

Social work resources expand on NTCC campus



STAFF PHOTO | ELISABETH LIVELY

The Eagle Pantry offers, not only food, but clothing and hygiene products.

By ELISABETH LIVELY
Editor-in-Chief

Two years ago this December, the Northeast Texas Community College's student food pantry was established. In the time since, many advancements have been seen, including the addition of hygiene products in the pantry, a clothing closet, a grant and two social work interns.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Eagle Pantry operated through curbside pickup and by appointment only. According to Carmen Shurtleff, NTCC instructor of social work and sociology and Eagle Pantry adviser, pantry numbers doubled during the pandemic while the curbside service was in effect. The pantry has now reopened for in-person service and will be open at least once a week, though students can only receive food and supplies up to two times a month. Through a partnership with God's Closet in Pittsburg, NTCC students can also receive food at their facility once a month.

This past spring, the NTCC social work program received a \$140,000 grant from the League for Innovation in the Community College to fight student hunger.

In the midst of the pandemic, Shurtleff saw the challenges it brought as a way to meet the needs of the students on campus. The grant will specialize in the funding for two separate projects - a website, eatbetter4less.com, and a meal kit.

"We have looked at this virtual option of creating this website, to where students can go to it and gain better knowledge of cooking, healthy eating, and also how to make their dollar last longer," Shurtleff said.

Shurtleff said there will be 300 meal kits available to NTCC students and their families next week. They are also pairing with area pantries for more advertising to create 1000 snack bags, which will be available to everyone, regardless if they are an

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Cleaning measures increase on campus as COVID spreads

By CAROLINA SALAS
Staff Writer

In addition to the social distancing measures, mask, and hygiene protocols to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, Northeast Texas Community College has been following the safety procedure recommendations as set by the Center for Disease Control, the World Health Organization, and the Texas Department of State Health Services.

Throughout the pandemic, the NTCC administration has been concerned with keeping the students and faculty safe. In order to do so, the administration has invested more money in cleaning supplies and staff than before.

Tom Ramler, director of plant services, said the increase in campus-wide cleaning caused a \$40,000 increase in spending and that funds have been taken from other campus departments and put into the custodial department to pay for more cleaning supplies and to increase the cleaning frequency.

In addition to the custodial staff, students are responsible for helping keep classrooms clean. Sanitizing wipe stations have been provided in order for students to clean their desk area before they use it.

"We have those [wipes] now, and obviously are providing those for students when they come into the classroom to be able to clean their own desk space," NTCC President Dr. Ron Clinton said. "We actually talked a lot about that, in terms of the planning, and it felt like that really, the best person to be concerned about that is the person that comes into the desk and says 'I want to make sure that my surface is clean.'"

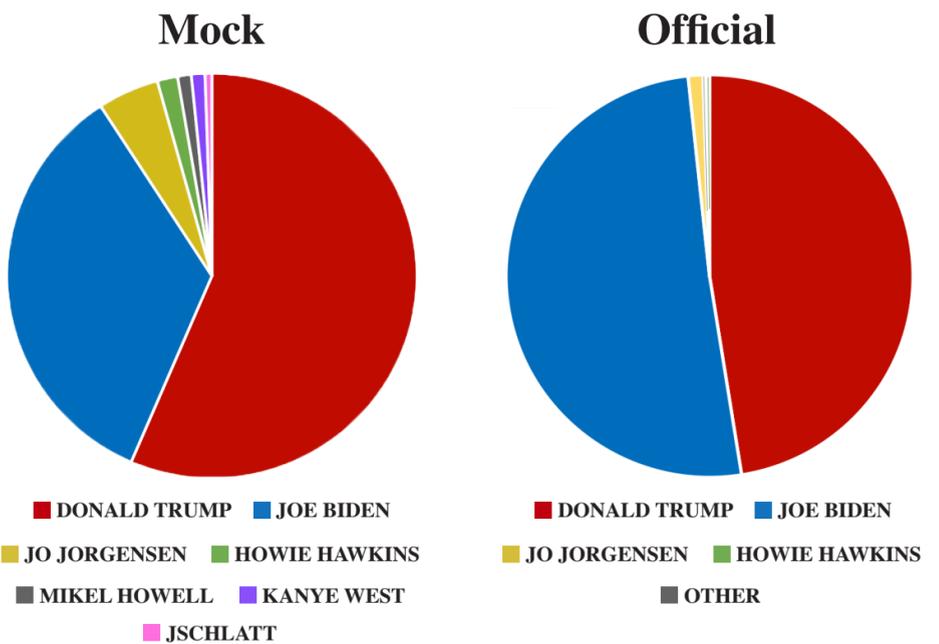
Savannah Goodrich, an NTCC student and custodial staff member, said that every evening, classrooms, restrooms and other occupied areas are cleaned and disinfected. Every night, the bathrooms are thoroughly swept, mopped, disinfected, and updated with sanitary supplies like soap, toilet paper, and paper towels.

Goodrich said it takes 20 to 30 minutes to clean each bathroom. With the addition of installing new toilet paper rolls and paper towels, Goodrich added that each Friday they use a machine that power washes the entire restroom.

The new machine that the college purchased is called the CC17 Cleaning Companion. The CC17 has a disinfecting wash, water

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Presidential election



The Eagle newspaper recently conducted a mock presidential election among the students and employees at Northeast Texas Community College.

The ballot included Republican Donald Trump, Democrat Joe Biden, Libertarian Jo Jorgensen and Green Party candidate Howie Hawkins - the four candidates with the possibility of earning 270 electoral votes, the minimum required to win the presidency.

The ballot also included an option for a write-in candidate.

After collecting votes for three days in the week prior to Election Day, the results were tallied and President Donald Trump emerged victorious taking 56% of the votes.

Of the 186 students and employees who participated in the mock election, 105 voted for Trump, 64 voted for Biden, nine voted for Jorgensen and three voted for Hawkins.

As for write-ins, two votes were cast for Mikel Howell, a member of the NTCC baseball team, two voted for rapper

Kanye West, and one voted for YouTuber jschlatt.

In the official election, Biden received the majority of popular and electoral votes.

As of 4:00 P.M. on Nov. 11, Biden had 77,057,196 popular votes and 290 electoral votes, Trump had 71,971,513 popular votes and 217 electoral votes, Jorgensen had 1,783,519 votes, Hawkins had 368,234 votes, with 408,986 votes cast for a variety of other candidates. However, votes are continued to be counted at press time.

Kiwi farm sprouts potential profits

By DAVIN WHATLEY
Staff Writer

In October 2018, Northeast Texas Community College partnered with Stephen F. Austin State University with one ultimate goal in mind: to find out if golden kiwi could be grown profitably in northeast Texas.

