



Texan News Service

INDEPENDENT STUDENT JOURNALISM FOR TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY



CAMPUS

Dr. Joseph White visits Tarleton to talk about the habitats of Golden-cheeked Warblers

BY HAELEY CARPENTER

Digital Media Director

Dr. Joseph White presented his research titled, “Habitat of the Golden-cheeked Warbler: To Burn or Not to Burn” on Friday, Feb. 16 as part of the Speaker Series that the Tarleton State University College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (COANR) is hosting this semester.

White’s research and presentation proved that Golden-cheeked Warblers need a bit of human intervention to survive. Burning habitats occasionally makes a positive difference because of the healthy regrowth it provides.

Dr. White started his presentation by talking about the Firebird from Slavic mythology and the Nightingale from a Chinese emperor story. Both of these birds came with stories about how people wanted to own them and interfere too much, but if they did then there would be negative consequences.

“We’re trying to do good, yet we’re often faced with the issue of ‘how do we take care of, basically, wild things in an environment that maybe has some political and ecological constraints?’” Dr. White said.

White jumps into the Golden-cheeked Warbler, one of many species that has a big enough decline in numbers for it to make the endangered species list.

These birds build their nests in Ashe juniper trees, because they must have that type of bark to live in.

However, their prey, such as isopods and insects, cannot thrive in the same type of tree. They require deciduous woodlands like the Texas Red Oak.

“It’s a plant question embedded in an animal issue,” Dr. White said.

Dr. White gave five propositions, what professionals in the field think is going on and talked through the theories.

These propositions included how the

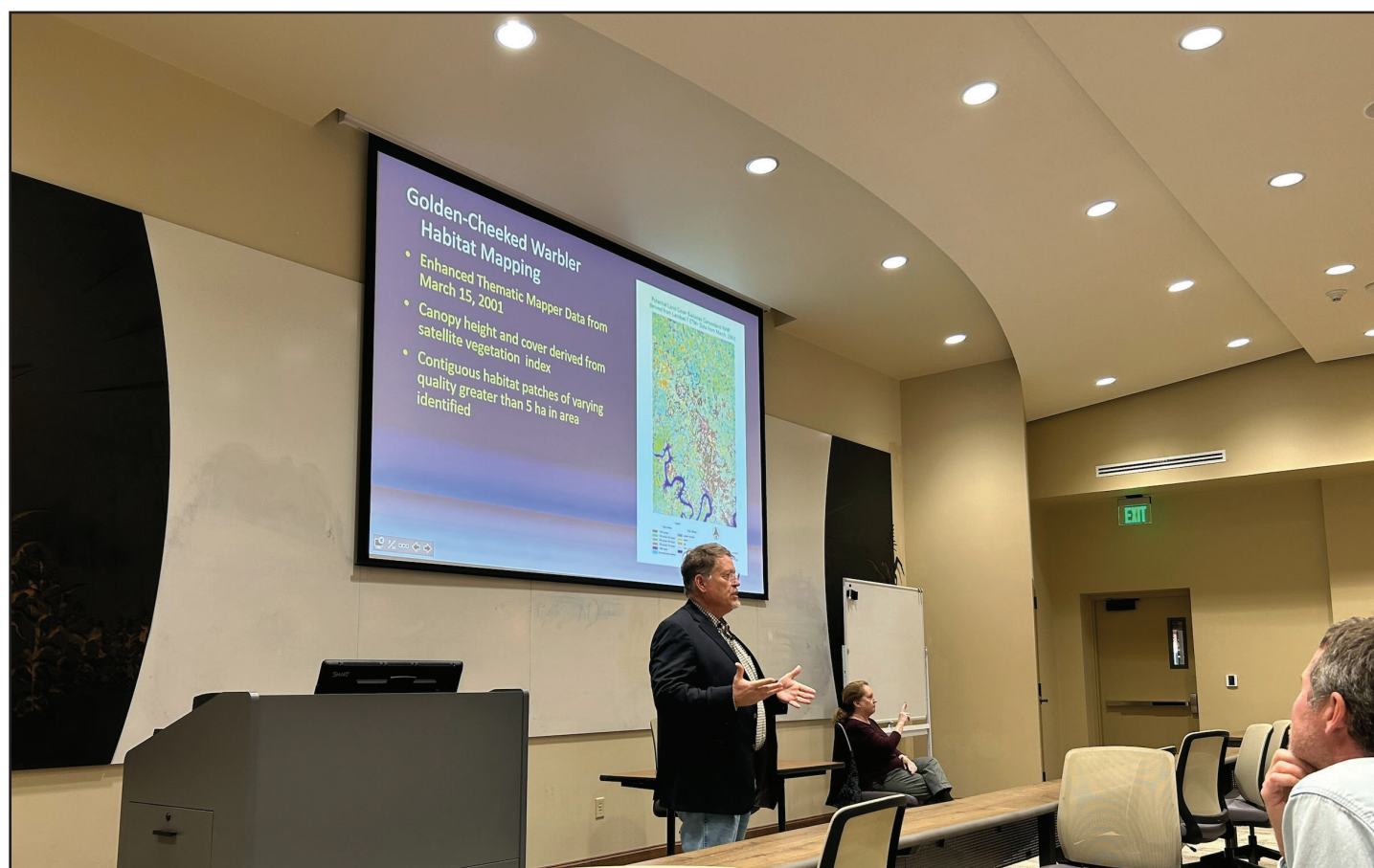


PHOTO BY: HAELEY CARPENTER

Dr. Joseph White explaining the habitat of the Golden-Cheeked Warbler.

canopies of juniper trees shade woodland areas, which affects how they grow. They also included how fire could affect some areas and the growing relationship between oak trees and junipers in the past century.

