Fire Dawgs Receive Certification for Wild-land Fire Training

Story by Jill Banzet

While cold weather continued to rear its ugly head all around the state of Oklahoma, the NEO Fire Dawgs were out braving the elements as they attended the Chickasaw Agency Fire Academy. The group left Monday, January 29 for camp, which was held in Ada, Okla., and returned Friday, February 3.

The NEO Fire Dawgs consist of students from the Forestry and Wildlife Club who are interested in fighting wild-land fires. The club sponsor and head of the forestry department, Mike Neal, had prepared his students for the camp with fire courses during the fall semester.

Although the fire academy required physical training, most of the trainees' time was spent in a classroom. The campers listened to lectures from 10 different Native American instructors (squad bosses) who each had anywhere from 8 to 15 years of experience with wild-land firefighting. Campers also took tests just as a regular college course would require. "Basically, we learned the information taught in a semester-long course in a week's time," said Ashley Dennis, sophomore Fire Dawg.

Aside from classroom work, the campers endured physical training that consisted of three-mile hikes at 5:30 a.m., lots of push-ups, and digging a fire-line in 10 to 15 degree weather. While the campers dug the fire-line, they had to wear personal protective equipment to simulate the some of the strains on the body during a real wild-land fire. This equipment included gloves, goggles, helmets, boots, shirts and pants that were all fire resistant.

Not only were the Fire Dawgs in training at the fire academy, but they also put in a full 40 hours of work and were paid by the Chickasaw Nation for their time. "We gained some good job experience and will also be paid for the next fire that we get called out to," remarked Daniel Louser, sophomore Fire Dawg.

See FIRE page 9
Nursing Students Gain Disaster Preparedness and Civic Responsibility in Tabletop Exercise

NEO Nursing students participate in a mock exercise to simulate an emergency response to a disaster.

NEO Press Release

Nursing students at NEO participated in a disaster preparedness scenario on Friday, January 26. The exercise addressed pandemic influenza and its implications on the community. NEO Nursing students have conducted research and participated in outside training to further their knowledge for this tabletop event.

The mock exercise outlined a pandemic influenza outbreak that started overseas and impacted several regions around the country, including 12 counties in Oklahoma. Students set up stations and were required to make decisions regarding the outbreak.

Those who took part in the scenario participated in an Incident Command Structure training beginning at 9 a.m. in the Student Union Ballroom. The tabletop exercise began at 1:30 in the same location. All NEO Nursing Students have received on-line training and certification through FEMA to offer their assistance in the aftermath of disasters. NEO offered this exercise in conjunction with Oklahoma Campus Compact, an organization dedicated to providing opportunities to promote civic responsibility through service and academic instruction to college students.

The disaster preparedness scenario is a service-learning project for NEO Nursing students.

"Service learning is a teaching method that combines community service with academic instruction to focus on critical thinking, reflective thinking and civic responsibility," said Alicia Weatherby, instructor.

"According to the Campus Compact National Center, their goal is to blend service and learning so that the service reinforces, improves and strengthens learning. The learning reinforces, improves and strengthens service."

Weatherby said many employers are now looking for college graduates who have had experience in leadership and service activities.

Guest speaker Maria Alexander, with the Oklahoma State Department of Health, related the command structure to real-life situations.

NEO students were divided into groups and presented a tabletop scenario, said Weatherby. They then used their ICS training to complete the scenario and write a plan for it.

This activity has required approximately 15 hours of research per student in addition to the time spent for their theory, skills and clinical hours.

Weatherby said, "It is our hope that through experiences like this, they will have a dedication to service-learning and civic responsibility," said Weatherby.

For Your Information...

NEW TOPICS:

The First Presbyterian Church of Miami (on the corner of Elm and Veterans) invites all NEO students to attend services Sunday at 10:30 a.m. or Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. - dinner is provided. Call 542-3388 if you need bus transport or have questions.

