



# J<sup>e</sup>-TAC

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**Homecoming royalty  
Hector Navarrete and  
Aspyn McCord PG. 2**



PHOTO BY HAELEY CARPENTER

**HOMEcoming 2024**

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## HOMECOMING

# Old traditions shine bright at Tarleton

BY THOMAS ENGELBERT  
*Multimedia Journalist*

Each fall, Tarleton State University comes alive with the spirit of homecoming. Alumni come home to celebrate the traditions that make Tarleton special with students and faculty.

One of the most popular events is the Lighting of the Smokestack, which marks the official start of Homecoming Week. When the smokestack lights up in purple, it's a sign that the festivities have begun; the glowing tower is visible across campus.

The smokestack has a deeper meaning for many at Tarleton. It represents pride, unity and a connection to the university's history.

"The smokestack to me means it's significant when we kick off homecoming. The smokestack means we're lighting it up and we sing the beacon out for all the alumni to come home," Lathes 'Momma T' Towns, a well-known figure on campus said.

The event brings people together. Every year, students, alumni and the community gather to watch, remembering every one of the university's strong traditions. The smokestack is more than just a visual symbol; it's a way for people to honor Tarleton's past and celebrate the future.

For many, this event shows Tarleton's commitment to its traditions.

The university values its history and keeps these traditions alive while continuing to grow. The Lighting of the Smokestack is a perfect example of this balance between honoring the past and looking toward the future.

The smokestack lighting also creates a "Tradition. That's one of the things that I think separates Tarleton from a lot of different spaces. Their emphasis on tradition. That's just another tradition that celebrates this university's history and legacy," said Drew Meyers.

After the smokestack lit up purple, the 2024 homecoming king and queen was announced.

The nominees for king were Andre Archuleta, Ethan Gutierrez, Garrett Jones, Hector Navarrete and Zachary Thompson.

The nominees for queen were Hannah Bradley, Madison Lehman, Aspyn McCord, Lauren Stacy and Morgan Waters.

Now a simple landmark, the smokestack once provided heat, light and power for the buildings in the original 40 acres of campus.

In 1920, it stopped working because long time rival school North Texas Agricultural College flew a plane over it to drop a brick down the middle of it.

While it doesn't work anymore, it still stands strong and lights up for certain special occasions.

Especially homecoming week.



PHOTO BY THOMAS ENGELBERT

The smokestack after lighting at the lighting of the smokestack event is a striking symbol of campus tradition and pride.

## HOMECOMING

# A crowning moment

*Aspyn McCord and Hector Navarrete are the 2024 homecoming royalty*

BY HAELEY CARPENTER  
Managing Editor  
Aspyn McCord and Hector Navarrete were crowned Homecoming King and Queen, respectively.

The lighting of the smokestack is one of the first events of the celebration week and it is where students find out who has been nominated for the coveted title of Homecoming King and Queen.

The five men chosen for the king nominations were Andre Archuleta, Ethan Gutierrez, Garrett Jones, Hector Navarrete and Zachary Thompson.

The five ladies chosen for the queen nominations were Hannah Bradley, Madison Lehman, Aspyn McCord, Lauren Stacy and Morgan Waters.

During halftime of the Texan Football game against Utah Tech, the court was brought out on the field and Navarrete was crowned king and McCord was crowned queen.

McCord is a senior nursing major from Pilot Point, Texas. Her hometown has a population of a little over 6,000 people so going from a tiny town to Tarleton with around 17,000 students on the campus alone was a big jump.

“I didn’t wanna go somewhere too big where I would just get lost in everything,” McCord said. “When I came here I felt at home, like there was a place for me here and that I have a meaningful connection that I wasn’t gonna be just another face in the crowd.”

She would be right.

McCord is part of Alpha Gamma Delta sorority ity where she was the Director of Social Media and Vice President of Marketing before serving as the current president. She was also a Rho Gam, helping potential new members find their home in Greek life and is part of the Order of the Omega.

“I just felt kind of inclined to kind of represent not only organizations that I’ve been apart of but also my current major, it’s one of the hardest majors I’ve heard about and also been apart of,” McCord said. “I feel like they don’t think they can do anything outside of school work and so I feel like this gave me an opportunity to represent that you can, as long as you put your mind to it.”

Navarrete is a junior criminal justice major with a minor in legal studies. He ran for king because of his fraternity.

“My GG Big in my fraternity, because I’m a part of Phi Kapp, he did it last year and I saw how much fun he had and just being able to meet people and I kinda

wanted to do it just because I wanted to put my name out there,” Navarrete said.

His first choice of college was a private university in San Antonio but he visited and toured three different times and it just didn’t feel right. Tarleton was an up and coming D1 school at the time and found a chance at independence.

“First 30 minutes of orientation, I fell in love with the place. It felt like home. Not too big, not too small and I felt like I was gonna be more than a number,” Navarrete said.