The focus of most of these propositions and this research is whether human interference, for example fire, is benefiting the Golden-cheeked Warbler habitat or not.

White’s research proves that if humans let the wild be wild and do its own thing, then the Golden-cheeked Warbler population will

continue to diminish. If humans step in every once and a while to shake things up then we can help increase their numbers.

Habitat sustainability for the long run is key. The goal is to balance the woodlands and the junipers without too much interference like with the firebird and nightingale previously mentioned.

“Disturbance is key and very important in habitat maintenance,” Dr. White said.

Dr. White attended Texas Christian University for both his undergraduate and

master’s degree before earning a doctorate in psychology from the University of Montana’s School of Forestry. He spent his postdoctoral research time in New Zealand to assess national carbon storage in indigenous forests for a climate change mitigation project.

This presentation was the first of many in the Speaker Series. To check out who is presenting next, follow COANR on Facebook and Instagram.

Luke Lewis:

Tarleton graduate and avid outdoorsman

Tarleton's Bass Club is often the highest ranked in Texas

BY COPELAND WELCH
Managing Editor

Many people have activities they remember doing since before they could walk, for Luke Lewis, this activity is fishing. He has been learning the craft, baiting the hooks and helping his dad with everything outdoor-related since he was “in the womb.”

Lewis is a recent graduate from Tarleton and is now pursuing a master's degree in accounting. He hopes to eventually take the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) exam and begin a career as a CPA.

After graduating high school, Lewis began looking at colleges and ultimately decided to attend Tarleton for their distinguished Bass Fishing Club.

“The Tarleton Bass Club is often the highest ranked public university in Texas and we do very well at the national level too, especially for the size of our team and our school and the distance that we have to travel to all of the tournaments, which is a big part of it,” Lewis said.

“We compete with the best and we have a lot of prestige in the bass fishing world.”

As Lewis likes to say, The Bass Fishing Club is “a brotherhood” and “its own fraternity.”

“There are not a lot of groups of men out there that take care of each other as well as the bass club does,” Lewis said.

“We try to always hold each other accountable at a really high level and the amount of work it takes when you're on the road two to three weeks out of the month keeping your school

up and ... it's a bond that is incredible, it's the coolest thing I've ever been a part of and I think that the Bass Club is the best organization that I've ever known.”

The Bass Club is not designed for only males. If you are a female and you enjoy “rippin' lips,” you can join too. In fact, there are two female officers on the team, Carson Dugger, who serves as treasurer and Jordan Kenny, the secretary.

Lewis cherishes many of the memories he has made while being a member of the Bass Fishing Club, but he has one in particular that holds a special place in his heart.

“Catching fish is always fun, you know, every member on the team has got their favorite big catch or their favorite deal, it's hard to narrow that down, but I remember the National Championship of 2022 on Fort Gibson Lake in Oklahoma, and all the guys stayed at a club sponsored house, and we had a really good time all just getting ready and having all my buddies up there,” Lewis said.

The Bass Fishing Club travels frequently for tournaments, often out of state, but Lewis believes the tournament in Florida takes the cake for the coolest trip the club has taken.

“The Harris Chain of Lakes in Florida was one of the coolest places, we went in February when everything was really cold here and it was warm there and the fish were active, and clear water, like textbook bass fishing, looks like it came out of a magazine ..., that was a really, really cool trip,” Lewis said.



PHOTO COURTESY: LUKE LEWIS

Luke Lewis holding his catch, a steelhead trout, near Soldotna, Alaska.

The Bass Fishing Club is a big time commitment, but Lewis and his partner, Blake Martinez, have found ways to stay on top of their schoolwork.

“Maybe, you know, one guy is driving halfway to a tournament and the other guy is sitting shotgun studying, or taking notes or what not, people have to make sacrifices for it but it's a lot of hard-working guys that handle their business well, and it's just all about dedication and good discipline because it can hard for sure,” Lewis said.

Lewis believes that The Bass Fishing Club can open many doors to new opportunities, in fact he was even able to do an internship in Soldotna, Alaska,

thanks to his experience and education he has earned at Tarleton.

“If anyone is interested in seeing the great outdoors in its purest form, and catching trophy salmon with me as your guide, contact Alaskan Widespread Fishing Adventures to book your next adventure,” Lewis said.

If you are interested in learning more about fishing opportunities in Alaska, check out www.widespreadfishing.com or email payne@alaska.net. You can contact Luke Lewis at luke.lewis@go.tarleton.edu for information regarding the Bass Fishing Club at Tarleton, and his experiences working in Alaska.

CAMPUS

KXTR is out of this world

BY ASHTYN HANSARD

Multimedia Journalist

In 2024, many students can look back at their lives and see how much has changed in such a short time, but what's constant in those years? Most would say family, friends and schoolwork, but others would like to add one more: music.

Tarleton's radio station, KXTR The Planet, has been around since 2004, setting up its first station in Davis Hall which has since then been torn down. The general manager, Lance McFarlin, got his start with KXTR in 2009, just five years after it first began, but he wasn't always in charge.