Kiwifruit are generally grown in various places such as New Zealand, Italy, France, Greece, Chile, China, Japan, South Korea and even California. But not Texas. Well, at least not yet anyway.

In April 2019, 140 kiwi vines were planted on the NTCC farm. This exotic golden fruit is different, in more than just appearance, from its more common,

green counterpart.

NTCC Agriculture Director Rene McCracken explained why they are grafting golden kiwi on the vines in the NTCC field rather than the kiwi fruit most Americans are more familiar with.

"We're just trying to get a good structure for the plant in the ground, and grown up enough to where I can graft on this new variety that will do well in this area, that's a golden kiwi, that is sweeter, that the market wants more, and that is higher priced," McCracken said.

If NTCC can discover a way to grow the kiwi profitably, the effects on the local economy could be substantial.

McCracken said that local government organizations, economists and even the college's administration were excited

after they sat down and ran the numbers.

"So early projections we're looking at, on about a half acre, about \$30,000 a year," McCracken said. "On a half acre that's extremely good. Just to put it in perspective, so we have about 200 acres that we have a cow/calf operation on, and every year we hope to have about that much in sales, because of our cattle, on 200 acres."

When looking at the commercial possibilities the fruit could bring to the area, McCracken decided they were too good to ignore. If NTCC could find a way to experiment with the plant and learn how to grow it at a rate that would help the region, then McCracken said



STAFF PHOTO | MANDY SMITH

See *Farm*, page 2

A student places a kiwi plant in the soil on the Eagle Farm.

Quote of the Month:

"Let us not seek the Republican answer or the Democratic answer, but the right answer. Let us not seek to fix the blame for the past. Let us accept our own responsibility for the future."

- John F. Kennedy

UPCOMING EVENTS

Professional Driving Academy.....	Nov. 2 - 24
Final Day to Withdraw with a "W" (16-week).....	Nov. 17
Thanksgiving Break.....	Nov. 25 - 27
Last Class Day.....	Dec. 3
Final Exams.....	Dec. 4 - 10
Fall Graduation.....	Dec. 11

NEWS

COVID-19 prevention on campus

Cont. from pg. 1

wash, and a vacuum. The machine works by using disinfecting wash to spray all over the bathroom, including the surfaces of the toilets, lavatories and walls.

After the disinfecting wash has been sprayed, it must be left on for 10 to 15 minutes to let the chemicals absorb the germs. The water wash is then used to wash the chemicals down while the vacuum is used to pick up the residue.

In order to test the efficiency of the new equipment, the custodial team uses an Ultraspab swab to determine the cleanliness of surfaces.

To find areas that needed more thorough cleaning, Ramler swabs high traffic surfaces on campus. The swab is then placed into a tube where a chemical is released. The tube is then placed in a hand-held device that detects how many germs are on the surface.

"We take those results, and we use those as training opportunities and say 'this was good, this was bad.'" Ramler said. "I'll be honest, we're not perfect. We have come back with bad results, but that's why we do it. We test and then we change our process so that we can make sure that we are delivering cleanliness and that we can prove that what we're doing is

working, our processes are working."

Staffing has increased with cleaning services changing from contract to in-house cleaning. Goodrich said that many of the in-house crew members got the job through RMP staffing, a company that helps people looking for jobs available near them.

NTCC President Ron Clinton said the contract team the college previously used did not have the training needed for this circumstance. The in-house cleaning services, however, allow for more cleaning to be done throughout the day, according to Ramler, compared to contract cleaning services that could only clean at the end of the day.

"Obviously, this is a very unusual circumstance in terms of cleaning, and hygiene, et cetera, and we felt like we just needed more," Clinton said.

The custodial staff receive training online through several training modules and videos that they are required to complete.

In the training, they are taught about the chemicals being used and how to properly maintain a clean environment. Each training video lasts about 10 to 15 minutes and requires a quiz afterward. The custodial team continues to receive training daily.

Ramler said that the cleaning on campus has improved during the pandemic, though Clinton said that sanitation has always been a priority to the college.



STAFF PHOTO | ELISABETH LIVELY

Savannah Goodrich practices driving the new custodial scooter that will be used to clean the floors on campus.



COURTESY PHOTO

NTCC Social Work freshman Audrie DeSantiago works in the Eagle Pantry each week.

Interns assist students' needs

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NTCC student or not.

With the many social work tasks Shurtleff is being faced with, she expressed gratitude that she does not have to do it alone. This summer, two social work interns from Texas A&M University - Commerce were assigned to work at NTCC, where they have been assisting Shurtleff in a variety of responsibilities.

"Oh my gosh, they've been tremendous help!" Shurtleff exclaimed.

Le'Trise Wallace, a bachelor's-level intern, composed the grant proposal, which stated what the funds would be used for and how the need to end student hunger at NTCC is being promoted. Wallace also works on the website, which will include a blog, money and food tips, and mini classes, such as how to handle and work with food.

"Putting a smile on someone's face is really the joy that I get from being a social worker," Wallace said.

She is also interested in using the funds for their meal kits. The meal kits, which the Eagle Pantry only recently began handing out, include a meal recipe and all its ingredients, enough to feed a family of one to five. Shurtleff said they are considering the idea of delivering the meal kits to those who request one.

Shurtleff said that the Eagle Pantry has begun a new partnership with the culinary arts department at Chapel Hill High School. Through this partnership, students will create and test meal kit recipes with the assistance of Wallace. The experience will not only provide NTCC students with meals, but also be a learning experience similar to the mystery basket challenge on the cooking competition series *Chopped*, as Shurtleff compared it, for the Chapel Hill students.

The pantry is also paired with the college's agriculture department. Shurtleff said that Rene McCracken, NTCC director of sustainable agriculture, donates eggs and other ingredients to the pantry, has assisted with the grant and answers questions about food safety.

Currently, the clothing closet offers business clothing in male, female, and unisex attire. Shurtleff said she hopes to expand the closet to casual wear. Articles of clothing

taken from the closet can be borrowed or kept, depending on whatever the student would prefer.

The master's-level intern, Sandra Martinez, said that she and Shurtleff hope that the administration will supply them with a larger space for the pantry and closet, "where students can go and feel comfortable and shop like it's a store," Martinez said.

Martinez works case management and helps students who have contacted or were referred to her make connections and access additional resources outside the Eagle Pantry and in the community. Martinez assists students with food, clothing, childcare, and other resources.

Shurtleff said that she is intending to use some of the funds to purchase a commercial cooler, which she is currently getting bids on, for the Eagle Pantry to store foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables. However, there is currently not enough space in the Eagle Pantry, which operates out of a single room in the Wesley Fellowship building.

Last year, Shurtleff said she hoped to combine all the social work resources into one, large Care Center. She said her plans remained unchanged.