He is the current president of Phi Kappa Sigma where he previously served as the new member educator and the philanthropy chair. Navarrete was also the vice president of finance and chosen as man of the year for IFC (Interfraternity Council). He is also part of the order of the Omega.

Outside of greek life, Navarrete was also a two-time Tarleton Transition Mentor and served on orientation staff and is a two-time College of Liberal and Fine Arts Congressperson for the Student Government Association.

Although both Navarrete and McCord wear a lot of hats, neither of them thought they would actually win the crown.

“I wasn’t even on homecoming court in high school so [winning] was just not even in my play book at all,” McCord said. “All of those girls on the court were amazing, two of them were actually my freshman roommates [Morgan and Hannah] so that was just really meaningful to me. I was rooting for all of them.”

Talk about a full circle moment.

McCord described her crowning moment as “pure shock as well as immense thankfulness.” Her running partner, Garrett Jones, had to give her a gentle push towards the crown because couldn’t move.

McCord might have been surprised to hear her name, but Navarrete was not.

“When I heard her name called out, I was like ‘she is very deserving of this’ she has done a lot for her chapter and overall Tarleton State,” Navarrete said.

Navarrete was not expecting his name to get called either.

“I didn’t know how to act,” Navarrete said. “When I heard my name, it was just like ‘wow.’ It was kind of crazy.”

Isaiah Laque and Jordyn Carson, Homecoming King



PHOTO BY HAELEY CARPENTER

**Aspyn McCord and Hector Navarrete with Student Body President Gabe Day and Vice President Emma Bielamowicz**

and Queen 2023, crowned Navarrete and McCord, respectively, who they had known previously.

Carson and McCord were quick to hug each other, sharing a special moment.

“I’ve known Jordan since we were in high school,” McCord said, “These two small town girls are out in front of a stadium of thousands, it was pretty cool.”

McCord wants to thank her mom, brother and sorority specifically to help get her through the week of craziness. She also mentions how she would not be here without God.

Navarrete wants to thank the rest of the homecoming court and their support of each other, specifically Gutierrez. He also wants to thank his family and fraternity for their support throughout the week.

## HOMECOMING

# Tarleton's Silver Bugle Hunt connects students to their legacy

BY COLTON BRADBERRY

Multimedia Journalist

As part of Tarleton State University's annual homecoming festivities, the Silver Bugle Hunt once again brought students together in a spirited competition to find one of the university's most treasured symbols.

This year, the team "3110", composed of Samantha Lira, Avery Killough, Jillian Sexton and Sarah Brown, were the first to uncover the prized Silver Bugle, claiming victory and securing their place in the legacy of Tarleton's homecoming traditions.

The Silver Bugle Hunt is more than just a game—it's a cherished tradition steeped in Tarleton's rich history. The bugle itself is a symbolic nod to the university's military roots, a reminder of Tarleton's beginnings when it served as a military academy.

The hunt invites students to engage with the university's past by answering questions that lead them through campus landmarks, retracing the steps of generations of Tarleton Texans who came before them.

For students like Ethan Beck, who participated in this year's hunt, the event holds a special significance.

"I feel like it keeps us in touch with our traditions," Beck said. "They did this way back then, and we're still doing it now. It just makes Tarleton more of a home and a place where you want to be."

The Silver Bugle Hunt is a key part of the homecoming experience, providing a direct link between Tarleton's storied past and its vibrant present. The hunt challenges students to work together, solve riddles and explore the campus, all while connecting them to the legacy of former students who once searched for the same elusive prize.



PHOTO BY COLTON BRADBERRY

### Group "3110" Winners of the Silver Bugle Hunt with Dr. and Mrs. Hurley.

The thrill of the chase, combined with the sense of belonging it fosters, makes the hunt a highlight of the homecoming celebration.

For Casey Dickerson, a senior at Tarleton, this year's hunt holds a special place in her heart as it marks her last year at Tarleton.

"This is my senior year, and I've never done it before. It was something me and my friend group wanted to do this year," Dickerson said. "I think it's really special because not only is this significant to Tarleton and its tradition, it's something we can participate in and be involved with spirit in."

Dickerson, who also serves as a

Texan representative, reflected on how Tarleton has shaped her college experience.

"Tarleton has become home for me. It's also just kind of a memorial thing this year to really take it all in," she added, emphasizing the emotional weight of her final year on campus.

Winning the Silver Bugle Hunt is no small feat, as teams must work together to decode clues that lead them closer to the bugle's hidden location. This year, "3110" managed to outwit the competition and claim victory.

The Silver Bugle Hunt embodies the spirit of Tarleton, where community and tradition are woven into the fabric

of student life. The event has evolved over the years, but its core purpose remains the same: To connect students with Tarleton's history, to challenge them intellectually and physically and to create lasting bonds of friendship and camaraderie.

As the Silver Bugle is found and the hunt concludes, the event once again proves its power to unite students in a shared experience that transcends generations. Beck captured the essence of what it means to be a part of Tarleton: "Family. To sum it up in one word, it's family."