"I started here in 2009 as a volunteer DJ as a part of a class, and then started working here as a student worker," McFarlin said. "I've just worked my way up and in 2018, I believe, I became the general manager and it's been genuinely life-changing."

"Before college, I was working in a sawmill for five years after high school and then decided to come to college and found radio," McFarlin said. "At first, it was journalism, but then I found radio and decided that I wanted to work in radio; It's given me the opportunity to do that for the last almost 14 years."

In a time where media is becoming such a big part of life, more jobs are requiring experience with technology for future employees. Though internships and college courses can provide help with this dilemma. McFarlin believes that KXTR can help these students with these requirements and their resumes.

"I think working here gives students a glimpse of working in a real media environment," McFarlin

said. "We have projects, we have deadlines, we run events, which are a big part of working in radio. I think it gives them a really good grasp of what working in a media environment would be like, including experience."

"There's technical experience and creative experience," McFarlin said. "Everyone that comes through here isn't going to be working in radio specifically; that's why we offer all those extras here so people can gain that experience as well."

It's not just communications students who come through to work at KXTR. McFarlin has seen students from all different kinds of majors, from agriculture to fine arts, try their hand at being a DJ. Every student can swing by and volunteer for a two-hour shift working the radio station and getting their own show.

"There are students that come through from all different kinds of majors that have an interest in working in radio, or not just radio but media like podcasting or maybe YouTubers or whatever it is," McFarlin said. "That's why we do a lot of that stuff here, not just radio."

Although KXTR has advanced quite a bit since its start in 2004, the station is always reaching to complete new goals. What once started as a show that only played underground music with a few listeners, has flourished into a well-known radio show that covers quite a bit of Stephenville, Texas and surrounding areas.

However, there's always more that could be achieved when growing a radio show.

"I would say goals related to people would be to give students a really good experience and help them



PHOTO BY: Ashtyn hansard

KXTR is a student run radio station at Tarleton.

get jobs," McFarlin said. "Students come to Tarleton, for the most part, to go get good jobs where they make good money."

"Doing my best to give them experience, not just in media but how to have a job and how to function in a workplace," McFarlin said. "A big part of what I do is helping students with their resumes and helping them connect with people with whatever fields they want to work in."

Check out KXTR The Planet on the radio at 100.7 on your next drive around Stephenville.

Tarleton shares plans to keep up with growth

BY PAYTON MARKS

Multimedia Journalist

Tarleton State University's College of Business is receiving a new name due to the eight-figure donation made by Dr. Sam Pack and his wife.

In a statement posted to his website, Tarleton President James Hurley has called this the largest cash gift that the university has ever received. In honor of Dr. Pack's donation, the Business building will be renamed after him.

In the same statement, Dr. Hurley also confirmed plans for the construction of a new residence hall for 120 million dollars. The new residence hall is said to include up to a thousand beds and will be the twelfth on campus residential option.

There are also plans to expand the current Dick Smith Library. Construction is set to begin later this spring and will add an extra 10,000 square feet to the library.

New additions to the library will include 24/7 accessible spaces, such as individual study rooms,

collaborative study rooms, instructional spaces, meeting rooms and multipurpose spaces.

The university is constantly growing when it comes to admission rates for incoming freshmen as well as transfer students. With a growing admission rate and student population often come new changes to the campus and university itself.

Dr. Hurley's full statements about these changes can be found on the official Tarleton Website.

We will update the story if further details and updates become available to us.



PHOTO COURTESY: Tarleton sga

The current student body President Billy Snipes and student body Vice President Kathryn Hoffman of Tarleton's Student Government Association.

SGA makes plans for spring 2024

BY MICHAELA DENNIS
Executive Producer

The Student Government Body (SGA) is a nationwide organization. Their goal is to be the voice of their student body by creating legislation and events that serve the student's needs.

At Tarleton State University, the SGA's congress consists of a representative from each College and organization on campus.

Their most recent acts include new legislation that affects housing.

Stephanie Hart is one of the two Vice Presidents operating under the event department of the Student Government Association. Her responsibility is to oversee and plan all SGA events and activities.

Hart's goal for the upcoming semester is to conduct a partnership with the Purple Pantry. She believes that a lot of students are not engaging with their organization which is hindering their development of serving student needs.

"We want to get more Congress chairs and spreading the word more

about SGA," Hart said.

Their organization's goal this semester is to get more students involved and market themselves more by hosting another, "Coffee with SGA." This event allows students to participate in question and answer sessions with members of the council.

Amber Trammel is the delegate for the Corps of Cadets. Trammel mentions how being part of the Council has benefited her by being more involved on campus and bettering her organization.

"I feel like being part of SGA I get more awareness of what is happening on campus and how this affects us as students," Trammel said.

Zinya Ward is a Senior at Tarleton State University. She said she has never seen SGA on campus and wishes they were interviewing more students on their needs.

"I feel like if they want to make change they need to come to the students," Ward said.

To learn more about SGA, visit Texan Sync.

Tarleton Student Social Work Association impacts students

BY THOMAS ENGELBERT
Multimedia Journalist

At Tarleton State University, numerous organizations are committed to aiding and enhancing the student experience.

Among the newer and less familiar groups on campus is the Student Social Work Association (SSWA).

The Association's primary objective is to equip its student members with the skills to integrate academic knowledge into the practical application of social work. This involves engaging social work students in community volunteer work and political activities.