"Ultimately, if you ask me what my dream would be, it would be a Care Center that students could have access to meet some basic needs that maybe they're not able to meet," Shurtleff said. "It is a long term dream, I guess that's all I can say."

She said that the administration is allowing them to use the old Fitness Center, which is located on campus across from the Humanities building, as temporary storage. The Pantry is also currently occupying a refrigerator in the West Residence Hall, as well as a freezer in the SUB provided by Rico Willis, director of student activities and multicultural affairs.

Shurtleff said the administration is supportive of her hopes for a larger space, but they're "not there yet."

"Our desire is to move on [to the] main campus with a bigger space," she said. "However, admin has not found us a space. But they know our vision."

Donations of non-perishable foods, hygiene products and clothing are always welcome. To donate, contact care@ntcc.edu or click "Give Now" at the top of NTCC's homepage at ntcc.edu.

Farm continues planting kiwi

Cont. from pg. 1

she wanted to do it before local farmers put their money on the line.

"The potential to really change the economy scale in east Texas is what we get excited about," McCracken said. "So that was ultimately what Dr. Clinton asked me, 'Tell me again why we should do this.' And I said, 'I don't know how I can say no, because the potential to change life is so great.'"

With this in mind, NTCC took on the challenge of determining if golden kiwi could make money in northeast Texas. The first year proved to be challenging. Of the 140 vines planted in 2019, only 45 survived. However, the 95 lost plants taught McCracken and her crew many important lessons.

They discovered that the plants did not like getting buried too deeply in the soil, and that the roots did not like being saturated in water either. Instead, the plants fared better with a constant drip of irrigation on them.

The fruits proved to be challenging to grow in many aspects, including a sensitivity to both hot and cold temperatures, issues dealing with either too much or too little water, and even a dislike to the soil's pH and sodium levels.

To help secure the roots in the ground, McCracken and her team found that the kiwi grew stronger when

they were planted directly in the ground filled with bark mulch.

Other plants were lost to a bad freeze in the winter, and a few were accidentally destroyed by workers mowing the fields.

Overall, McCracken said that she and her team learned a lot of valuable information during the project's first year from trial and error. She acknowledged that was a huge part of the process of reaching the intended goal.

"We made a lot of mistakes, just as any farmer would, and that's the reason that we're doing this," McCracken said.

They are now going about the process and using the resources like a local farmer would, in order to lay down guidelines and rules for growers in east Texas who might want to try and plant golden kiwi in the future.

All of the lessons McCracken's team learned came to good use in the second round of planting. Of the 90 planted in April 2020, NTCC found on October 15 that only 10 had died, primarily due to fire ant damage. The 10 kiwi plants have since been replaced.

McCracken said that the 45 plants that survived from 2019 have done really well. She hopes to graft on the golden kiwi to these rootstocks in spring 2021. The next two years are going to go a long way in helping NTCC figure out some of the questions they are trying to answer.

If the kiwis are able to grow at a profitable rate, then the program will have to determine the best way to harvest, store and eventually sell the kiwi.

As of now, the plan for spring 2021 will include accessing the plants that survive the winter, working with those that are ready to be grafted, and building a trellis system for the vines.

Chad Henry, NTCC's agriculture instructor, and the Ag construction class will be charged with building the trellis system that the kiwi plants will be able to grow on, similar to the way grapes grow in a vineyard.

The difference between the trellis system for fruits like grapes or muscadine as opposed to kiwi, is that the kiwi system will allow the vines to grow overhead at about six and a half feet.

NTCC's golden kiwi growing project is far from over. The Ag department still has a lot to do, numerous questions still need to be answered, and it is likely that there are more challenges to come and conquer.

Not only are students and staff hard at work in different capacities across the state such as NTCC, SFA, and Texas A&M, but now, different farms are involved in the effort to help determine if kiwi can grow in different areas around the state.

Only time will tell if Texas could be an unexpected new contributor to the kiwi industry.

NTCC Firefighter Academy now accepting applications

SPECIAL TO THE EAGLE

The Northeast Texas Community College Continuing Education Department is now accepting applications for the 2021 Firefighter Academy. Classes begin in Jan. 2021 and will be held at the Mount Pleasant Central Fire Station.

The Fire Academy is a partnership between Northeast Texas Community College and the Mount Pleasant Fire Department. It prepares trainees for a career as firefighters.

The academy is an authorized training facility for structural firefighting under Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP -

FDID #107).

Trainees who successfully complete the academy will be eligible for the certification exam given by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection or the State Fire-men's and Fire Marshals' Association of Texas.

Volunteer firefighters sponsored by an approved volunteer department may qualify for reimbursement through 2604 funding through the Texas Forestry Service for volunteer departments.

Visit the NTCC website for more information and to download the application. You can also call 903-434-8134 for more information.

CIS program seeking donations for Believe in Christmas store

SPECIAL TO THE EAGLE

Communities In Schools of Northeast Texas is hosting the first annual Believe In Dreams Christmas Store.

They are collecting new and also gently used items for families to shop at no cost.

They are also currently accepting donations for the following: clothes of all sizes, shoes, coats, hygiene products, toys for all ages and common household items.

Donations are accepted Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Nevills Chapel Church located at 113 CR 3210 in Mount Pleasant.

Donations can also be delivered to the CIS office in the IA building on the Northeast Texas Community College main campus.

For more information, please call 903-434-8212.

For after hours donations call Rachel at 903-563-0672.

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NEWS

NTCC Honors present posters at the NCHC

SPECIAL TO THE EAGLE

Since 2008, Northeast Texas Community College's honors students have presented scholarly posters at the National Collegiate Honors Council.

This year the meeting went virtual. But five NTCC scholars both made the cut to present, joining 300 other undergraduate researchers from around the nation, and filed their videos, posters, and personal statements in time for the virtual conference. Over 90 percent of those exhibiting scholarly posters were university students.

NTCC's scholarly outpouring at the NCHC was anchored by two posters that now appear on the west wall of the college's Humanities building, and are open to public viewing.

The ideas in each also helped the scholars connect with their research to place second and third in last spring's McGraw Hill Poster Contest, and to win 2020 State of Texas Caldwell Awards.

Katelyn Lester of Mount Pleasant re-approximated the rank of the Texas historian, Walter Prescott Webb among American historians. Webb, in her view, completed an "arc of erudition" that made history relevant

both for the past, but also to the present and the future. In his own maverick way, Webb was unprecedented.

The second poster featured on the west wall is the *Marvelous Makeover* by Maritza Quinones, of Mount Pleasant.

Quinones was the film scholar who uncovered the basic thesis behind last year's NTCC film that Adina De Zavala re-centered the image of Texas patriotism from San Jacinto to the Alamo.

