competition because the original teacher was out of town at the time. He's been able to work with Wei fall and spring of this semester.

"They make me work and think very hard. They make me draw upon all the training that I had and my experience," said Forbat. "When you have a student who is advanced and ready to take on more than just foundational concepts, ready to look at more interpretational decisions, and technical choices, then you're really working on word building and artistic performance, and it's not just these are the notes, and these are the rhythms."

Both of these students challenge him to think carefully about what decisions should be made and what might be a beautiful choice.

"I hate to tell them 'play it exactly this way,' because I want them to be thinking, 'how can I make that more effective', or, 'how can we handle that passage physically better?'"

There are sometimes little things to correct in the note reading, but not so much with these two.

Both are one year exchange students from China. Li started playing the piano when she was five years old and she's 21 now.

"I'm applying to graduate school, so when I finish my undergraduate, I will continue studying," said Li. "I think performer is my dream, but

I think teacher is a good choice for me. If I can do the performer, I will do the teacher."

Forbat went to China twice during November 2012 and visited Ying's school and heard his recital.

"I went to Buyun's school, also, and she came because there was a lot of contact between our university and Xinghai conservatory," said Forbat.

She decided that she'd like to spend a year of exchange here while she prepares for the master's degree.

"This was my first time to attend the competition in the United States, so it's of real significance for me. I attended several competitions in China, but in the United States, I rarely notice," said Li. "I think I gained a lot of experience in the United States. I think it's a really unforgettable experience for me."

In Li's category, there were four other pianists competing and Wei was the only one in hers.

She still had to earn her distinction because they don't just award it randomly. There was a competitor from OU who cancelled at the last minute.

"I don't want to downplay her achievement, but her competition backed out. But that's part of getting ready for it and having the music to play; it means that you got it together. It's easy to sign up sometimes for a competition, and then to realize, gee I didn't really get ready in time," said Forbat.

It's a collegiate competition that happens every year.

There were competitors from OU, OSU, OCU and OBU.

"I would say at least five of the major schools in the area were represented, so the fact that we took two first places is significant because it means that we have something going on here that the judges from outside can reward with distinctions," said Forbat.

He thinks that having the competition is such a motivator.

Wei got some very good comments from the judge.

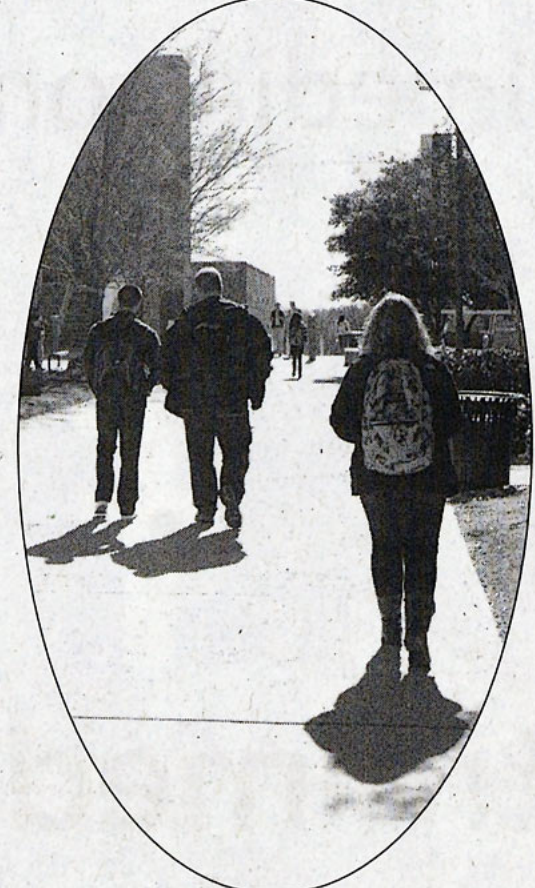
"I think young pianists should practice a lot. I think it's very important for the audience to feel the emotion in the piece, as well," said Li. "I think we shouldn't be very nervous on the stage. We can change a nervous feeling to exciting. When we're playing the piano, we pass our thoughts and pass our emotion, along with what we think, to the audience because music is a very beautiful thing."

"My hope is that competitions and recitals, no doubt about it, they push you cause it's a deadline. You have to be ready by then because if you're not ready, then you won't do well and somebody else will take the prize," said Forbat.

He thinks most people operate that way in their field. He also thinks all musicians need to learn that even when it's not a competition, there's work to be done.

Forbat said, "It's important to love what you do, and the music, and what it requires, and accept that as part of what you do on a daily basis. That's my hope because I think that's what sustains a musician over the long course of their career."

Back to School to Prove to Dad I'm Not a Fool...



Students returned to campus to begin the Spring 2014 semester this Monday. A group of students walk toward the Nigh University Center in between classes on Wednesday, January 15, 2014. Photo by Ailiki Dyer, The Vista.