The overarching goal is to raise awareness and understanding of social issues within both the campus and the broader community.

Fostering active participation in supporting the SSWA and its students and enabling the application of classroom learning to real-world experiences.

Tristan Dufresne currently serves as the president with her main goal being to promote awareness and ideas related to the SSWA.

With access to extensive resources

and a large network, the SSWA aims to inform students about the resources available to them, often unknown.

"It can be intimidating to approach professors or individuals in the welcome center," Dufresne said. "As social workers, we possess knowledge that can make it more accessible and easier for students."

The SSWA recently concluded a clothing drive to provide students with necessary clothing items in case of another freeze, as experienced in the winter of 2023. The goal is to offer a safe place where students can find warmth and acquire the clothing items needed to stay warm.

In February, they plan to host a social event in collaboration with PANKUS (People Against Not Knowing University Spirit) to celebrate Mardi Gras and promote student cultural diversity.

The association is located in the old Engineering Building or the Health and Human Science Building.

For more information on their website click [here](#) or contact Tristan Dufresne at tristan.dufresne@go.tarleton.edu.



Tarleton Student Social Work Association



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CAMPUS

Six counseling services you may not know exist

BY MICHAELA DENNIS
Executive Producer

The counseling services is a program on Tarleton State University's campus that allows students to seek therapy in person and via TELUS. The purpose of their department is to support students through psychological and behavioral development. Here are six additional services that you may not have known the counseling services offer.

The first group counseling they offer is, Grief Group. This is for students who have experienced loss. According to West Chester University, group counseling can be beneficial for someone because it reduces the feeling of loneliness and increases the feeling of pain being a normal emotion. Additionally, this type of counseling provides attendees with the comfort of giving and receiving the support they need. To attend these services, they are offered weekly in the Tarleton Wellness Center on Wednesdays at 2 p.m. beginning Feb. 7.

The second support group the counseling services offer is the Sorta Social Peer Support Community. These services are offered for students who are autistic and want to grow their social capability. This service is unique because its goal is to bring students together who share similar history and struggles. This service is not meant to be a therapeutic session such as the one-on-ones offered. Being able to find someone with a common experience can build community and social skills. The details of these services are not published on the counseling service's website.

The third service offered is the Mental Health First Aid Training. Unlike the others, this service will allow any Tarleton student to receive a certification after completion. The course consists of a two hour online portion plus an additional five and a half hour instructor led video course. The purpose of the course is to teach how to be aware of the signs of mental illness and substance abuse, and be able to be a helpful ally for their treatment. Individuals can either register for the adult or youth training. The adult training is offered March 22, and April 19. The youth training is offered March 8 and April 5.



PHOTO BY: JOLEE SKINNER

A sign at the Wellness Center at Tarleton.

The fourth training offered is Red Flags. This training is to teach you how to be aware of alarming signs within romantic relationships and learn about healthy relationships. To attend this training, you must reach out to the counseling services. These sessions will be more interactive and conversational.

The fifth workshop is the Unwind Workshop. This workshop is designed to teach you how to allow your brain and body to relax by practicing breathing techniques and relaxing the muscles within your body. Lastly, this session will teach you how to be grounded and aware.

Finally, the last workshop the counseling services offers is the Foundations of Wellbeing Workshop. The purpose of this session is to review the way your daily tasks are impactful to you such as hobbies, relationships, hygiene and more. This workshop is offered per request.

All these services can be found on the counseling page through Tarleton State University's website.

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CAMPUS

Tarleton combats FAFSA delays

BY JOLEE SKINNER

Editor-in-Chief

Tarleton State University Financial Aid office is helping current and potential students navigate the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) delays.

Tarleton has extended their priority consideration date to May 1 for need-based aid and institutional scholarships after the U.S. Department of Education announced last week on Jan. 30 that the already delayed FAFSA forms will not be sent to institutions until March 15.

The FAFSA forms were originally supposed to go out to universities in late January but the delay caused the date to be pushed back.

Lucas Malone, a Tarleton financial aid advisor, said it has been hard for students because it is essentially a waiting game.

“It’s Extremely frustrating. A Lot of times, especially with the students whose parents don’t have a social security number because in that instance, it completely locks the FAFSA for them to complete,” Malone said. “That makes you feel like you’re not being any help to them at all.

This delay could severely impact students’ futures as many depend on aid to go to college and they need to know if they will receive the aid to go to college.

According to Bankrate.com, 17.8 million students fill out a FAFSA each year. That’s how many students this delay will affect. And for many families across the nation, students may have to take out loans.

“As a last resort, we can also look at alternative private loans from private loan lenders,” Malone said.

In response to this national delay, Tarleton is monitoring this situation and is adjusting to accommodate challenges that current students, additionally potential students, will face.

“We’re definitely working with both our director and assistant director on making those plans as the issues come up,” Malone said. “But once we actually are able to start receiving those FAFSA forms, then we can help students kinda navigate making corrections.”

Dr. James Hurley, president of Tarleton State University, said this adjustment is part of the university’s commitment to make sure all opportunities for students are available and to show support for the student body of Tarleton.

“We’re looking at other scholarship options as well,” Malone said. “And especially in the instance of sophomores, juniors and seniors since a lot of them moved off campus next semester.”

Tarleton also announced it will start sending out official financial aid responses in April to all students whose FAFSA forms have already been submitted.