## HOMEcoming

# Launching of the Ducks is becoming a favorite Tarleton Homecoming tradition

**BY BARRETT JORDAN**  
*Multimedia Journalist*

Tarleton State University's Launching of the Ducks event has remained one of the more popular homecoming traditions among students. This year it was held on Tuesday, Oct. 8 starting at 5:30 p.m.

Attendance for the event was booming as a line of students anticipating the launch formed down the entire sidewalk leading up to the pool.

President Dr. James Hurley and his wife Kindall mingled with students talking about what people wrote on their ducks while unofficial mascot Oscar P celebrated with the students.

There were several tents positioned

where students could collect their duck, photo opportunities with props set up throughout the waiting area and exciting music was playing for the duration of the event.

Although it's been around for a bit of time now, the Launching of the Ducks happens to be one of the newer traditions introduced to homecoming week.

Participating students are given their own yellow rubber duck. On it, they write their own unique goals and aspirations whether that be in the near or distant future.

After writing and designing their duck, students then make their way to the Reflecting Pool by the Nursing Building and launch them simultaneously with the others in their group. The action of launching the

ducks is symbolic of putting the written goals into effect.

Residential leaders assisted in putting together the Launching of the Ducks. They gathered hours before to set up tents, props and more to help make the event a success.

James Golla, a junior residential leader at Tarleton elaborated on his experience working with others he's formed bonds with through housing.

"We have a really great team under residence life. My team is fantastic when it comes to events like this and we enjoy working the same times together which brings me even more incentive to serve other students with them," Golla said.

Golla appreciates the value of community that Tarleton provides through homecoming activities like the

Launching of the Ducks.

"I like the community aspect of it. I think having a good community and supporting students is always a good thing," Golla said. "It's really well run and I like the home feel of it, it's a great tradition."

This event is really like no other. It can be very memorable because it's tailored to you as an individual.

Yes, it's fun to decorate your duck and throw it into a pool with your friends. It also allows you to reflect on what you have accomplished and what you want to look forward to.

The Launching of the Ducks captures Tarleton's homecoming week quite exceptionally. It will continue to be a popular homecoming tradition among students for years to come.



Tarleton students launch their ducks into the Reflecting Pool with the Hurley's, Oscar P. and Purple Poo.

PHOTO BY BARRETT JORDAN



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# Walk like a Sigma is strolling into year five

**BY HELENA KNUTSON**  
*Multimedia Journalist*

Walk Like a Sigma is an event held by the Phi Beta Sigma fraternity during homecoming week. Students can form groups and compete in a dance competition that consists of six rounds, three rounds for each group.

Phi Beta Sigma started this event five years ago and it has been growing ever since. One of the men who has helped this tradition live on is Phi Beta Sigma President Carlos Reed.

“We started this to get more eyes on our organization, but also, you know, everybody loves the traditions of purple pancakes but what they don’t love is standing in that line. So we figured we would give them something to do while they wait,” Reed said.

This year, two groups performed. However, these groups were not from clubs or sororities; they were simply a group of friends who decided to come together to have fun. One of these group members is Taylor Smith Johnson, who was in the group known as the Divine Six.

“I’ve gained friends as a freshman. I had nobody here. I came here by myself. This has really helped me find my community,” Johnson said. “We’re strangers from across the campus that came.”

The dancers weren’t the only ones having a good time. The crowd also got in on the dancing during intermissions; one of these fans was Tarleton State University’s very own Lathes “Mama T” Towns.

“We started with just a barrier audience to look at this. It’s a packed house. No, no room,” Towns said. “Walk like a Sigma is all about the traditions and the things they do as a Divine Nine. You know, our historical black organization is led by the Sigmas and the Phi Beta Sigmas here on campus.”

Phi Beta Sigma brought this nationally known event to the Tarleton campus and has used it to help shed light on the nine sororities and fraternities of the IFC, also known as the Divine Nine.

“This is like a national program of ours. So, other Sigmas at other schools do this as well. We just thought we would bring it here to give our African-Americans here and other diverse groups that once again may not want to stand in line for purple pancakes for an hour,” Reed said. “Maybe sit down, be able to watch, and have some fun. We saw everybody come out in the crowd, the line dances and all of that.”

These groups that perform at Walk Like a Sigma spend weeks choreographing and perfecting their dances. One of these dancers



PHOTO BY HELENA KNUTSON

**The crowd outside Tarleton Student Center for the Walk Like a Sigma Event.**

was Lajoy Chapell, a junior kinesiology major.

“You get your coach and you immediately start on availability and once everyone is able to practice and meet together, then everything starts ticking down till homecoming and Walk Like a Sigma,” Chapell said.

The winner of Walk Like a Sigma was a group who call themselves the Divine Six.

“I honestly couldn’t believe the results because there is always room for improvement, but I’m very content and I’m so proud of us and all the work we put in,” Johnson said.

Walk Like a Sigma has become a well loved addition to Tarleton homecoming traditions.

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# Plating homecoming tradition: Who's behind Tarleton's purple pancakes?