2014 - 2015 University Wide SAF Funding Applications

Applications for funding University Wide programs and events through Student Activity Funds are now being accepted. Any campus department or organization seeking funding for a new program or event is encouraged to e-mail Teresa Metzger at tmetzger@uco.edu to request an application.

The application deadline is February 7, 2014.

Examples of programs currently receiving Student Activity Funds include Earth Day and Kaleidoscope Dancers.

Funding requests for programs or events benefiting the entire student body are encouraged. Departmental academic activity and activities not accessible to all students will not receive consideration.

State capital statue

“It is not something the people of Oklahoma would support...”

- Rep. Eric Proctor

The responses from state lawmakers over the Satanic Temple's plan have ranged from dismissive to that of being offended. Senator Brian Bingman of Sapulpa spoke to the Tulsa World, adding, "I think it is a joke," while Rep. Eric Proctor of Tulsa told the paper, "It is not something the people of Oklahoma would support, and the people of Oklahoma support the Ten Commandments monument."

Rep. Doug Cox of Grove told the Tulsa World the proposed monument wouldn't be approved for the capitol grounds "without a court battle, I can assure you."

Shortly after the group's proposal gained local and national media attention, two other groups, the Universal Society for Hinduism (USH) and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) also petitioned the OCPC. USH proposed a monument of the deity Hanuman and PETA proposed displaying a banner stating, "Give Peas a Chance: Go Vegan. Kindness Is the Best Religion of All."

On Dec. 19, 2013, the OCPC voted to ban any new requests for displays at the state capitol until a lawsuit regarding the placement of Ten Commandments monument had been resolved. The suit, filed by the Oklahoma branch of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) against the OCPC on Aug. 19, 2013, seeks to discontinue "the placement and maintenance of the display of the Ten Commandments placed upon public property on the grounds of the Oklahoma State Capitol."

Among the complaints included in the filing is that the monument "is designed around a clear and conspicuous religious message,

making emphatic and explicit references to God in divine terms."

The filing goes on to describe that the OCPC was authorized by legislation passed in Nov. 2009 to find a suitable place on the state capitol grounds for the monument, and although the funds gathered for the construction were raised privately, coming from the family of current serving Republican Rep. Mike Ritze of Broken Arrow, public funds were used in the process of placing the monument.

The ACLU also cites in the filing a provision found within the state's constitution that declares, "No public money or property shall ever be appropriated, applied, donated, or used, directly or indirectly, for the use, benefit, or support of any sect, church, denomination, or system of religion, or for the use, benefit, or support of any priest, preacher, minister, or other religious teacher or dignitary,

or sectarian institution as such."

University of Central Oklahoma



This artist's rendering provided by the Satanic Temple shows a proposed monument that the New York-based Satanic group wants to place at the Oklahoma state Capitol. The statue features a bearded, goat-headed demon sitting in a pentagram-adorned throne with children next to it. (AP Photo/Satanic Temple)

students had varying opinions on the subject, but of those asked, most considered the move by the Satanic Temple as more of a symbolic move to highlight the need for religious equality and freedom of speech.

Tosh Miller, a senior in public relations, said, "I understand why they would want a monument there, especially in light of religious freedom. But honestly, I think it's kinda silly. If they get it put up there, then I'm not going to complain about it, but they're really just trying to make a statement more than anything."

Kieran Walsh, a special education graduate student, echoed Miller's view, adding, "I think they're doing it out of protest because they believe the Ten Commandments shouldn't be on any government building."

Andrew Gerding, a management information systems major, stated his belief that by allowing the Ten Commandments, an image that he sees as being a symbol of Judaism and Christianity, on the capitol grounds, then you have to allot other religions the same right. Ultimately, Gerding believes the Ten Commandments have no place being in front of a government building.

Walsh, a student from the U.K., elaborated further, saying, "As an outsider I find it quite funny, in many ways I can see why they're doing it because it's saying church and state should be separate and therefore if you can have this on why can't you have something else, and being from England, most people are atheist really. So therefore moral or reli-

gious, as government goes and also [everyday people] it's a private matter ... I realize it's to the extreme and why many people would be upset about it."

The Satanic Temple's efforts to create the monument are still ongoing, utilizing crowdsourcing site Indiegogo.com for funding. Launched Dec. 8, 2013 with a goal of raising \$20,000, the group had exceeded their goal, raising over \$26,000 as of Jan. 15, with the funding window set to end at 11:59 p.m. on Jan. 17.

On Jan. 6, 2014, the group unveiled a rendering of the proposed 7 ft. monument, which depicts Satan with two children, a girl on the right and a boy on the left, with a pentagram in the background.