Three other NTCC scholars also made the virtual NCHC conference: Gem Elmore, Sam Griffin, and Jaidyn Thompson. Their work on the integration of churches in Northeast Texas, Gene Autry, and the meaning of Daingerfield lawyer, Harold Nix, have also been presented elsewhere.

The National Collegiate Honors Council is the oldest and largest association for honors programs, and honors colleges in the United States.

It comprises 900 member institutions, both universities and community colleges. The NCHC dates back to 1966, and 65 percent of all honors programs in the nation, as well as a scattered group of programs in other nations, are members.



COURTESY PHOTO

Maritza Quinones and Sam Griffin pose next to Quinones' national recognized poster that showcases how Adina De Zavala re-centered the image of Texas patriotism from San Jacinto to the Alamo.

New course formats bring mixed feelings

BY JOELLE WEATHERFORD
Editor-in-Chief

After the second half of the spring 2020 semester, Northeast Texas Community College made the decision move to an online-only format due to COVID-19.

Some hoped that the fall semester would bring back a state of normalcy, however, with the new Hy-Flex class format, which requires students to attend one class day in-person and one online, many students and professors are still struggling to maneuver through the new format.

Jill Dietze, NTCC speech professor, said her teaching style usually requires students to work closely together. During normal face-to-face classes, her students have to interview each other, do group projects and work on group speeches together.

"My class suffers because we do a lot of group work," Dietze said. "Everything that I do in class that's not giving a speech or a lecture is a group thing, and to change it, I can do it with the people who are in class, but the people on Zoom just have to watch."

While some professors had to adjust their lessons to accommodate social distancing, others are struggling to get their students engaged in the lessons at all.

Rex Allen, government professor, said that while the Hy-Flex classes are not all bad, one of the biggest challenges is keeping students engaged.

"The Hy-Flex is working pretty good," Allen said. "Except, still you've got the people on Zoom who you don't know if they're really participating or not."

Allen said that he tries to encourage his students to engage in discussions even when they are on Zoom.

While the Hy-Flex format allows for at least one day a week of in-class learning, another partially-online class format can now spread class days even further apart.

Hybrid classes have been a part of NTCC's course delivery system for several years, however, the current hybrid format was modified to allow for social distancing during COVID-19.

While a typical hybrid has students in-class one day a week, this new version only

requires one in-class day every other week.

According to Allen, one of the biggest challenges faced in this type of hybrid class came about during midterms.

"My biggest problem with the hybrid is I only see the class every other week face-to-face," Allen said. "You've got half the class on test week to give a test, [then] you've got to wait another week for the other half to give them a test because you're not going to see them but every other week."

Dietze said that the flip-flopping of students and class days can cause a feeling of chaos for many students and professors.

"I don't want students feeling like they've come to a class with an instructor that doesn't know what they're doing, because a lot of it is they need confidence in us that we know how to teach this, but we don't," Dietze said. "We don't know how to teach that way. I don't even teach my fully online [classes] that way. It's just a big learning curve for everybody."

Not only are professors tasked with learning how to adjust their classes to fit into the provided formats, but they also have to learn how to use the webcams that have been installed on their classroom projectors.

The webcams are usually positioned to have a full view of the whiteboard at the front of the class. However, for some, like NTCC student Samantha Lara, the webcams only make it harder to learn.

"It's hard to hear. They never have the board right, and when they do fix it, you can't zoom in far enough to see whatever they're writing," Lara said. "It's hard to understand what they're trying to say or teach or show us on the board."

Lara said that while she does not have trouble focusing during the Zoom portions of her classes, the disconnection between student and teacher makes understanding more difficult.

The new formats have succeeded in maintaining at least a small amount of normalcy.

"It's the best thing we've got right now to get face to face back in the classroom," Allen said. "I strictly like face to face and I think it's good and if I just get to see you once a week it's better than none at all."

Student wins Walter B Cooper Texas Regional Scholarship

SPECIAL TO THE EAGLE

Northeast Texas Community College student Carolina Alcocer-Salas, from Winfield, recently received the Walter B Cooper Scholarship at the Phi Theta Kappa Texas Leadership Conference.

The conference, held Oct. 16-19 virtually this year, recognized five winners from across the entire state of Texas.

The Walter B Cooper Scholarship recognizes outstanding students who are "well-rounded" in the four Hallmarks of Phi Theta Kappa: Scholarship, Leadership, Service and Fellowship.

Currently the Chapter President for Alpha Mu Chi, NTCC's chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, Alcocer-Salas, is heavily involved on the college campus and within her community.

Alcocer-Salas serves as the Public Relations Specialist for the Student Government Association, Secretary for the Honors Northeast Student Council, and a staff writer/photographer for the college newspaper *The Eagle*.

In high school she served as Class President, Student Council, and Secretary for Future Business Leaders of America.

She has been involved in numerous service and volunteer activities ranging from painting rocks pink for breast cancer awareness to helping put together



Alcocer-Salas

a TxDOT PSA video on teenage drinking and driving.

She donates blood, serves senior citizens, and volunteers at local harvest festival and fundraising activities. She is also an Extraordinary Eucharist Minister in her local church, trained to be able to help give communion.

A desire to help others in a meaningful way is part of her motivation for acquiring a business degree, and eventually establishing her own business

to serve the community.

Alcocer-Salas was recognized by Phi Theta Kappa as a national Leader of Promise earlier this year. An Honors Scholar at NTCC, Alcocer-Salas has also won awards for her writing, including fourth place in the Bonnie Spencer contest for her essay on the Harlem Renaissance and fourth place in the Regional Poetry Contest for her poem "Mood Swings."

"Engaged, curious, and a consistent contributor in class, Carolina has also shown herself to be a powerful natural leader and genuinely caring individual," Dr. Melissa Fulgham, division chair of Social Sciences and an advisor for the Phi Theta Kappa chapter, said. "She appreciates, encourages, and empowers others, leading by example and with an exceptional work ethic. I've been fortunate to have had her in class and to also see her in action as a leader. I have no doubt that she will go far in her chosen profession and it's a pleasure to see her receive this well-deserved recognition."

Alcocer-Salas is the seventh NTCC student to have won the Texas regional scholarship in seven consecutive years.

Tonya Hammonds won in 2019, Jazmin Garcia in 2018, Alicia Cantrell in 2017, Tanika Santos-MacSwain in 2016, Mary Smith in 2015, and Kayleah Cumpian in 2014.

Honors students present at conference

SPECIAL TO THE EAGLE

For the seventh time, Honors Northeast scholars have presented a panel on the use of film at the yearly meeting of the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC). The NCHC, established in 1966, comprises 65 percent of the honors programs and colleges in higher education in the United States, about 900 entities. Each year, only fifty "general sessions" are accepted into the conference program, and top university programs usually dominate these panels. This fall as with every yearly meeting since 2013, with the exception of last year, NTCC's proposal again made the cut. Film producer/director Jalyn English, film scholar and star, Maritza Quinones, Honors Coordinator, Andrea Reyes, and Honors Director, Dr. Andrew Yox presented their work on "Institutional Courage, Niche Cinema, and the Making of an Honorary Bonanza."