**BY MACKENZIE JOHNSON**  
*Multimedia Journalist*

On the winner's podium of Tarleton homecoming events, Purple Pancakes may just take the gold medal for being one of the most treasured traditions.

At 10 p.m. on Tuesday Oct. 8, the dining hall doors opened, designating the start of Midnight Breakfast.

By 10:15, the line to get into the dining hall wrapped back between the Clyde H. Wells Fine Arts Center and the Joe W. Autry Agriculture building, to nearly the front entrance of the O.A. Grant building.

A steady stream continued to pour into the dining hall until 12:15 a.m. on Wednesday Oct. 9, when the curtains for Purple Pancakes officially came to a close.

Purple Pancakes is no stranger to loads of hungry college kids anxious to get their hands on the famed and carefully dyed pancakes, and although food is always a strong motivator for college kids, it still takes a special legacy to draw in such large attendance numbers.

The tradition of Purple Pancakes on Tarleton's homecoming week was born in 1983. The spot and time the pancakes, sausages and eggs are served to students has differed over the years, but the mission of raising Tarleton's spirits on homecoming week has not.

In fact, Midnight Breakfast may just be as big as it's ever been, keeping Tarleton's Student Government Association (SGA) up to their necks in pancake batter in the hours leading up to the event.

SGA and more specifically the Freshman Representative Council (FRC), completely sponsor, organize, cook and serve up the purple pancakes in partnership with the food service company Sodexo.

"FRC are students who love Tarleton and wanted to get involved as soon as they got to school," Gabe Day, SGA student body president, said of the event coordinators. "They love putting on Purple Pancakes because they get to see new students work together to host a huge event and get to see how many students come to it."

Day credits co-vice presidents of FRC Andre Archuleta and Lauren Rogers for primarily running the beloved event, and it's certainly no cake walk.

"There's a lot that goes into running Purple Pancakes," Archuleta said. "We had to figure out things like what time to cook pancakes, how many we would need, where to put stations to have the best flow of people... how to coordinate what time the DJ should be there, how to play the same music inside and outside and what equipment we needed. (We do) all of this while staying within our budget and making sure we give students the best possible event for the best possible price so we can plan more fun things for them throughout homecoming week and the semester."

Having such prominent roles in the event allows the two co-presidents front row seats to the impact Purple Pancakes has on the FRC organization.

"I love Purple Pancakes because it's a great way to get all of the students together doing one of our favorite things - eating," Rogers said. "It's also a great team building exercise for the Freshman Representative Council and teaches them how to work under pressure and still have fun."

That fun being had in the kitchen notably transfers over to those on the receiving end of the plates as students stick around to chat and dance long after they've finished their breakfast.



PHOTO BY MACKENZIE JOHNSON

(Left to right) Taryn Scroggins, Tylee Fillingim, Gracee Bankston and Madasyn Schoonover all hold up their Purple Pancakes outside of the dining hall.

"Purple pancakes is just all around fun," Archuleta said. "Realistically most students are up between 10 p.m. and 12 a.m. anyways studying or creating memories with their friends. Purple Pancakes is one of those events where you can just crawl out of bed with your PJs on, walk to the dinning hall and dance to some great music while getting a midnight snack with your friends."

Maybe it's the late hours or maybe it's the sight of University President Dr. James Hurley and First Lady Kindall Hurley in decorated aprons passing out pancakes, but something about Purple Pancakes' authenticity may just be what makes it a staple Tarleton homecoming event.

"Midnight breakfast has been an essential part of Tarleton's homecoming for over 40 years now," Rogers said. "It has become a symbol of tradition and something we all look forward to

every year."

Preserving that symbol requires meticulous planning for FRC members long before the griddles are fired up on Tuesday afternoon.

Despite the labor of such diligent forethought, FRC members don't doubt the importance of dedicating their energy into an event so rich with Tarleton pride, and lending a hand in creating a historic homecoming week at Tarleton makes it beyond worth it.

"The most rewarding part of Purple Pancakes is seeing how many students show up to something that we prepared and make it even better with their presence," Archuleta said. "We had close to 3,000 people in our first 30 minutes... It's moments like those that reassure you how much of family Tarleton is. It makes me proud to be a Texan."



## HOMECOMING

# Lambda Chi Alpha , Alpha Gamma Delta keep their titles

BY CAROLINE CRAIN AND  
BRENNA DEMPSEY  
*Multimedia Journalists*

Lambda Chi Alpha and Alpha Gamma Delta were crowned champions of Tarleton State University's 2024 Yell Contest, making it their fourth and second respective victories in a row.

Lambda Chi Alpha won the small division portion of the contest with their Elvis theme. Alpha Gamma Delta triumphed in the large division with the theme of USA.

Tarleton President Dr. James Hurley sat front and center with the judges to cheer on the students.

"I think every group was phenomenal. This was the best year in terms of overall uniform, themes and sound," President Hurley said. "The tracks were themed with the uniforms really well."

Both winning groups said their previous successes added high expectations for their performances.