Shortly after making the rendering of the monument public, the Satanic Temple's efforts were criticized again, this time by another group known as Church of Satan, also based out of New York. Referencing the image, Magus Gilmore wrote on the Church of Satan's website, "The statue is crudely designed and ugly to me and seems pedophilic," he went on to say that the image "seems to imply that Satanism represents the same situation which has plagued the Roman Catholic and other Christian churches for some time: child abuse."

He closed by stating, "It occurs to me that the efforts by the perpetrators of this proposal may be intended as a means for making Satanism appear foolish and just as dysfunctional and irrational as we secularists view most other religions to be."

“The statue is crudely designed and ugly to me and seems pedophilic...”

- Magus Gilmore



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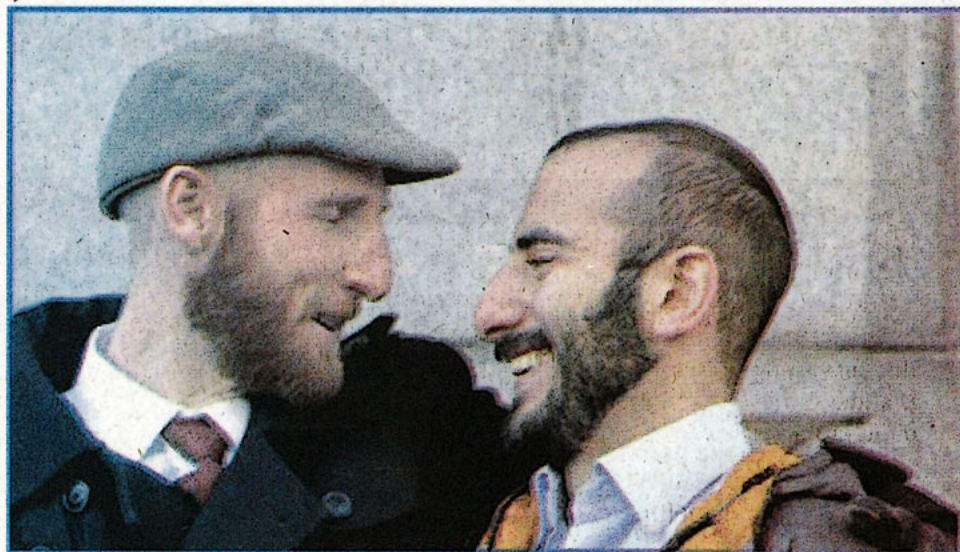
University of Oklahoma Sorority House Catches Fire



In this photo taken on Tuesday, Jan. 14, 2014, Norman (Okla.) firefighters battle a late-night blaze at the Alpha Gamma Delta sorority house on the campus of the University of Oklahoma, Tuesday, Jan. 14, 2014, in Norman, Okla. No one was injured and investigators don't yet know what caused the fire but say it likely started in the building's attic. Members of the sorority are staying in temporary housing until they

NORMAN, Okla. (AP) — No one was injured after a fire at a University of Oklahoma sorority house. Fire officials say the blaze broke out Tuesday night at the Alpha Gamma Delta sorority house on campus. Norman Fire Department Deputy Fire Chief Jim Bailey says flames were coming from the building's roof when firefighters arrived. Everyone was evacuated safely. Investigators don't yet know what caused the fire but say it likely started in the building's attic. Members of the sorority are staying in temporary housing until they can safely return to the house.

Oklahoma's Ban on Same Sex-Marriage Ruled Unconstitutional



In this Dec. 4, 2013 file photo, Derek Kitchen, left, and his partner Moudi Sbeity look at each other following court in Salt Lake City. A challenge to Utah's same-sex marriage ban by three gay couples was back in court Dec. 4, as a federal court judge heard arguments. A federal judge struck down Utah's same-sex marriage ban Friday, Dec. 20, 2013, in a decision that brings a nationwide shift toward allowing gay marriage to a conservative state where the Mormon church has long been against it. (AP Photo/Rick Bowmer, File)



Mary Bishop, left, and her partner Sharon Baldwin listen as Sue Barton and her partner Gay Phillips speak to guests during a celebration at the Dennis R. Neill Equality Center, Tuesday, Jan. 14, 2014 in Tulsa, Okla. A federal judge struck down Oklahoma's gay marriage ban Tuesday, but headed off any rush to the altar by setting aside his order while state and local officials complete an appeal. (AP Photo/Tulsa World, James Gibbard)

TULSA, Okla. (AP) — For the second time in a month, a federal judge has set aside a deeply conservative state's limits on same-sex marriage, this time in Oklahoma.

U.S. District Judge Terence Kern on Tuesday struck down Oklahoma's voter-approved ban, but headed off any rush to the altar by putting the effects of his ruling on hold while state and local officials complete an appeal.