NOT-SO-NEW TOPICS:

Don't forget about NEO's career/transfer resources! Visit the following webpage to view current job opportunities:

http://www.neoam.cc.ok.us/~arc/career/students/jobs.htm

To check out the webpage with career interest inventory and various career/major exploration and transfer resources, visit http://www.neom.cc.ok.us/~arc/career.htm

The career/transfer service also offers resume building software, notebook with detailed job listings and files with transfer information, campus catalogs, etc. from area and Oklahoma institutions.

They have updated the files recently with information obtained from the transfer fair.
Seniors Brave Snow to Visit NEO Sr. Day

Story by Adam Bohlerand

Going away to college can sound a little intimidating at first. Now that most of us have done it for a while, it seems much less so, but remember the first day you arrived? Many High School Seniors feel this angst, but what to do about it? In comes NEO. Senior Day, a program devoted entirely to making the transition from high school to college easier. But Senior Day is more than just showing seniors where the cafeteria and dorms are located. For many this will be the first time out of the house, away from parents and living on their own.

NEO Senior Day is aimed at answering questions, boosting the confidence of seniors and providing the tools to make incoming freshmen as successful as possible. How many of us would have liked our initial semester’s GPA to be a little higher? These prospective college freshmen are reminded that with freedom, comes responsibility. They are reminded that college is more than freedom and fun, it is the beginning of their adult lives and it is much easier to not dig a hole in the first place than to dig one’s way out of one.

To this end Senior Day provides not only advice on how to study and conduct oneself, but also tools like study web sites, departmental tutoring and a multitude of academic advisors to make sure that incoming freshman enroll in a field of study that interests them and also that they do not struggle or fall behind while becoming acclimated to their new surroundings.

Overall Senior Day was a resounding success that helped build the confidence and preparedness that this incoming freshman class will need to be successful.

Nominees Announced for Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship

NEO Press Release

Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College has nominated two students for the Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship. Megan Nading and Nikolaus Atkinson will represent NEO A&M as the college’s scholarship nominees.

Nading, a resident of Miami, is a music major. A sophomore, Nading is the daughter of Donnie and Patty Nading.

Atkinson is a resident of Miami and will graduate from NEO with a degree in pre-engineering. He is the son of Vicki Brede of Fairland.

The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation was established in 2000 and provides scholarships for college students attending two-year institutions who wish to continue their education at a four-year university. The Foundation provides up to $30,000 annually to recipients and includes tuition, room and board, fees and books.

Jack Kent Cooke had holdings in television stations and newspapers throughout the country and owned the Los Angeles Lakers and Washington Redskins. Born in Ontario, Canada, in 1912, Cooke dreamed of receiving an education but was forced to leave high school during the Depression to support his family. The foundation established to honor him also strives to help young students to reach their full potential.

To apply for a Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Scholarship, students must meet grade point average requirements and write essays on their personal philosophies, civic responsibilities and participation in campus activities.

Nominations from across the country are submitted to the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, which will select 50 students to receive the $30,000 scholarship. The recipients are typically announced in May.

“IT IS AN HONOFR BE NOMINATED FOR A JACK KENT COOKE SCHOLARSHIP,” said Mark Leonard, theatre instructor and scholarship coordinator on the NEO campus. “They are looking for the best of the best junior college students.”
Beware of the Flu

Story by Kristin Hoover

As temperatures continue to fluctuate wildly, the people of Ottawa County not only have to be concerned with staying warm, they now also need to be concerned with catching the flu.

According to a press release dated February 1, from the Oklahoma State Department of Health, northeast Oklahoma is undergoing an influenza outbreak. Craig and Ottawa counties seem to be the hardest hit so far and many schools are seeing a significant drop in attendance.

The OSDH is urging everyone to get a flu shot and State Health Commissioner Dr. Mike Critcher says that doing so “can still provide substantial protection against influenza and will help contain the spread and severity of this outbreak.”

It normally takes 10-14 days for a flu vaccine to provide effective immunity, but there is some immunity shortly after taking the shot. Flumist®, a nasal spray containing a live flu virus, provides immunity in 3-4 days, however the nasal spray is not for everyone. The Flumist® spray is only for healthy individuals ages 5-49 years who are not pregnant.