Jared Nichols, a member of Lambda Chi Alpha, felt the weight of the previous wins.

"There was a lot of pressure on us, but we got the job done and I couldn't be more proud of these guys," Nichols said.

Farmhouse were the runner-ups of the small division for the third year in a row and Kappa Delta Rho secured third place. In the large division, second and third were taken by Delta Phi Epsilon and Phi Mu, respectively.

Regardless of the outcome, the relationships grown during the process were victories themselves.

Wyatt Spivey, a member of Farmhouse, felt like he grew closer to his fraternity brothers while they were practicing for the Yell contest.

"It was a lot of work but it was a lot of fun to bond with brothers, especially as a new member," Spivey said. "I got



PHOTO BY CAROLINE CRAIN

### Lambda Chi Alpha performing their Elvis themed Yell.

to meet so many really good guys and spend a lot of hours with actives, new members, and alumni from Farmhouse. It built my understanding and love for the fraternity."

Many people went from strangers to friends through practice and preparation.

Dillin Gerstroud, an active member of Lambda Chi Alpha, saw this growth firsthand.

"Everyone here got super close. Some people before we started didn't know each other's names and now we're just so close and down on that level," Gerstroud said. "This win definitely brought us together."

Despite differences in size and elements, all of the organizations agreed that preparing for and competing in the Yell Contest was no easy task.

Alpha Gamma Delta Yell director Emmie Vaughn said that their victory was definitely warranted.

"They have put so much hard work and time and effort into it, and it is so

deserved. There was not one moment where it was easy at all," Vaughn said.

After last year's trial run, the Corp of Cadets made their official Yell Contest debut as an organization this year.

Freshman Cadet Jeff Knapp described the preparation that went into their performance.

"It was a lot of rehearsal. We went out behind the football stadium and at like six in the morning we'd go practice," Knapp said. "We would practice four or five times, we'd go out there and get it as loud as we can, work on the formation, come back and do it again the next day."

One reason that many students attended Yell was simply for the experience.

Student Government Association Vice President of Marketing Madeline Walker emphasized the event's significance for students.

"Yell is something you can only experience, like what, four times in your life max. It's something different,

it's something almost every Texan knows about. Not just Tarleton Texans, but the state of Texas," Walker said.

The contest was so highly anticipated that Wisdom Gym reached capacity before the event even began.

Lathes "Momma T" Towns reflected on the electric atmosphere in the packed gym.

"It was amazing. It was captivating. The audience, the energy, was amazing," Lathes "Momma T" Towns said, "We were packed, full house. We had over 3,000 people viewing and we had over, I would say, 5,000 viewing live online."

After the winners were announced, President Hurley and First Lady Kindall led the Snake Dance, joined by the Yell Contest champions, Tarleton Cheer, the Texan Stars, the Plowboys and a crowd of students, all moving toward the beating of the drum that followed.



# Long time tradition still beating

BY LINDSEY HUGHES  
Multimedia Journalist

The beating of the drums is a long-standing Tarleton State University tradition dating back to the early 1920's. Groups of Tarleton students rally to beat an old oil drum for 24 hours a day, starting on Wednesday night following the Yell Contest and ending at the beginning of the homecoming football game.

This tradition originated out of necessity, as the famous rivalry between Tarleton (originally known as John Tarleton Agricultural College, JTAC) and North Texas Agricultural College (NTAC) was at an all-time high. What started as competition between football teams had spiraled into something much greater.

NTAC and JTAC were consistently pulling stunts in attempts to ruin the other colleges homecoming celebrations, especially the bonfire. In an attempt to protect and defend the bonfire, Tarleton students set up a large oil drum near the fire site, so as to alert any possible attackers of their presence in the area.

Since that time, the necessity to defend the bonfire has lessened however, the tradition has lived on. Students now rally to beat the drum, and the sound rings throughout all of campus as a reminder that homecoming is in full swing.

Most groups that are chosen to beat the drums are sororities, fraternities, spirit groups, academic clubs and dorms. Each one of these organizations gets a one-hour time slot, in which they must beat the drum for the entire hour straight, and then hand off the sticks to the next group.

This continues until the first cannon



PHOTO BY CAROLINE CRAIN

**Several Plowboys members beating the drum during their time slot.**

goes off at the homecoming game signaling kickoff. The oil drum is set up in the amphitheater outside of the student center, next to the dining hall patio.

Over 50 groups and organizations were selected to beat the homecoming drum, several of them including the Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity, the Phi Mu sorority and the Delta Phi Epsilon sorority.

Addi Woodrum is a Tarleton junior, and is a member of the Phi Mu sorority which had a 12:00 p.m. slot to beat the drum this year.

“I think beating the drum plays a huge role in our school spirit, because every time you walk around campus you can hear it and it becomes a constant reminder of the love our students have for traditions and the spirit of homecoming week”

Hector Navarrete is a Tarleton honors student and is also the president of the Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity, which had the 2:00 a.m. and 3:00 a.m. slots to beat the drum this year.