Malone did say that students wanting to go to Tarleton likely do not have to worry about not receiving aid.

“New students expecting not to get aid, I would say that is a worst case scenario because everything that I’m seeing right now is that we should start receiving those completed FAFSA forms on March 15th”, Malone said.

According to the Department, this delay is the result of having to fix a \$1.8 billion FAFSA mistake. The mistake was the math typically done to calculate how much aid a student would get was wrong.

Dr. Javier Garza, vice president for enrollment management, is advising students to send all financial aid and scholarship applications before the respective deadline to Tarleton as soon as possible to receive need-based aid.

Tarleton State’s priority deadline for the 2024-2025 merit-based scholarships will remain Feb. 15.



TEXAN NEWS SERVICE FILE PHOTO

Tarleton looks to have all FAFSA delays remedied in time to welcome students back in fall.

LOCAL

Lida's Food Basket and Bakery stands tall after 32 years

BY HAELEY CARPENTER

Digital Media Director

Lida's (pronounced lie-duh) Food Basket and Bakery has been serving Stephenville for over 30 years.

The original owner, Sue Leudtke, started the business in 1992. The current owner is Courtney Elleby.

"Her daughter was a teacher, so she kind of wanted to help give teachers a break sometimes, so she would make home cooked meals because you know when you're busy and eat out all the time it gets kind of tiring," Elleby said.

Leudtke first began making the meals out of her daughter Ann's kitchen and put sweet treats with each meal. Her business was growing so much that Luedtke bought a storefront in 1993 on Frey Street where the bakery still lives today.

Elleby started working at Lida's in 2017 when Ann was the owner and took over in 2019 when she was ready to retire.

Elleby makes all of the casseroles with the original recipes from Sue's mother, Lida, which is where the name of the business comes from.

Lida's has 15 types of casseroles with sizes ranging from individual, which serves one person to double, which serves about 15 to 20 people. They have side options of salads and vegetables and desserts ranging from pies to cakes and cookies.

"If you miss home cooking then you should give us a try," Elleby said. "We have something that I think anybody would like. We have a variety of options and sizes. If you're a single person and you don't want anything big or if you're wanting to meal prep then you can get a large and freeze them."



PHOTO BY: HAELEY CARPENTER

Lida's store front on Frey Street.

Elleby's favorite casserole is the ham and potato. Her favorite dessert is the pecan pie and the chocolate sheet cake.

When asked what sells the best, Elleby said,

"Our casseroles are our biggest seller. It depends on the day and the week and the time of the year."

They are open from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Elleby is keeping the tradition that Leudtke started by giving a 20%

discount for teachers and a 10% discount for students.

Elleby works with three other people, including Michelle Pierce, who has been the baker for 18 years. When you order in the store, there is a jar at the cashier for donations. These donations go to Michelle's 3-year-old niece, who is battling brain cancer.

Everything is made fresh in house. They always have casseroles on hand, but you can also call ahead with 24

hours notice and ask for something specific.

"I enjoy cooking," Elleby said. "That's how I reach people. I enjoy it when I can make something to give to someone and it makes them feel better."

Sue and Ann Leudtke stop in every now and then to see how Elleby and Lida's Bakery are doing.

LOCAL

The Shack:

Serving Stephenville crawfish, community and Cajun culture

Roots grounded in Cajun tradition and passion for seafood

BY THOMAS ENGELBERT

Multimedia Journalist

Nestled in the heart of Stephenville, a quaint town known for its Texan charm and vibrant community spirit, The Shack stands as a beacon of culinary delight.

With its roots firmly grounded in Cajun tradition and a passion for bringing people together over delectable seafood, this family-owned restaurant has carved a niche for itself since its inception in August 2023.

The Shack is owned and operated by Colbe Stoker, along with his wife Sandra Nava and supported by his parents, Amy and Ruurn Stoker.

The Shack is more than just a place to dine; it's a labor of love. It's a testament to the Stoker family's dedication to serving up authentic Cajun flavors with a side of southern hospitality.

Stoker's long-standing dream of establishing a Cajun-style hub in Stephenville has materialized into The Shack, a welcoming space where friends and family convene to savor crawfish without the fuss of preparation.

Stoker emphasizes the priority of comfort and friendliness.

"I made it how I would want to have fun, made it how I want to be treated," Stoker said.

Central to The Shack's menu is its signature offering: crawfish. Renowned for its tender meat and bold flavors, crawfish takes center stage, enticing diners with its irresistible allure. Whether served steamed and seasoned to perfection or incorporated into mouth watering dishes like shrimp or gumbo, crawfish reigns supreme at The Shack.

While The Shack maintains a familiar menu akin to its predecessors, the standout feature lies in its seasoning, a unique touch that sets it apart.

Despite encountering challenges earlier this year, including a scarcity of crawfish due to a severe drought and a recent freeze impacting domestic production, the family persevered. Seeking federal relief, they recently celebrated the arrival of their first full crawfish shipment on Feb. 2, igniting enthusiasm among patrons.

Fortified by a dedicated team inherited from the previous owner, The Shack thrives, drawing praise from delighted customers.

Stoker and Nava, both 2021 graduates of Tarleton State University, hold a special affection for their alma mater.

"Tarleton drives our hearts," Stoker said.

The Shack's symbiotic relationship with the college town atmosphere, fueled by Tarleton's expanding student population, fuels its growth trajectory, making it a beloved fixture in the community.