Like the federal judge who reversed Utah's gay marriage ban in December, Kern determined that Oklahoma's constitutional amendment violated the U.S. Constitution's equal protection clause. His ruling was littered with references to both the Utah ruling and those issued by the U.S. Supreme Court last summer.

Kern described Oklahoma's ban on same-sex marriage as "an arbitrary, irrational exclusion of just one class of Oklahoma citizens from a governmental benefit."

"Equal protection is at the very heart of our legal system and central to our consent to be governed," Kern wrote. "It is not a scarce commodity to be meted out begrudgingly or in short portions. Therefore, the majority view in Oklahoma must give way to individual constitutional rights."

The decision drew criticism from the governor, attorney general and other elected officials in this state, known as the buckle of the Bible Belt. A state lawmaker who once said gay people posed a greater threat to the nation than terrorism blasted rulings from "activist judges."

Oklahoma's ban on same-sex marriage is the third to be struck down by a federal judge, after California and Utah. State courts also ruled in favor of same-sex marriage in New Mexico in December and New Jersey in October.

Camilla Taylor, marriage project director at civil-rights organization Lambda Legal, said momentum has been increasing as litigators see that gay-rights groups are winning same-sex marriage cases. She said there are currently 43 gay marriage lawsuits in courts, and a new one is brought almost every week.

The Oklahoma ruling came in a lawsuit filed nearly a decade ago, by two same-sex couples.

"There's so much emotion, I'm kind of crying right now," said Mary Bishop, who hopes to marry partner Sharon Baldwin. "It's overwhelming to think that we finally won."

"Sharon and I want to get married here in Oklahoma. We've been together for more than 17 years — it's time. This is something that when I was young, I thought I'd never see in my lifetime."

Bishop and Baldwin, who work at the Tulsa World newspaper, filed the lawsuit with another same-sex couple in November 2004, shortly after voters approved the constitutional amendment. Their case was the longest-running challenge to the Defense of

Marriage Act, according to the national gay marriage advocacy group Freedom to Marry.

"The Bishop couple has been in a loving, committed relationships for many years," Kern wrote. "They own property together, wish to retire together, wish to make medical decisions for one another, and wish to be recognized as a married couple with all its attendant rights and responsibilities."

Taylor, with Lambda Legal, said she wasn't sure why the judge's ruling came now, though she noted that he made several references to the Utah case in his ruling.

In his 68-page ruling, Kern also took a shot at Oklahoma's high divorce rate, noting that "excluding same-sex couples from marriage has done little to keep Oklahoma families together thus far."

"Exclusion of just one class of citizens from receiving a marriage license based upon the perceived 'threat' they pose to the marital institution is, at bottom, an arbitrary exclusion based upon the majority's disapproval of the defined class," Kern wrote. "It is also insulting to same-sex couples, who are human beings capable of forming loving, committed, enduring relationships."

Republican Gov. Mary Fallin issued a written statement accusing Kern of undermining the will of Oklahoma voters who overwhelmingly passed the ban.

"I support the right of Oklahoma's voters to govern themselves on this and other policy matters. I am disappointed in the judge's ruling and troubled that the will of the people has once again been ignored by the federal government," the statement said.

Attorney General Scott Pruitt said the Supreme Court had left it to the states to define marriage and that Kern's ruling was "troubling." He said it would likely take another Supreme Court decision to resolve the matter.

Tulsa County Court Clerk Sally Howe Smith, who was a defendant in the lawsuit, said there was no way under Oklahoma law for her to give Baldwin and Bishop a marriage license. "That's how I became a defendant in the case," she said.

Not including Utah and Oklahoma, 27 states still have constitutional prohibitions on same-sex marriage. Four more — Indiana, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Wyoming — do not permit it through state laws.

For 17 days, Utah was the 18th state to allow gay couples to wed, after a federal judge there overturned the state's same-sex marriage ban. Hundreds of couples got married before the Supreme Court put a halt to the weddings earlier this month by granting the state a stay on a federal judge's ruling that two other courts previously denied.

The fate of gay marriage in Utah now rests in the hands of the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver — the same circuit as Oklahoma.

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Men's Basketball

Bronchos defeated Southwest Baptist

Austin Litterell

Sports Reporter

The UCO men's basketball team earned itself a hard earned victory at home on Saturday. The Bronchos defeated MIAA opponent Southwest Baptist 89-72. The Bronchos moved to 10-4 on the season and went over the 500 hundred mark in conference play at 4-3. Southwest Baptist dropped to 8-7 and 1-5 in MIAA play.

The score was close early in the game, with both teams remaining within a few points of each other. Then, SBU opened up a seven-point lead with just over 11 minutes remaining in the game.