The NTCC scholars argued that though making feature-length films are up-against-the-gradient endeavors for an honors program, there are many dividends. Presidential Scholar, Jalyn English explored his journey from initial reluctance to a producer and a presenter of last year's film on

Adina De Zavala. "Stepping up" and crossing a threshold of "fear and ignorance" led to a number of resume citations and awards. Maritza Quinones, shared her revelation of how first studying and then being an inspirational heroine gave her a new perspective on life. Andrea Reyes presented a view of the group dynamic, and the film as a group learning, and bonding experience.

Dr. Yox noted how the use niche cinema allows an honors group to dramatize the history of the community that supports their college and program.

This year, because of the pandemic, the NCHC shifted to a virtual format. The NTCC group filmed their presentation, and it will be accessible for members of the NCHC for the coming year. The NTCC panel presentation is also available on YouTube.

NTCC's film culture has been beholden over the years to premier film patrons, Jerald and Mary Lou Mowery as well as to other donors of Honors Northeast. This last summer, NTCC's administration was one of the first public entities in the state to permit collegiate travel, thus allowing English to direct his first film, and many honors freshmen to gain the experience necessary to continue the tradition.

Contact Cati Harp at (903) 293-5621
or ntccwesley@outlook.com

MUSICIANS NEEDED

for the NTCC Wesley Fellowship Worship Team

OPINION

Eagle Eye

HOW HAS THE PANDEMIC AFFECTED YOU IN A POSITIVE WAY?

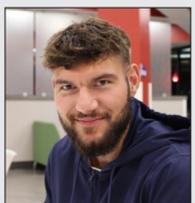


"I've been able to get myself a better work ethic. Being able to be accountable for myself more because I don't have to rely on other people."

- Jason Schneider

"I got to know myself better, and I understand more than I knew before the pandemic happened. Now I know when I'm good and when I'm sad and when I'm happy and to control my emotions."

- Carlos Quinones



"I learned a different way to work on myself and improve my abilities. I called my family more and took more care of them."

- Thomas Brulay

"Over the summer I had been struggling with a lack of motivation but some of the challenges we went through going through school over the summer sort of helped me make up my mind on what I want to do, and that I do want to continue through school."

- Jehowraah Ben Yehovah

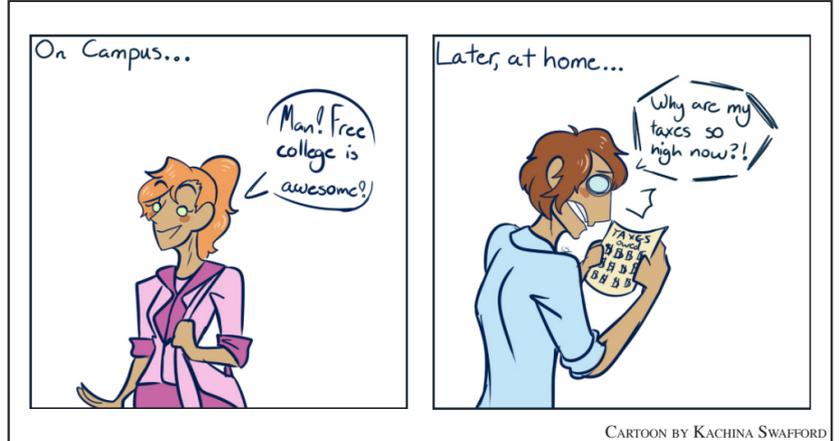


"I started working during the pandemic and in my orientation class, I made some new friends, not all around my age but they're pretty cool people. I got more free time."

- Alex Ortiz

"I got to sleep in most of the time, and I got to spend more time with my family so that was really great. I got to play more video games. That was really fun, and I was just chilling so it was great. I had a good time."

- Enrique Ibarra



Don't ruin my degree with your free college

By EMILY SHEARIN
Staff Writer

Now that the presidential election is finally over, the president elect has made some promises to provide free college and help student debt vanish.

While the thought of free college sounds appealing, there are several reasons why it just will not work.

One of the main reasons free college would never work is because it would starve traditional public colleges of funding and cause them to decline. A misconception about free college is that the colleges will be receiving plenty of money - this is false.

The evidence of this is from countries that have had free college systems, such as England and Germany. They discovered that student-funding does not keep up with the costs required for the institutions to remain open and functional.

With the government paying for the student's tuition, they will most likely only pay the institution a certain amount therefore limiting enrollment. By limiting the enrollment, the university would be losing out on funding. Instead, the focus should be on boosting the college educational value by making it less costly and having better graduation outcomes, not free to all.

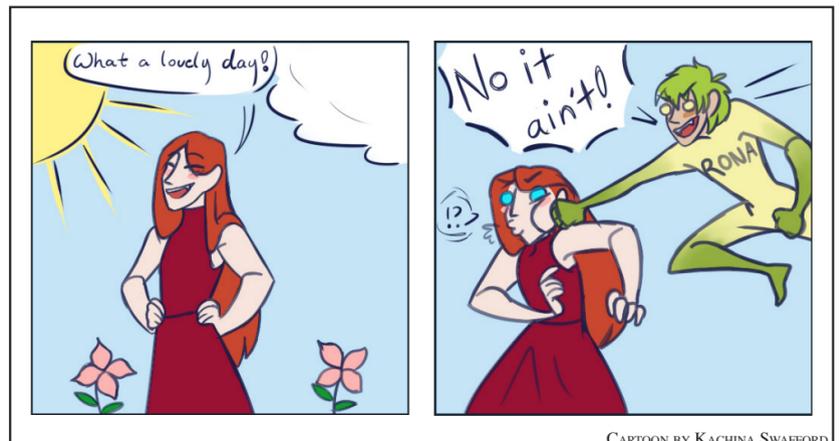
Americans love the idea of free college without the slightest idea of how to make it free. Today's proposals only charge education, in the form of debt for future generations of taxpayers, instead of changing it.

Free college would also be helping the wrong people. The majority of free college policies are regressive and do not cover the costs that actually matter to the students such as food, health care, childcare and transportation. Making tuition and additional fees cost-free to students is unlikely to move the needle for student completion as community and junior college is already free to low-income students.

The government covers undergraduate costs for those who qualify for Pell Grants, and yet we continue to see awful completion rates. A whopping 40% of first-year, full-time students fail to graduate from four year programs within six years. The rate is even worse with two year programs where only 39% complete. All these proposals do is support a subpar system. Many of them merely subsidized access for middle and upper-class students.