The Shack in Stephenville under new ownership.

PHOTO BY: THOMAS ENGELBERT

OPINION

Texan News Service staffers invited to a Journalism Conference

TNS crews takes a trip to Austin

BY REESE KEELING

Art Director

Eight Texan News Service (TNS) staff members traveled to Austin to attend the Courage, Tenacity, Integrity and Innovation in Rural Journalism conference on Feb. 28.

Austin is full of fun activities and culture that the staff got to experience together we were hosted by the unique and very Austin-like hotel, The Moxy downtown.

We started our day on the 27 taking a bus to downtown Austin. For some of the staff, this was their first time visiting the city. We arrived at 3 p.m. Wednesday and had free time to walk around downtown, take pictures and shop.

“My favorite part about getting to walk around downtown Austin was the abundance of food places and the different culture Austin brings,” Sports Editor Jaxon Hansard said.

I’m from Austin so I was excited to show all of my favorite people from Stephenville around where I grew up. I took them to some places I enjoyed growing up.

Wednesday night the Texas Center of Community Journalism hosted a dinner at The Moxy where they set up a taco bar for the guests.

We played games in the hotel lobby and all around grew closer as a staff.

After dinner we all took Ubers to an Austin favorite, Gourddough’s Donuts on First Street.

“The donuts were a light airy pastry with a sweet topping,” Executive Producer Micheala Dennis said. “Definitely not something you can get in Stephenville.”

The next morning was the rural journalism conference. We were lucky enough to get to hear from experienced journalists and see Craig Garnett accept the 2023 Tom and Pat Gish Award. Garnett is the owner and publisher of the Uvalde- Leader News. He received this award for their courageous journalism efforts involving the tragic Uvalde school shooting.

“It was just so interesting,” Digital Media Director Haeley Carpenter said. “I’m still new to journalism so hearing them talk about all of their different experiences was inspirational.”

It’s always such a privilege to get opportunities like this to meet these important people in the journalism industry, get network opportunities and gain more knowledge outside of Tarleton.

At the end of the day, we got a tour of the Texas University Moody Center (the school of journalism) and it was such a cool experience to see the way other students run their newspaper department and their photo department and to see all of the cool history all over the walls.

The TNS staff wants to thank Dr. Hurley, Professor Gearhart and our advisor, Austin Lewter for allowing us to have these experiences. The next stop for TNS is New York on spring break.



PHOTO BY: HAELEY CARPENTER

Jaxon Hansard, Thomas Engelbert, Ashtyn Hansard, Reese Keeling, Copeland Welch, Jolee Skinner and Haeley Carpenter on trip in Austin, Texas.

OPINION

Pilates is the best class you can take at the Tarleton Rec

Tarleton offers 12 group fit class at the Rec Center

BY SARA FARMER
Contributing Writer

Out of all of the workout classes offered at the recreational facility at Tarleton State University, pilates is one of the most well-rounded and effective.

The pilates classes are a combination of workouts that engage all of the muscles, but especially the core, glutes, hips and back. Pilates works muscles that are not often used when lifting weights, such as the erector spinae, which is the opposing muscle to the abs.

Along with strength training, pilates also offers training in flexibility. Several stretches and balance sequences help participants develop more flexible limbs along with the ability to hold their balance longer.

Instructor Sonia Bauer says that pilates is her favorite class to teach.

“I love to teach pilates because you can make it as hard or as easy as you would like,” Bauer said. “I like to use different equipment when possible so you can make it more challenging.”

Pilates is the most popular class among the workout classes available. It has the highest number of regular attendees, averaging 20 attendees per class.

“Pilates is by far my most popular class,” Bauer said. “We have had up to 60 people in pilates in this class. That has never happened before. I think it is because more students are beginning to know that we have more classes and more students are willing to come.”

Students have high approval rates for both the pilates class and for the pilates instructor.

Freshman Therese Cox, a kinesiology major, expresses her love for the class.

“Pilates is my favorite class because it’s relaxing and it relieves a lot of stress,” Cox said. “Sonia Bauer is a really great instructor. She knows what she’s doing and makes it a really great time.”

Students who are considering careers in kinesiology would benefit from attending the pilates class.

“Sonia knows the right breathing patterns and the right techniques and that is what kinesiology is about, the body’s movement,” Cox said. “It is inspiring me to pursue a career in fitness instructing and maybe pilates one day.”

After attending classes twice a week for a semester, you will notice a significant increase in core and glute strength. If you are looking to get stronger and more flexible, pilates is for you.

Pilates classes are held upstairs in studio 225 from 5-6 p.m. every Tuesday and Thursday.



PHOTO BY: SARA FARMER

Pilates students follow their instructor, Sonia Bauer, in a workout sequence.

SPORTS

Men's basketball makes way for newcomer Devon Barnes

BY REESE KEELING

Art Director

Tarleton Men's Basketball team has made their name known in the Western Athletic Conference (WAC) this year. The Texans are 15-3 in the conference and are currently on a winning streak of nine games in a row.

A few players have stood out this season, one being Devon Barnes.

Barnes is a sophomore from Hinesville, Georgia and this is his first season on the team. He has a high of 12 free-throws against Grand Canyon University (GCU) and 13 free-throw attempts against GCU.

"I love football but my mom didn't want me to get hurt," Barnes said. "I started basketball and I was actually good at it so since then I've been playing basketball."