The Bronchos dominated the rest of the half, outscoring Southwest Baptist 31-14 in the final 11:18 of the half. They took a double-digit lead into halftime that would only extend in the second half of the game. This included a 10-0 that was ended by a three pointer from Cal Andrews. This put UCO in command for the rest of the game. The Bronchos carried a 44-34 lead into the locker room.

The Bearcats were only able to get within five points of UCO at the beginning of the second half, before the Bronchos started to extend their lead.

Cal Andrews drained another three with 15:41 remaining and the Bronchos were up by 14, less than four minutes into the half.

There would be no comeback from Southwest Baptist, as UCO would hold onto their double-digit lead that led to a 17-point victory at home.

Coach Rodney Dindy said, "I really thought our guys collectively as a group, played really well as a team. We shot the ball well, we defended a little bit better, and I think they did a great job of coming together after a disappointing loss to Missouri Southern. So, overall I think we did a great job Saturday."

One word to describe this game by the Bronchos is balance. UCO had four players score in double digits and four players who recorded at least two assists in the game. The Bronchos were led by another impressive all-around performance by Joshua Gibbs.

Gibbs led the team in scoring, rebounding, and was second in assists. He finished with a game high of 22 points, seven rebounds and six assists. Other players getting into double digits were Andrews with 18, Aaron Anderson with 15, and Nic Combs with 13. Seth Eckert added seven assists in the game.

The Bearcats also had four players score at least 10 points, but nobody managed to score more than 12 in the game. With 12 points, Jaywaun Hill and two others led the Bearcats.

Shooting wise, both teams shot well. They both shot over 40 percent in the game, which turned into a three-point shootout. The Bronchos won 14-11.

UCO looks to earn another conference win

Austin Litterell

Sports Reporter

The Bronchos men's basketball team will be looking to earn another home conference win on Thursday at Hamilton Field House against Fort Hays State. UCO comes into this 10-4 overall with a 4-3 record in the MIAA. Fort Hays is 12-3 overall with the same conference record and is coming into this game with a four-game winning streak. These teams are in a logjam in the middle of the conference with three other teams in the MIAA who also have a 4-3-conference record.

This is the third of four straight home games for UCO. The Bronchos split their first two games with a loss to Missouri Southern State University and a win over Southwest Baptist University.

UCO lost to the Tigers last season on the road, 78-71. The first half was close, all the way with multiple lead ties and lead changes. Fort Hays led by two at halftime. The Bronchos trailed by as much as 11 points in the second half, before cutting the lead to two late in the game. A turnover led to Fort Hays, hitting consecutive free throws that would seal the deal for the Tigers in Hays, Kan.

Assistant coach Rodney Dindy said, "Fort

Hays State is a very very good team in our conference, MIAA, one of the best teams in the MIAA. They're playing really well right now. They started out in the conference 0-3, but they're better than that. So it's going to be a tough game for us. We have to come ready to play."

In their four-game winning streak, the Tigers have been winning by an average of 10 points per game.

This game should be a high scoring one. UCO and Fort Hays State are in the top three teams offensively in the conference, both averaging over 80 points per game. On defense, UCO will have to be able to guard the

three point line and force turnovers. The Tigers have the second best three-point field goal percentage and number one assist to turnover ratio in the conference.

Players to watch in this game include Joshua Gibbs and Dwayne Brunson, both in the top 10 in the league in scoring. Gibbs is second in the conference, scoring an average of 22.8 points per game and leads the conference in rebounding. Brunson is eighth in scoring in the MIAA.

After this game, UCO will have one more home game before hitting the road again to take on Washburn. The last home game is Saturday against Nebraska Kearney.

Women's Basketball

Lady Bronchos to Face Fort Hays Tonight

Rick Lemon

Sports Reporter

The UCO women's basketball team is preparing for a crucial mid-season matchup against Mid-American Intercollegiate Association foe Fort Hays State. The game is at 5:30 p.m., Thursday at Hamilton Fieldhouse. The Lady Bronchos (4-3 in MIAA) are only sitting one game back from the Fort Hays Tigers (5-2).

Therefore, a win tonight would move them into a tie with Fort Hays for either fourth or fifth place in the conference. This is depending on the outcome of the Missouri Southern vs. SWOSU game that is being played later Thursday night.

If Missouri Southern wins their game tonight, they will hold the fourth place spot outright in the conference. If Missouri Southern loses and UCO wins their game against Fort Hays, then the Bronchos and Fort Hays will move into a tie for fourth place in the MIAA. Then, if UCO ends up being beaten, there are scenarios where they fall anywhere from sixth to ninth in the conference standings.

Fort Hays will be a tough test for the Bronchos. The Tigers are coming off of a three game winning streak and have

many weapons in both the front and backcourt. The Tigers have been ranked most of the year in the national polls, only dropping out after suffering a loss to Missouri Southern earlier this year. However, they are still receiving votes and will most likely reenter the polls if they continue this most current win streak.