“We were all in good spirits and were super excited to beat the drum at 2 am. Personally, a late night time

slot is better because no one is on campus and it's only your respective organization which allows for more bonding,” Navarrete.

Tarleton's drum beating has been one of the most beloved and well-known traditions at the school for years. Being able to participate in these types of activities provides for an amazing sense of involvement and community, as well as giving students common ground with their peers.

## HOMECOMING

# Purple Out for LJT, Kat Hasty and Shane Smith and the Saints

BY ANNABETH JOHNSON

*Multimedia Journalist*

Students and alumni gathered together to celebrate the Purple Poo at the Purple Out Concert and Picnic during one of the most spirited weeks of the semester. The event took place at the Smokestack parking lot from 7:30 - 11:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 10, 2024 night.

The event featured headliner Shane Smith and the Saints, with Kat Hasty and Stephenville's very own Larry Joe Taylor as supporting acts.

Taylor opened the show and invited all members of the Purple Poo onstage to join him in "On Ye Tarleton" and the traditional Purple Poo chant "Hey Oscar P."

Hasty followed his performance by singing one of her more famous songs titled "The Highway Song." She then sang two songs off of her unreleased album. One was titled "Drag my ass back to Midland" about a guy that tried to convince her to stick around her hometown when she just wanted to get out.

Shane Smith and the Saints were the headline band for this event and put on a fantastic show in celebration of homecoming and the Tarleton community. The band sang their song title "All the way" which Smith dedicated to his wife.

All three artists were gifted a Tarleton jersey by Dr. and Mrs Hurley along with Dr. Diana Ortega-Feerick and were welcomed into the Tarleton family as 'Honorary Texans.'

Brennan Wilson is a freshman at Tarleton who attended the Purple Out Concert and Picnic for the first time.

"My favorite part of the concert is



PHOTO BY ANNABETH JOHNSON

**The members of the Shane Smith and the Saints band are gifted a Tarleton jersey by President Hurley and Momma T.**

the fact that we can all gather around and sing some songs as a community and just have a good time on a regular Thursday night," Wilson said.

Alex Duran is also in his first year

at Tarleton who loved having a concert right on campus.

"I came to see Shane Smith and the Saints perform here at the concert tonight," Duran said. "The concert is a

great atmosphere and a fun time. You get to get out on a Thursday night to see artists you may never expect to see and get to have a great time."



## HOMECOMING

# Tarleton Volleyball sets attendance record during Homecoming week

**BY GAVIN PATRICK**  
*Multimedia Journalist*

1129 fans turned out at Wisdom Gym for Thursday's volleyball match against Abilene Christian, the highest attendance for a volleyball game in school history.

This bested the previous high of 864 set on October 3. That one, however, wasn't set during Homecoming week, the time where school spirit reached a pinnacle.

Homecoming week at Tarleton State University is always around the second or third week of October, which is also right in the thick of volleyball season. Spirit organizations are in full-fledged super fandom, the student section is out of their seats, the president and athletic director are out; everything just feels different.

On the volleyball court, with sound bouncing off the hardwood, the uptick in decibels couldn't be more apparent. Being in the center of it all, no one felt that energy more than the players.

"The crowd was awesome," junior middle blocker Emma Burke said after Thursday's match against Abilene Christian. "They've shown out, supported us, they're up, they're enthusiastic; it's really great to have that support."

The game itself was a thriller. The Texans rode the

energetic atmosphere early, winning the first set 25-19. The subsequent two sets saw the script flip, though, with the Wildcats taking a 25-19 advantage in each.

The Texans hadn't won multiple sets in a game in almost three weeks, but they responded in the fourth, 25-20, and kept the match going. However, they were out of gas at that point, and a number of miscues led to them falling in the fifth set, 8-15.

That's not to say the crowd didn't get their money's worth.

Senior outside hitter Allison Bryant turned in one of the best games of her career, notching a career-high five aces, 27 points -- her second most of the season -- and 21 kills. Burke wasn't too shabby either, leading the team with seven blocks.

In all, both players appreciated the support they got on what turned out to be a historic day for Tarleton Volleyball.

"All the plowboys, frats, sororities -- all the different organizations always show up, and we love to have them," Bryant said.

"For sure," Burke added. "We had a great turnout today, and we love to keep seeing them throughout the year."



PHOTO BY GAVIN PATRICK

(From left to right) Addison Goss and Carly Lange bend down with apparent focus as they await the next serve.

## A fast start to Homecoming Week

**BY ASHTYN HANSARD**  
*Executive Producer*

Tarleton State University's homecoming officially started on Sunday, Oct. 6. Each year for homecoming, Tarleton hosts a 5k race for all students, family and community members of Stephenville to open the festivities of homecoming. The race starts at the Recreation Center, travels all around campus and ends right back at the starting line.

This year, there was a big turn out with a total of 307 runners participating in the event.

The overall male runner was Destin Foley with a time of 18:17 and placed first in the race. The overall female runner was Julia Melo Torres with a time of 21:08 and placed tenth in the race.