Barnes first came to the Tarleton Basketball Team in 2023.

"When I first came to Tarleton it felt like home," Barnes said. "Jakorie Smith was my host home and I just instantly connected."

On Feb. 24, the Texans played California Baptist University (CBU) and Barnes took off in the first half with eight points. Barnes scored 25 points in the second half making that 33 points for Barnes against CBU. After this game, Tarleton was tied for the fewest losses in the WAC.

"That game was the day before my dad's birthday so I knew I had to give him a birthday present," Barnes said. "I'm a God fearing man and when that happened I wasn't surprised because I put my faith in God."

He was named WAC Newcomer of the Week on Feb. 26 after his dominating games against GCU and CBU.

Barnes is not only an asset on the court but his teammates would say that he is all around needed in every aspect of the team.

"My coaches and teammates would



PHOTO BY: REESE KEELING

Devon Barnes shoots a layup to add a point to the board for the Texans.

describe me as a fun man and always locked in on the court," Barnes said. "I'm always leading everybody with positive words."

Coming onto the team as the only starting sophomore allowed Barnes to approve among his older teammates.

"A big challenge is being consistent like when conference play first started I wasn't consistent and it was some games up and some games down," Barnes said. "I've become closer to God so my mentality for every game was just trusting him and having faith with him."

Although there have been challenges,

the season has been at an all time high.

"The best part of this season is this amazing winning streak we're on right now," Barnes said. "We're breaking so many records and making history, so it's been the highest point for me right now."

The team is headed to Vegas after a long and hard fought season to show their talent even more. The team is preparing to hit the road for the WAC Vegas tournament.

"From a personal standpoint I'm gonna have faith in God and trust him and give everything every step of the way," Barnes said. "With the team it's

what we've been doing and nothing really changes and it's big but at the same time we just take it."

The Texan's last two games are coming up. March 7 is greek night and March 9 is senior night. They will be fighting for the WAC regular season title to carry on their winning streak.

Come out to support Adam Moussa, Kiandre Gaddy, Lue Williams and Jakorie Smith on their senior night or you can watch the men's basketball team play on ESPN+.

Tyler Jackson: Sisterhood through hoops

BY JAXON HANSARD

Sports Editor

In the Tarleton State University Women's Basketball Team's previous loss, they faced Utah Tech University who had two pairs of sisters on their team.

Junior, Tyler Jackson, shares her positive experiences from having an older sister and role model, Taylor Jackson, who played for Stephen F. Austin State University.

"I feel like she is a leader in her own way and she's very supportive in whatever I do," Tyler Jackson said while looking up at her older sister.

"We talk every single day, so she was kind of my role model growing up," Tyler said.

Even with the six-year age gap between the sisters they still worked together growing up.

"She put me through some drills for sure," Tyler Jackson said. "I think I'm better personally but she probably thinks that she's better."

"She is more of like a true point guard than I am, I could post her up, but she may take me off the dribble," Tyler said.

Tyler had originally committed to Fresno State while in her senior year of high school, but changed her mind after finding out her sister was pregnant and wanted to be closer to her family.

The Tarleton Texans currently stand 6-13 on their season under a new era of coaching from accomplished long-time Kim Mulkey and assistant Bill Brock.

With the season off to a bit of a



PHOTOS COURTESY: TARLETON ATHLETICS

Tyler Jackson making her Midnight Madness introduction.

struggle, Tyler wants to take some inspiration from her sister and help be a leader for this team.

"Being more vocal and being more consistent, locally and just like what

I'm showing on the court every day," Tyler said. "My main goal is to try to find my leadership within the team, with only three returners we don't want to step on each other's toes."

Tyler wants to stay healthy this season and loves helping with her nieces.

RODEO

Tarleton Rodeo dominates at Odessa College

Men's team brings home the Champion Title

BY KILEY MORGAN

Multimedia Journalist

The Tarleton State University's Rodeo Team competed Feb. 22-24 at the Odessa College rodeo in Odessa, Texas. The men's team brought home the Champion title, as did many individual athletes.

Competing against 15 other colleges in the Southwest Region, Tarleton's men's team finished 200 points ahead of any other team at the Odessa College rodeo. This win allowed the men's team to keep their spot in first place in the overall standings of the Southwest Region.

The women's team finished third behind Frank Phillips College and Cisco College, scoring 150 points. The women are still sitting first in the overall standings of the Southwest Region.

Ira Dickinson was named Champion Saddle Bronc Rider after he scored 160 points on two broncs this past weekend. Dickinson is currently sitting first in the Southwest Region standings in the saddle bronc riding, ahead of his fellow teammates, Bailey Small and Gus Gaillard.

Travis Handley was right behind his teammate, Ira Dickinson, in the saddle bronc riding. Handley was the Reserve Champion Saddle Bronc Rider of the Odessa College Rodeo, scoring 159.5 points on two broncs.

Cole Walker and his team roping partner, Roan Oldfield of Cisco College, were champions in the team roping. Walker and Oldfield roped their steer in 5.4 seconds in the long-go and came back to the short-go Feb. 24,



PHOTO COURTESY: TARLETON RODEO

The Tarleton Rodeo team competes at Odessa College Rodeo.

stopping the clock at 5.2 seconds.

Roedy Farrell scored 158.5 points on two broncs, taking home the title of Reserve Champion Bareback Rider. He scored a 77 in the long-go, and an 81.5 in the short-go.