With tuition being free, college would be turned into a glorified daycare for fresh out of high school kids.

I believe that the students who need assistance with college already get it via the Federal Pell Grant. These grants are only offered to students earning an undergraduate degree, which can be an associate and/or a bachelor's degree. That means if you are going to graduate school, you have to take out loans to pay for it. These loans are awful, and they take forever to pay back. I honestly would love to have free college, but with the current school set up the way it is, free college just wouldn't work.



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

Time travelers, beware!

By ELISABETH LIVELY
Editor-in-Chief

You know in the cartoons when a kid drops their ice cream cone and they break out in tears? That's 2020 summed up.

2020, COVID-19, Rona, whatever you want to call it, has been the human race's number one enemy for eleven months and going.

If 2020 were a person, she would be a pyromaniac (wildfires) that collects bugs (murder hornets), and has a quick temper that'll blow at any moment (volcanoes, earthquakes and hurricanes.) Her violent behavior (protests) gets her into a number of arguments (election) that inevitably caused a rift between a long-term power couple (British royal family separation.) She also has several counts of murder on her criminal record (celebrities dying).

So, yeah, she's horrible.

In all seriousness, 2020 has been one for the books. It'll probably have its own chapter. Years down the line, we will remember it as "the one with the pandemic" or "the one."

I'm pretty sure it's still May. There's no way that 11 months have passed in the past five months. I cannot even remember the Fourth of July or Easter. Did September and October even happen? Was I drugged?

As I shouted "Happy New Year!" those many months ago, I wondered what surprises this year would bring. Oh, how young and naive I was...

This year alone, Kobe Bryant, Chadwick Boseman, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Eddie Van Halen and Alex Trebek died.

Donald Trump was impeached, Prince

Harry and Megan Markle left the royal family, dozens of countries faced endless violent and peaceful protests and the U.S. nearly entered war with Iran.

Half the world either caught on fire, drowned in a hurricane, got ripped apart in a tornado, burned alive in volcanic eruptions or collapsed in an earthquake.

I've got to say, Jumanji is a lot more fun when I'm not the one playing it. I mean, how many more rolls will it take until someone reaches the center of the game board?

The icing on the cake is just as bitter, because of a rapidly-spreading virus that shut down many nations' economies and killed over one million people, all in less than 12 months.

COVID-19, a mere petal in the ugly, smelly 2020 flower, has canceled all the happiness we had planned for this year, which included my college graduation and a trip to New York City. Of course Rona, and indirectly 2020, is to blame, but at this point, we're using it as an excuse for every minor inconvenience in our lives.

We keep waiting for 2021, as if that'll erase all the horror this world has seen in the past 11 months. But we're so blinded by F.O.T.T. (Fear of Twenty-Two) that we're not realizing that January 1 is just another regular day. The good and bad of the world is not affected by the current calendar date.

I recently saw a Facebook post that said "What if 2021 tells 2020 to 'Hold my beer'?" The truth of the matter is that we have no idea what the future has in store. But don't worry, I have plenty of food and water rations in my underground apocalypse bunker if anybody wants to join me.

ENTERTAINMENT

THE DEVOLUTION OF SLASHER FILMS

BY GENESIS BARRIENTOS
Staff Writer

Horror has always remained present, long before films, well alive in literature.

Despite its consistent presence, the horror genre has also consistently evolved with time, from the early start with expressionist films like *Nosferatu*, the religious ideals hidden in *Dracula*, the infamous '70s exploitation films and the successful campy horror of *IT*.

While horror remains alive and profitable, the once inventive and daring slasher sub-genre has failed to adjust and create for a modern audience, instead turning to produce remake after remake of beloved classics. The decline of slasher films is more than

evident, made clear by both the *Scream* and *Chucky* franchises and their sharp decline, along with the failed attempts to revive the glory days.

Scream was, and still continues to be, the template for satirical horror films, a movie that single handedly revived the slasher in the '90s.

The original *Scream* wasn't without flaws, but the movie successfully added an insightful critique to not only the slasher genre, but the horror genre as a whole. The heroine wasn't pure, there were multiple culprits, and the film wasn't gory for the sake of

being gory. However, the franchise quickly became everything that the original critiqued, with repeating storylines and tropes, overusing gore, and packing as many celebrities into the last installment as possible, reverting back to the cheap tricks used

both in the '80s and '90s.

Chucky made his debut at what had been the end of the first wave of slasher films, starting off with the *Child's Play* series, which seemed like an absurd and silly idea but resulted in a truly creative and, at times, a mysteriously scary movie.

The next installment in the franchise took a vastly different direction after *Scream* revived slasher films for the '90s. So, *Chucky* shifted away from the seriousness and moved completely to campy and self-aware satire with *The Bride of Chucky*.

The Seed of Chucky became even more absurd, prioritizing the shock value of offensive humor rather than creating a cohesive plot.

What followed would no longer be additions to the original series, but instead reimaginings of Chucky, both his character and the franchise as a whole.

The latest installments have found themselves with no direction, with Chucky's character and the franchise constantly shifting from camp to seriousness and back again.

The rights to *Chucky*, like other horror icons, have become muddled with multiple studios, directors and writers attempting to recreate what once was. *Scream* has also found itself in the strange limbo of Hollywood, with a TV spin off, and constant on and off talks of a reboot, remake or continuation.

The slasher sub genre has been buried into the ground for some time now, with remakes and tropes having dug the grave and film studios carving the tombstone.



Low-budget Indie film probes fear of unknown

BY ELISABETH LIVELY
Editor-in-Chief

It's simple, it's realistic, and most importantly, it's compelling. Three characteristics Hollywood does not know how to often put together.

The Vast of Night is set up as an episode of Paradox Theater – a parallel of the *Twilight Zone*. Set up with the paranoia of the *Blair Witch Project* and the theme of *War of the Worlds*, it's clear from our 21st century standpoint that this film is about space aliens. While the extraterrestrials are never seen, the film focuses on the fear, rather than the visuals that there is something, someone in the sky.

The Vast of Night is exclusively available on Amazon Prime, but only after its premiere at the 2019 Slamdance Film Festival, where it won the Slamdance Audience Award.

Filmed on a shoestring budget, this film is stripped down to a bare minimum story, with long, single-take shots, dense dialogue, and little to no changes in scenery. Only a single, brief scene uses the element of CGI, and director Andrew Patterson does not skimp out on it.

In the sleepy New Mexico town of Cayuga, sometime in the 1950s, everybody knows everybody, and they're just about all at the town's high school basketball game. But not suave radio DJ Everett and spirited switchboard operator Fay – their night jobs have pulled them from the crowd and into lonely, enclosed spaces. And, we all know that fear seems to heighten when we're alone.