As for Tarleton students, the top three female runners were Brooke Roddam, Kasenia Hipshand and Mackenzie Ruttly. They each had times of 21:23, 24:21

and 25:16 respectively.

The top three male runners for Tarleton were Reise Leon, Jack McDonald and Samuel Iturrino. They each had times of 19:08, 20:46 and 21:42 respectively.

While the race may be challenging, many participants enjoy competing in the race. One of these participants was Eric Mendez.

"I think it's always fun to do a race, no matter what the occasion is," Mendez said. "Whether it's to remember someone, or to raise money for charity; I think those are the best kinds of races."

Even though several participants enjoyed the race, it's still easier said than done. Addison Anderson felt the same.

"Honestly, I feel like had we had the race a little bit later in October, it would have been a lot better," Anderson said. "It was just really hot today. I wasn't really expecting this weather."

With this race kicking off homecoming week, Tarleton is started off in good spirits and looking forward to a great homecoming week.

## HOMECOMING

# Tarleton hosts annual J. Dixon White golf Tournament

BY ANDREW UTTERBACK

*Multimedia Journalist*

Tarleton State University's annual J. Dixon White Golf Tournament teed off for a good cause on Friday, Oct. 11 at Squaw Valley Golf Course.

The 18-hole scramble tournament was made up of 6-person teams and started at 8 a.m. via shotgun start. Throughout the course, there were "closest to the pin" and "long drive" competitions where participants could win prizes.

The competitions are fairly self explanatory. For the "closest to the pin" competition, whichever golfer or team gets the shot closest to the pin will win a prize. For the Long Drive, the distance of the player's shot will be measured and the prize is awarded to the furthest.

Tarleton Director of Campus Recreation, Mario Rios is overseeing the tournament.

"Any proceeds we have would go toward Campus Rec, student, staff, [and] professional development opportunities," Rios said.

The tournament serves as a way to donate towards Tarleton's recreational program, as well as being a great chance to enjoy the beautiful course.

The teams played a scramble tournament, where the lowest score among the team members is the one recorded. This made for a fairly low stakes event for those looking to just have a good time.

Squaw Valley is an award winning course located a little under an hour southwest of Fort Worth in Glen Rose, Texas. The course features memberships, lessons, and a bar and grill.



PHOTO BY BRENNA DEMPSEY

**Left to right: Charlie Havis, Tommy Mosher, Kevin Martinez, Dr. Michael Luera (Assistant Professor: Department of Neuroscience), Jessie Guerra, Zakery Mosher.**

Rios encourages not only Tarleton students and faculty to participate, but anyone who is interested in golf or the

tournament itself.

"We hope those interested in golf, camaraderie, student development and

Tarleton join us every year for our golf tournament," Rios said.



# Alumni, students and community celebrate annual Tarleton Homecoming Parade

**BY DREW FLEMING**  
Multimedia Journalist

To close out another successful Tarleton State University homecoming week, the annual homecoming parade was held on Saturday, Oct. 12, 2024. Like many Tarleton traditions, the homecoming parade has been happening for over 100 years.

This year, the alumni Darrell and Shelly Brown were stationed in front of the gates at heritage park to commentate on the parade.

Darrell is an alumnus that received the Chancellor's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Award in 2022. Brown is very involved in the Stephenville community, and is active in the Stephenville Chamber of Commerce.

Commentating alongside Darrell was Shelly Brown, who currently works as Director of Assessment & Strategic Initiatives and Interim Director of Communications at Tarleton. Darrell and Shelly gave background about each organization as their float passed by, and took the time to recognize distinguished alumni that were at the parade.

The Tarleton Alumni Association executive committee and board of directors were thanked for their contribution to planning the parade.

Sydney Lane is a senior at Tarleton, sweetheart for the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity and member of Delta Zeta.

"My favorite part about the homecoming parade is always seeing all of our great alumni that come back yearly to the homecoming festivities. I remember when I was little my whole family always came for homecoming so it's so cool for me to see all those little kids with their parents who attend the parade." Lane said.

Similar to many homecoming week



COURTESY BY DREW FLEMING

**From left to right: Andrew Rolfes, Wade Fails, Oscar Alvarez, Grant Owens, Haden Sechelski, Justin Moberley, Sydney Lane, Seth Terry, Chase Dillinger, Wyatt Draper, Drew Dorris, Jaden Adams and Colt Shepard.**

festivities, the parade is a chance for the community, faculty and students to come together. Each organization makes a float for the parade to showcase their school spirit and love for Tarleton. Over 60 floats are in the parade, including Tarleton greek life, the poo and local businesses.

According to the purple book, which gives insight into every deep-rooted Tarleton tradition.

"The parade begins at Memorial Stadium and encircles the Tarleton campus. Floats, bands and marching units from Tarleton and surrounding

communities participate in the parade each year. "

It is evident that students spend a lot of time pouring into their floats to make them the best they can be.