Brayden Roe roped and tied his calf in 9.5 seconds in the long-go but made an even faster run of 8.3 seconds in the short-go on Feb. 24. These two solid runs set Roe up to be the Reserve Champion Tie-Down Roper.

Rayme Jones was named Reserve

Champion Goat Tyer. Jones tied her goat in 6.4 seconds in the long-go, advancing her to the short-go where she tied in 7.8 seconds. These two runs put Jones at an average of 14.2 on two goats, just one second slower than the champion goat tyer.

Other Tarleton Rodeo athletes also placed in their respective events, earning points for the team. Those athletes are: Korbin Rice, seventh place team roping; Tyce Lacina, eighth place team roping; Gus Gaillard, third place saddle bronc riding; Lucca Alvarenga,

sixth place tie-down roping; Tori Brower, third place goat tying; Keni Labrum/Hattie Haynes, sixth place goat tying; Rylee Abel, seventh place goat tying; Megan Smith, eighth place breakaway roping; Taber Garcia, fourth place barrel racing; and Acey Pinkston, seventh place barrel racing.

The Texans will head to Sweetwater March 21-23 for the Ranger College Rodeo, where they will compete once again to try to earn their spot at the CNFR in Casper, Wyoming this June.

Strength, conditioning and national championships

BY KILEY MORGAN

Multimedia Journalist

Most know that Stephenville, Texas, is the Cowboy Capital of the world. It is also known that Tarleton State University has one of the largest and most successful rodeo teams in the country; However, what most do not know is that the Tarleton Rodeo Team is the only collegiate rodeo team in the United States with the advantage of having their own strength and conditioning coach.

Tyler Frank is the name of the man that can be found training world champion athletes in the gym of the Doty Rodeo Complex on most days. His job is “one in a billion,” as Frank would describe it.

“I wake up every day as the luckiest human being alive. I mean I tell people, ‘I have had more fun in one day than you have in a month,’” he said.

His plan was not always to be a rodeo strength and conditioning coach. In fact, going into college, he did not know what his future would look like.

Frank is originally from Keller, Texas, but started his college career at Tarleton in 2016 where he obtained his undergraduate degree and his masters.

He grew up rodeoing and came to Tarleton to rodeo, when he was unexpectedly picked up by the cheer team. He was a member of the co-ed cheer team for three to four years and was with them when they won a national championship in 2018.

“This was nowhere near what I had planned,” Frank said. “I started out as an ag major; I had no clue where that was going to go. Then, I started the cheer team and found out what kinesiology was, and I ended up loving that.”

His family owned a gym growing up and that is something that he was always interested in.

After a short hiatus, Frank found his way back into the rodeo world when he started to work with the Tarleton Rodeo Team his junior year.

While his job is to be the strength and conditioning coach for the rodeo team, his duties go far beyond the name of his title.

“I have done everything from help athletes register for classes at 6 a.m., to going over what they are eating, how they are eating, eating habits, creating success around food, injuries, camp counselor,” Frank said. “You know when you’re in the weight room and you just had a bad day and you just need

to tell somebody about it. I cover just about all of it.”

When asked if he felt like this job was his calling, Frank emphatically agreed.

“Oh 100%, I tell everybody on a daily basis, I have the job that everybody dreams of. I’ve got amazing co-workers; amazing athletes and we have the best facility. Anything and everything you could ask for, we have right here,” Frank said.

Unlike other collegiate sports, there is no information to be found on strength and conditioning for athletes in the arena. It is a broad area to cover when trying to find the best workout plan for rodeo athletes since they compete in anything from roping a calf to riding a bull.

Considering there is a designated wall in Doty Rodeo Complex full of national titles, 37 to be exact. Specializing workout programs for each athlete and the team as a whole is something that Frank takes seriously.

“Whatever we did from day one, I kept in a document, and we do our research and say ‘Hey, did this work? Did that work? How do we build the best rodeo program?’ There are no articles, there are no books, and on top of that you have injuries,” Frank said. “We have injuries in this sport that nobody else sees. I have a job that presents a new challenge every single day,”

“Movement is medicine” is his coaching philosophy. Whether it be for physical or mental treatment, Frank believes that movement is medicine and that is what he teaches his athletes.

“No matter what is going on, I think if you move your body and fuel it with what it needs, it will improve your quality of life,” Frank said.

While it might sound different than what most coaches would say, Frank’s most rewarding part of his career at Tarleton is what he describes as “the water bucket rule.”

“We have a lot of young ladies that come in and always complain that carrying their water bucket is the hardest thing to do, then, about halfway through the first semester or towards the end of the semester, each one will come in and say, I carried my water bucket from the spicket all the way to my stall and I didn’t even stop or think about it,” Frank said.

That is something that Frank looks forward to as a coach.



PHOTO BY: KILEY MORGAN

Tyler Frank, is the Strength and Conditioning Coach for the Tarleton Rodeo Team

Starting in August, a lot of his athletes have trouble unloading hay or carrying water buckets. But by the time December rolls around, it is obvious that their hard work has paid off. Even if the reward is as simple as carrying a water bucket.

With the help of Frank, Tarleton rodeo athletes are going into the spring semester with their gas tanks full.

“We are going to be physically fit to the point that it is dominating when we walk into the arena,” Frank said.

To Frank, it is way more than just weights and training.

“We have a legacy. Not only of being winners but being winners with great character,” Frank said.

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