The first 20 minutes of the film is spent debuting the characters through scenes and commentary unnecessary to the plot of the film. Here's why that's a good thing

– left and right, movie directors around the country work to ensure that every little word and action is a support beam for the plot of the film, which makes them unrealistic, no matter the genre. But that's not how it works in reality, and Patterson makes sure that we see that. By connecting with the characters through relatable scenes and commentary, we feel more involved with the film, which is what every filmmaker wants. Patterson's directing style is so simple that it makes *The Vast of Night* a humanly realistic tale of suspense and fear. It's so realistic that it's scary.

Only just starting her shift, Fay tunes into Everett's radio station as she waits for calls. The film's dive into the mystery begins when she hears a mysterious sound interrupt his station, followed up by a disoriented phone call.

After phoning Everett, he pulls the noise from the audio recording and plays it over the air, asking his few listeners who aren't at the game if they recognize the sound. One man does. As the listener tells his story on how he came to discover the sound years earlier, the screen blacks out, a creatively bold move for the film, leaving viewers to expand their imagination as to what the listener may look like or where he may be – just as a person would with any radio broadcast.

Fay and Everett then follow up on a potential lead to better understand the sound, discovering that it is connected to something far more ominous and so much older than they could have predicted.

In the midst of the Cold War, the fear of the unknown seems to feed off the already-paranoid minds of these American teenagers. It's the Soviets, Everett is sure of it. But what Fay and Everett cannot comprehend is that



COURTESY PHOTO

As a switchboard operator, Fay (Sierra McCormick) connects phone lines day in and day out. When one line produces an unusual sound, followed by multiple dropped calls, she connects to a frantic woman screaming about something hovering over her property that's stirring up a tornado. Her line is then mysteriously cut, like all the others.

they're dealing with a foreigner so much further away than across the ocean.

Perhaps the most beautiful camerawork *The Vast of Night* offers is when viewers are, in what appears to be a single shot, moved from Fay's switchboard and led down the street, through backyards and a dark pasture, into the frenzy of the basketball game, around the players and audience, out the window, and down the street to where Everett is smoking a cigarette outside the WOTW radio station. As the camera strolls through the town, a chilling soundtrack of hesitant, out the window, and down the street to where Everett is smoking a cigarette outside the WOTW radio station. As the camera strolls through the town, a chilling soundtrack of hesitant, out the window, and down the street to where Everett is smoking a cigarette outside the WOTW radio station. As the camera strolls through the town, a chilling soundtrack of hesitant, out the window, and down the street to where Everett is smoking a cigarette outside the WOTW radio station.

Patterson's filmmaking avoids stereotypical 1950s America and accurately portrays the

lifestyle, actions and props of the era. It's not all poodle skirts and chocolate milkshakes as seen in other films.

The film takes place over the span of the basketball game, so of course the two characters would not become close and in love by the end of the film, a concept that Hollywood does not seem to understand. Thankfully, the sane Patterson keeps their relationship mutual and focused on the issue at hand, just as normal people would be doing in real life.

This film provides intense paranoia in the same way that a child is only afraid of the monster under their bed at night. Because people are most scared of something when they can't see it. Filming after sundown, viewers experience the vacant, small town in an eerie manor. It's silent and it's lonely – or at least that's what they thought.

Classic Holmes mystery debuts without Sherlock



COURTESY PHOTO

The Netflix original film *Enola* is based on the six-book series "The Enola Holmes Mysteries" written by Nancy Springer between 2006 and 2010.

BY JAMES BUCKLEY
Staff Writer

Like most families stuck at home with children due to COVID, my family likes to binge watch shows. This has been our entertainment for the last six months. The challenge is finding a family friendly movie.

With the recent release of *Enola Holmes* on Netflix, my children were excited that there was a new movie for us to watch. So we popped our popcorn, got the Snickers mini candy bars, and our blankets and pillows. All the lights were out, the volume was turned up loud and the movie began.

There is Enola Holmes riding on a bike while

speaking to the audience. Enola tells about the mystery she is involved in with the disappearance of her mother. She is on her way to the train station to meet her brothers, Mycroft and Sherlock Holmes.

Yes, that Sherlock Holmes, the famous detective.

She had not seen her brother since the death of their father when she was very young. Enola goes on to talk about growing up with her mother who home schooled her and was her greatest friend.

She knew she had to solve the mystery and locate her missing mother. After Enola greets her brothers at the train station, the three travel back to the estate

where Enola and their mother had been making their home.

My children are the sort who comment about things they see in movies we watch as a family. They were impressed with the carriages and the estate. Every room reminded me of a scrapbook, skillfully arranged by a master.

There is great attention to detail throughout the movie. The clothing of every character is well put together, the furnishings are spot-on and every scene makes you feel like you have traveled back in time.

Parts of the movie take place in London, and you can easily imagine it would have looked exactly as it does on the screen. While

the brothers are going through their mother's bedroom searching for clues to what happened to their mother, they inform Enola she is now Mycroft's ward and he will be sending her to a finishing school for ladies.

Her protests fall on deaf ears and this is where the adventure begins. The rest of the movie has many twists and turns as well as a surprise ending.

The movie is based on a series of six books written by Nancy Springer (that my children insist I must purchase for them to read). Overall, I rate this movie 4.5 out of 5 stars. There is clearly room for a sequel, which my family and I cannot wait to see.

SPORTS

WINTER SPORTS WRAP UP



STAFF PHOTO | JAMES BUCKLEY

NTCC soccer players Fatima Fedrano, #12, and Celi Cisneros, #14, defend the soccer ball from their opponents in a recent game against the Jacksonville College Jaguars.



STAFF PHOTO | JAMES BUCKLEY

Jordon De Costa, #8, races toward the soccer ball during a recent practice match.

Fall season sees changes

By JUSTIN HARGROVE
Assistant Athletic Director

Northeast Texas Community College Athletic teams will complete the fall competition season this weekend with the final Fall Rodeo competition hosted by Sam Houston State University.

The fall seasons saw several changes for our programs, some personnel, and some due to COVID-19.

Men's and Women's soccer, which normally play in the fall, saw their season moved to the spring by the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA).

Baseball and Softball had a reduced fall practice season and plan to have their regular seasons in the spring.

The Eagle Softball program will have a final practice on Friday to complete their first fall under new Head Coach Joshua Freeman. Freeman took over the NTCC Softball program in Oct. and hit the ground running along with returning assistant Coach Kallee Wilkins.

The Eagle Soccer programs saw a lot of new faces. New Head Coach Zane Barnes

brought in new assistant coaches JD Perales, and Heather Brady to help lead both the men's and women's soccer programs.

The Soccer teams were able to conduct a few scrimmages this fall and will resume practices Mar. 15, 2021 with games beginning in early April.