"The boys were so determined to have the best float this year and in my eyes they did just that. It was so cool getting to see them come together and get so pumped and excited to show all the returning alumni and students at Tarleton their awesome float." Lane said.

Ethan Morris is a sophomore at Tarleton and an associate member of

the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity.

"It was really rewarding to see all the organizations on campus come together with their unique floats. My fraternity won third place with our float so in the end it was a big accomplishment." Morris said.

The parade allows students to come together to show the alumni and community how much they care about their University. The alumni as far back as the class of 1953 came back to watch the parade. This speaks to Tarleton's impact on students, and how students and alumni really do bleed purple.

## HOMECOMING

# Texan Alley Tailgate: Where students, families and alumni feel at home

BY BROOKLYN MCKINNEY  
*Multimedia Journalist*

Tarleton State University school spirit started at the Texan Alley Tailgate for the Homecoming game against Utah Tech on Saturday, Oct. 12. Tailgate started at 2 p.m. and went on past kickoff.

Texans, friends, family and alumni got together to eat good food, crack open cold drinks under the hot sun and blast music while looking picture-perfect in purple and white.

Bart Crow performed at 4:30 p.m. to amp up the tailgate festivities.

Tarleton student Annabeth Johnson was excited to see him perform on campus.

“I’ve seen Bart Crow in concert before but this time it was more special because it was in a place that I’m proud to be involved in,” Johnson said. “He put on a great performance in celebration of Tarleton homecoming.”

For some, college football isn’t just a sport but a way of life. Several of Tarleton’s traditions such as Yell Contest or Launching of the Ducks are marked by Homecoming week, and last week’s tailgate was no exception.

Organizations such as the Plowboys and the Tarleton Alumni Association pitched their tents to offer Texan fans free food and drinks.

Melanie Lawrence is a member of the Tarleton Parents Association (TPA) and an alumna of Tarleton State University. The TPA uses the tailgates as an opportunity to network.

“For TPA I think the main thing is really just meeting people,” Lawrence said. “They’re giving out hot dogs and fries and water, so the fees that parents pay help us feed the kids.”

Overall, tailgates are a huge part of college culture and a fun way to foster



PHOTO BY BROOKLYN MCKINNEY

**The Plowboys with @partysteve\_tsu at the homecoming Texan Alley tailgate.**

community before the big game.

Brady Talwater is the Risk Management Officer for the Delta Chi fraternity at Tarleton and appreciates when Tarleton has home games so he can use the tailgate to relax.

“It’s the one time a week I actually get to hang out with my buddies and not have to worry about my work,” Talwater said.

Another Tarleton alum, Cody Mann welcomes this opportunity to catch up with old friends.

“This is where we all come back to. We’re spread out everywhere but we know that we can come back here and see all our old friends, see alumni that we’ve met and known for years, which we don’t always get to see them because you know, someone’s in San Antonio

and you’re in Dallas,” Mann said.

During the homecoming week festivities, students and alumni came out to the Tarleton Texan tailgate to hang out with friends, make new ones or catch up with old ones. And if they didn’t, then they were missing out on one of Tarleton’s best traditions.



HOMEcoming

# Tarleton Texan tradition lives on for homecoming matchup

BY JAXON HANSARD  
*Sports Editor*

Homecoming is a big deal all across the world as alumni of former schools, institutions and universities have an excuse to come back and reminisce about a time before.

A grand entrance was made to the game with Sgt. First Class Dana Bowman circled down to the field with a parachute while “God Bless the U.S.A ” by Lee Greenwood through the stadium AP system.

The homecoming football game is a big attraction to the alumni and the Stephenville community so it is important that the team puts on a good show. To ensure that a good game is played a rival or lesser opponent is scheduled.

There was a bit of déjà vu this year because this is the second year in a row where the purple and white have shut out an opponent with 42 points (the first being last year with Morehead State University). Maybe this is the newest tradition that Tarleton football will keep going.

Tradition is a deeply important pillar of Tarleton and that was reinforced with a matchup against conference opponent Utah Tech who is still waiting to catch a break. Total yards, passing yards and receiving yards were doubled and some tripled compared to the Trailblazers.

The game started with defensive back Deangelo Rosemond making a 40+ yard rush off receiving the kickoff. Four of the touchdowns came in the first quarter with the first coming in just over a minute from a 62-yard score from season-star running back Kayvon Britten who would end the



PHOTO BY HAELEY CARPENTER

Sgt. First Class Dana Bowman parachuting onto the field while “God Bless the U.S.A.” by Lee Greenwood .plays.

game at halftime with 135 yards and 3 touchdowns.

The halftime score was the same as the final score so the second half proved to be a very good period for the second and third string players to get

some reps in.

Braelon Bridges and Kristian Dalton would carry out the second half of the game along with 55 rushing yards a piece with help from the week two and three QB Daniel Greek.

After all zeros lit up the scoreboard and the lights turned off, the fans were treated to a drone show of 250 drones that would make many fan-favorite Tarleton-related figures and sayings.



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