If the Bronchos want to win Thursday night, they will have to contend with Fort Hays' starting center, Kate Lehman, the MIAA single-season and career record holder for blocks, who also is a threat to put up a triple double every time she is on the court.

Not to mention, the reigning MIAA Women's Basketball Athlete of the Week; Chelsea Mason averaged 23.3 points per game and 52.6 percent from behind the three-point line last week, while leading the Tigers' offense from the guard position.

If the Bronchos can provide solid frontcourt defense against the Tigers, and if Olivia Mason can continue to put up the stellar numbers that she has been producing all season, the game Thursday night should make for a very interesting one.

Considering the implications, as far as conference rankings, this is one of the biggest games of the year for the Lady Bronchos.

Women's Basketball: While you were on break

Rick Lemon

Sports Reporter

While the rest of the student body celebrated the end of the year, the Lady Bronchos basketball team began the heart of their conference schedule.

Since UCO ended fall semester classes, the Bronchos have played five more Mid-American Intercollegiate Association opponents, winning three and losing two.

This brings the Lady Bronchos overall record to 9-5 and 4-3 in MIAA competition, well enough for sixth place in the conference with a little over half of the season left.

Through the first seven MIAA conference games of the season the Bronchos have shown many strengths and weaknesses that can be used to improve in the coming weeks. One of the biggest weaknesses so far this season for the Bronchos, has been their lack of offensive consistency.

The Bronchos rely heavily on the three-point shot, which when you can make it is an effective weapon for any team, but this type of offensive strategy is high-risk/high-reward. There have been multiple games where the offense goes stagnant because of missed shots, leading to scoring droughts for UCO and scoring runs by the opponent.

When the Broncho offense is making shots, however, it can be electric. With steady scoring led by Jill Bryan (14.5/game) and Julia Mason (11.1/game), as well as big contributions by the rest of the starting lineup and solid play from the bench, the Bronchos have shown that they

can be versatile and not rely on one person for their offense.

However, lately it has been the play of freshman guard Olivia Mason that has been making the headlines.

Mason has shown all season that she can get hot in a hurry and score in bunches, but it's the big plays that have impressed over the last five games, including her late game heroics against Missouri Southern last week. During the final 20 seconds of that game and with the Bronchos nursing a 80-59 lead, Mason was able to snatch the ball away at half court and race down the hardwood to force Missouri Southern to foul her. She then sank both foul shots, making the score 62-59 with 18 seconds left.

The Bronchos then defended the three-point line aggressively, leaving Missouri Southern no choice but to chuck up a prayer with 2.9 left on the clock. Unfortunately for Bronchos, the refs called a foul on the shot and Missouri Southern had a chance to make three free throws and tie the game. The Lions, however, missed two of those three and Mason came up with another big play, securing the rebound and the win for the Bronchos.

UCO has shown a lot of potential over the first half of the season and looks to be only now truly hitting their stride. The offense is gelling and freshmen are making a major impact for the team. Look for them to start making a run here in the second half of the season and be a dark horse in the MIAA tournament, come March.

The Bronchos next game is at 5:30 Thursday night at Hamilton Fieldhouse against Fort Hays State.

Opinion

Litterell-ly Sports: Just one of those weekends



Austin Litterell

Sports Reporter

In sports, you have your days or weekends that just seem to stand out above the rest. There is Super Bowl Sunday, the final

four and national championship, etc. This weekend in the NFL is one of those weekends. The championship weekend matches old college rivalries, longtime NFL rivalries, the older generation and the new generation. This Sunday has what it takes to be special.

The Seattle-San Francisco matchup is going to be a physical one, for sure. These teams do not like each other. The most intriguing aspect of this game might come from the sidelines, two coaches that didn't like each other in college and still don't today. The chess match between Jim Harbaugh and Pete Carroll has been going on since Stanford-Carroll, where Harbaugh owned Carroll. However, the tables have finally started to turn in Carroll's favor. Seattle has won two of the last three games by a score of 71-16. This matchup is always one of the most intriguing to watch.

Now, for the actual players in the game,

this match up presents a stage for the younger generation to shine. These two young quarterbacks have been remarkable throughout their early career, but both will have to step their game up in this one.

Kaepernick needs to prove he can beat Seattle consistently, while Russell Wilson will try to take his team to where Kaepernick has already been: the Super Bowl. Wilson, to me, is the more consistent of the two and less likely to have a turnover in a big situation.

With Lynch and that defense around him, Seattle should advance to the big game, but the 49ers' defense should keep it close.