NTCC Rodeo hosted the annual NTCC Rodeo at the Mount Pleasant Rodeo Association Priefert Arena on Oct. 16 and 17 bringing in Rodeo teams from across Texas, Arkansas and Louisiana.

The spring season will take the Rodeo athletes to the Trinity Valley Community College, Texas A & M University—Commerce, Texas A&M University, Hill College, and Wharton County Junior College Rodeos.

Baseball and Softball are scheduled to begin regular season practices again in Jan. when the Eagle Athletes return to campus for the spring semester.

Springtime at NTCC will be busy with several opportunities to catch some live game action starting in early Feb.

To stay up to date with the upcoming spring schedules, visit the Eagle Athletics website at www.ntcc eagles.com.



STAFF PHOTO | JAMES BUCKLEY

Nico Baumbach takes a swing during a recent game against The University of Arkansas Community College - Rich Mountain.



STAFF PHOTO | JAMES BUCKLEY

NTCC Baseball Player Freddie Cabazos practices catching fly balls during a recent training session.

LOVE BASEBALL, SOCCER, SOFTBALL OR RODEO?

THE EAGLE IS LOOKING FOR SPORTS WRITERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS

MEETINGS IN HUMANITIES 108 EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 1 P.M.

SPORTS



STAFF PHOTO | ELISABETH LIVELY

Above, a Texas A&M University-Commerce calf roper races against the clock to get the lasso around the calf's neck.

Above, NTCC student Joseph Moya keeps a tight grip on his bull rope as the animal plows forward, sending those in the area scrambling in fear.



STAFF PHOTO | ELISABETH LIVELY

NTCC ropes points in local NIRA rodeo event

BY JUSTIN HARGROVE
Assistant Athletic Director

Northeast Texas Community College hosted the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA) Southern region Rodeo Oct. 16 and 17 at the Mount Pleasant Rodeo Association Priefert Arena in Mount Pleasant.

The weather was great as was the Wing Rodeo Company animal stock providing a great two days of Rodeo. The Saddle Bronc competition saw the bronzes win, with only one qualified ride on the weekend.

Tim Murphy of Hill College scored an 82-point ride to win the Bareback competition, while teammate Parker Fleet was the only cowboy to make 8 seconds on a bronc to win the Saddle Bronc competition with a score of 70.

Seth Rustin of Panola College tied with Chris Villanueva of Sam Houston to split the top spot in Bull Riding with 77 points each. Kase Bacque of Sam Houston State University won the Tie Down roping with a time of 8.7 seconds.

Mount Pleasant Native Kincade Henry of Panola brought home a third-place finish in tie down roping. Former NTCC Eagle, Slate Wiseman of Sam Houston State University won the steer wrestling competition with a 3.7 second run.

Team Ropers Reno Stoeber of Southwest Texas Junior College and partner Colt Brittain of Hill College took the top spot in the Team Roping Event.

On the women's side Hannah Phillips of Sam Houston won the Breakaway roping with a lightning fast 2.9 seconds to top the competition.

Lacey Bruening topped all competitors in the Goat Tying event to win first place with a 6.9 second run. The top spot in the Barrel Race went to Emma Smith of Texas A&M University.

Kincade Henry placed in two events, Tie Down and Team Roping to bring home the Men's All-Around Top Cowboy while, Kamryn Duncan of McNeese State University took the Women's All Around with outstanding performances in Goat Tying and Breakaway roping.

NTCC Bull Rider Sean Garner brought home a third-place

finish with a 73-point ride. Garrett Fields Tie Down time of 9.9 seconds earned him a fourth-place finish in Tie Down Roping.

Northeast Texas Community College competes in the Southern region of the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association with Hill College, Louisiana Tech University, Louisiana State University-Alexandria, McNeese State University, Panola Junior College, Sam Houston State University and Southwest Texas Junior College.

As well as Stephen F. Austin University, Texas A&M University, Texas A&M University-Commerce, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Trinity Valley Community College, and Wharton County Junior College.

In addition to these schools we had athletes from Baylor University and Tarleton State University competing here in Mount Pleasant this weekend.

The Eagle Rodeo team was to head to Lake Charles, Louisiana for the McNeese State Rodeo next but that Rodeo was moved to the spring semester and now will head to Conroe, Texas Nov 13 and 14 for the next collegiate Rodeo hosted by Sam Houston State University.

Coach hired for softball team

BY JUSTIN HARGROVE
Assistant Athletic Director

Northeast Texas Community College has announced the hiring of Joshua Freeman as the new Head Coach of the Eagles softball team after a nationwide search.

Freeman comes to lead the Eagle Softball program from Christopher Newport University in Newport News, Virginia.

Christopher Newport University is a NCAA Division III program where Coach Freeman served as Assistant head coach.

In addition to his position at CNU, Freeman has been an assistant coach at Virginia Wesleyan University, Head Coach of the Hampton Roads Vipers Select team in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Freeman has also been both an Assistant Coach and Head Coach of Green Run High School in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

At CNU, Freeman helped lead the Captains to two straight NCAA Tournament appearances, including a trip to the Super Regionals in 2019.

Overall, Christopher Newport has posted a 74-



Joshua Freeman

19 record since 2018 and reached the top spot in the NFCA National Coaches Poll for the first time in program history last year.

During his time at Virginia Wesleyan Freeman helped lead the team to the 2017 NCAA Division III National Championship and the coaching staff was selected as the National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) National Coaching Staff of the Year.

A native of Charlotte, N.C., Freeman graduated from East Carolina in 2000 with a Bachelor of Science in Communications.

He and his wife, Melissa, have one child, Lauren.



STAFF PHOTO | JAMES BUCKLEY

Above, NTCC Softball player Pearl Perry works on perfecting her swing during the team's recent practice session.



Left, NTCC Softball player Kailey Hancock catches the ball behind homeplate during a recent practice session. The team had a shortened season due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, no play did not mean no work as the girls have been busy practicing for their upcoming season starting in the spring 2021 semester.

STAFF PHOTO | JAMES BUCKLEY

Catch the Eagles back in action starting Feb. 2021

SPORTS



NTCC student Briar Mansker tightly grips the reins and hopes for an eight-second ride during the saddle bronc event at NTCC's recent NIRA rodeo held at the MPRA arena.



Above, a Sam Houston State University student finds himself testing gravity after his horse decides to go solo.

Left, a Southwest Texas Junior College student lifts his arm high as he maintains stability on the back of a bull.

CHAPS, CHUTES AND SPURS

Photos by Elisabeth Lively



Above, student Peyton Cooper keeps a tight grip on the piggins' string between her teeth as she prepares to jump off her horse during the goat tying event.



A Hill College rodeo student holds his breath as he tries to take a steer down during the steer-wrestling competition.