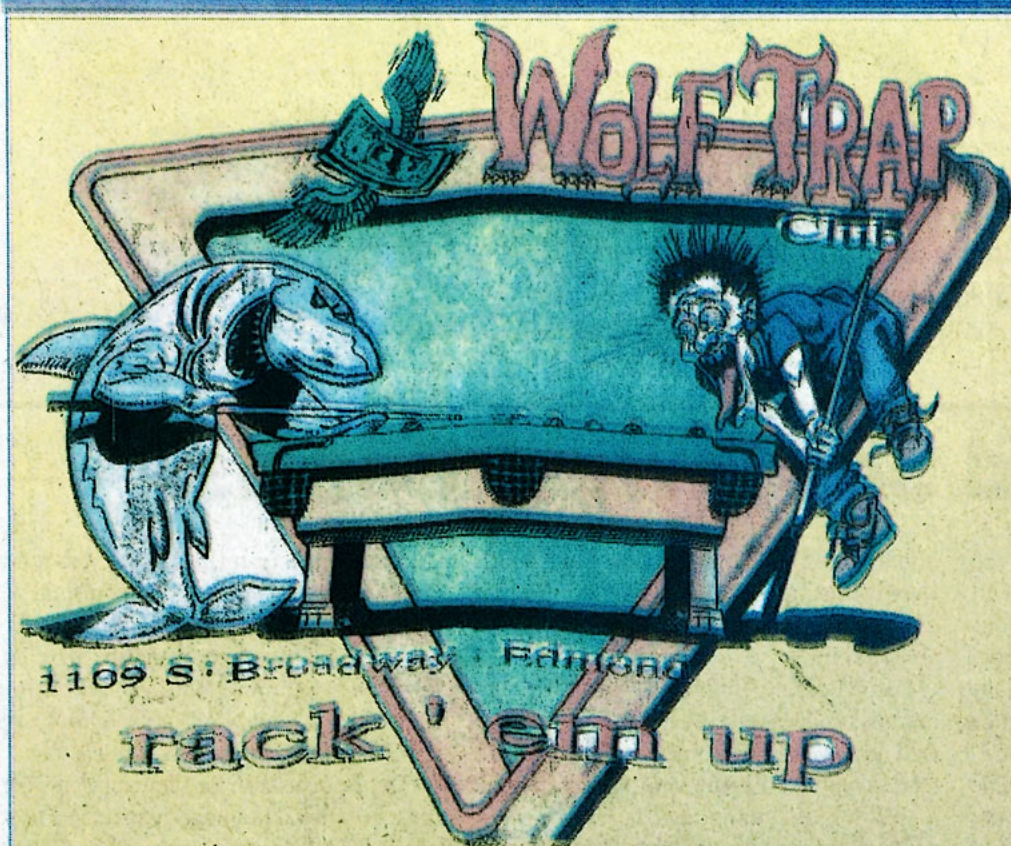
The biggest game of the day, to me as a Broncos fan anyway, is of course the Patriots and the Broncos. Two of the best quarterbacks of all time playing for a berth in the Super Bowl. It does not get much better than that.

The Manning Brady rivalry is the best in

sports, in my opinion. Every time they play, it is a classic. Who knows how many times these two will get to play again; maybe a couple at best, so everyone needs to enjoy this moment. Hopefully, this match up between two legends of the game will live up to hype.

The big advantage for Denver in this game is the fact they are playing at home. The defense without their best cornerback will need to thrive off the energy from the crowd and pressure Brady. Brady tends to get pawed feet when pressured in the pocket. Whichever team runs the ball best, will win this game. If the Patriots run the ball like they did against the Colts, Denver will be in trouble.

The home team usually wins in this rivalry, and I am sticking with the trend, making the Super Bowl Denver versus Seattle.



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UCO takes fourth at National Dual Tournament

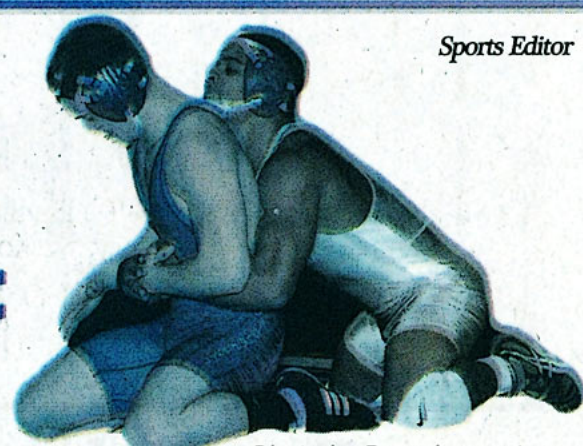


Photo by Bronchosports.com

Coaches' Thoughts

"Disappointing Sunday, tough semi-final match. We had a big lead there early and kind of lost it at the end. We should have won that dual, especially when you have 10 weights. We had five wins and they had five wins. The difference was they had a fall. When it is that close you can't give up bonus."

"Against St. Cloud it was kind of the same thing. We got in the hole early so kind of the opposite. Then we came back in the middle and had a chance to win it there. But we just didn't get it done with our bigger weights."

"We had four duals. First one we went seven and three. We won seven weights. Next dual we went six and four. Even though we tied, we won on criteria. And then we went five and five, lost on bonus. And then we go four and six against St. Cloud that was national runner-ups and we finished fourth last year. But my point of saying that is all of

those top five teams are still real close. We might be, don't know for sure, but we might be a better tournament team than we are a dual team."

"When it's a dual you kind of focus on what happened to the team but what's interesting is we had a lot of positives like Dauphin and Watson going undefeated."

"We just got to move on. We go and wrestle Thursday night in Hays, Kan. It is a conference dual. They are a real decent dual team. It will be close. January like I said, it is four weekends in a row that we are competing in two, to three, or four duals."

"Saturday we will drive up to Kearney who were the defending national champions. We will have them in a dual, California Baptist, and Western State Colorado. We got a busy weekend. We just got to rebound."

- head wrestling coach **David James**

First Round

UCO 29, Findlay 9

- 125 - Ben Sergent, UF, dec. Josh Breece, 9-5 (TB).
- 133 - Casy Rowell, UCO, tech. fall Van Vleet, 17-0.
- 141 - Dustin Reed, UCO, dec. Nick Skonieczny, 3-1.
- 149 - Jordan Basks, UCO, pinned Dalton Nicely, 1:56.
- 157 - Cory Dauphin, UCO, dec. Jordan Cowell, 6-3.
- 165 - Chris Watson, UCO, dec. Brad Metz, 3-0.
- 174 - Adam Walters, UF, dec. Zach Aylor, 3-2.
- 184 - Znick Ferrell, UCO, won by forfeit.
- 197 - Garrett Henshaw, UCO, dec. Gerard Beck, 4-3 (TB).
- Hvy - Luke Fleming, UF, dec. John Finn, 3-2.

Second Round

UCO 18, Upper Iowa 18*

- 125 - Josh Breece, UCO, dec. Chris Paulus, 7-1.
 - 133 - Casy Rowell, UCO, dec. Tanner Schmidt, 2-0.
 - 141 - Jordan Roths, UIU, pinned Dustin Reed, 6:42.
 - 149 - Edwin Cooper, UIU, dec. Jordan Basks, 9-4.
 - 157 - Cory Dauphin, UCO, dec. Zak Benitz, 5-4.
 - 165 - Chris Watson, UCO, dec. Dalton Westerlund, 2-1.
 - 174 - Colton Gallo, UCO, dec. Colby Vance, 7-6.
 - 184 - Znick Ferrell, UCO, dec. Blake Sorensen, 11-5.
 - 197 - Carl Broghammer, UIU, pinned Garrett Henshaw, 3:41.
 - Hvy - Logan Hopp, UIU, dec. Cody Dauphin, 3-2.
- *-UCO won on criteria (most wins, 6-4)

Semi-finals

Newberry 19, UCO 18

- 125 - Ryan Brooks, UCO, dec. Jeff Vesta, 1-0.
- 133 - Casy Rowell, UCO, tech. fall Trung Duong, 16-1.
- 141 - B.J. Young, NC, major dec. Dustin Reed, 12-3.
- 149 - Jordan Basks, UCO, major dec. Seiji Borja, 10-0.
- 157 - Cory Dauphin, UCO, dec. Kayne Melko, 5-0.
- 165 - Chris Watson, UCO, dec. Taylor Knapp, 8-2.
- 174 - Joe Pittman, NC, dec. Colton Gallo, 5-2.
- 184 - Jared Holliday, NC, pinned Znick Ferrell, 5:22.
- 197 - Braden Carter, NC, dec. Garrett Henshaw, 2-1.
- Hvy - Matt Wade, NC, dec. Cody Dauphin, 3-1.

Third-place bout

St. Cloud State 22, UCO 14

- 125 - Tanner Johnshoy, SCSU, dec. Josh Breece, 6-5.
- 133 - Andy Pokorny, SCSU, major dec. Casy Rowell, 14-2.
- 141 - Matt Nelson, SCSU, dec. Dustin Reed, 5-1.
- 149 - Jordan Basks, UCO, major dec. Jay Hildreth, 9-0.
- 157 - Cory Dauphin, UCO, major dec. Clint Poster, 12-3.
- 165 - Chris Watson, UCO, dec. Ryan Zumwalt, 4-2.
- 174 - Clayton Jennissen, SCSU, dec. Colton Gallo, 8-2.
- 184 - Znick Ferrell, UCO, dec. Dylan Braun, 3-2.
- 197 - Chris Brassell, SCSU, dec. Garrett Henshaw, 3-2.
- Hvy - Austin Goergen, SCSU, pinned Cody Dauphin, 2:12.