A flu vaccine can be given to anyone over the age of 6 months, providing that person is not allergic to eggs or other components of the vaccine. By not getting a flu shot now people are putting themselves at greater risk for contracting the virus and also putting others at risk of catching it from them.

Those at highest health risk during this year’s flu season are children age 6 months to 5 years, pregnant women, people 50 years of age or older, people of any age with certain chronic illnesses such as asthma or emphysema, and people who live in nursing homes or other long-term care facilities. Those who care for those at risk are at risk themselves and that list includes household contacts of a person who is high-risk, household contacts and out-of-home caregivers to babies 6 months or younger and healthcare workers. At the beginning of the flu season this was the target group to be vaccinated but since this recent outbreak in northeast Oklahoma the goal is to vaccinate everyone.

Signs and symptoms of the flu are fever between 100° and 102° or higher; headache; general aches and pain which can become severe; general fatigue and weakness; extreme exhaustion; especially in the beginning of the illness; chest discomfort and cough and sometimes stuffy nose, sore throat, and sneezing. Symptoms can also include vomiting and diarrhea, but these are more common in children than in adults. Fatigue can last sometimes as long as 2 to 3 weeks after the other symptoms are gone.

The common cold shares some of these symptoms as well, but usually a cold does not come with a fever, headache, extreme exhaustion or severe body pain.

If a person experiences symptoms of the flu it is important that they seek medical advice and treatment immediately. Antiviral medications, such as Tamiflu®, can lessen the duration and symptoms of the flu, but must be taken within the first 48 hours of the onset of symptoms and is taken for 5 days. These medications are only available through a doctor.

There are several things one can do to help prevent the spread of viruses, which come down to common sense practices that are not hard for anyone to do. Wash hands often using an antibacterial soap and warm water. The use of alcohol-based hand cleaners, such as Germ-X and Purell, are beneficial as well. When sneezing or coughing germs can fly as far as 6 feet, so it is recommended that you cover your mouth with a sleeve at the very least, your nose or mouth. These areas contain mucus and are susceptible to germs.

China Tests Missile | Couple Wins Millions

Story by Tiffany Mead

January 22 Chinese officials confirmed China carried out a test that destroyed a satellite in a move that caused international alarm.

China launched the missile to destroy one of their out of date satellites and by doing so, became the third country - the United States and former Soviet Union being the other two - to shoot down an object from space. It is the first known satellite intercept test for more than 20 years.

China used a ground-based medium-range ballistic missile to destroy the aged weather satellite. Several countries, including Japan, Australia and the US, have expressed concern at the test, amid worries it could trigger a space arms race. But China stresses that it has consistently advocated the peaceful development of outer space and it opposes the arming of space and military competition in space.

Liu Jianchao was quoted as saying "China has never, and will never, participate in any form of space arms race."

The test is thought to have occurred at more than 537 miles (865km) above the Earth.

Story by Crystal Riley

Although many lotto winners instantly opt for early retirement, this wasn't even an option for Missouri's newest lotto millionaires.

Jim Wilson II, 84, and his wife Shirley are the latest winners of the Missouri Lottery jackpot. Winning $254 million, these loyal ticket purchasers now can look forward to the rest of their lives with anticipation of relaxation and the finer things in life.

The couple intends to share their winnings with their three sons. One son, Terry Wilson, is most likely going to take a vacation to Australia.

The family, all from St. Louis, have been buying these tickets for years, with the intent to share everything if they ever won.

Jim Wilson bought the winning ticket just one hour before they closed the sales for Powerball tickets. The grocery store that sold the ticket will receive $50,000. This is the 10th largest single-ticket lottery prize in world history.
2008 Presidential Race Heating Up

Although November 2008 may seem far away, presidential hopefuls are already gearing up to earn their party nominations and planning their bids for the White House.

Story by Stephanie Jourdan

It is now February 2007 and the 2008 Presidential Election looms before us as the rest of the world eagerly awaits our decisions.

Washington is in full political swing and Republicans and Democrats are beginning to raise money for their parties. Republicans say the war in Iraq needs to be continued and Democrats are sending out the call for new leadership.

Current candidates for party nominations include:

Senator Hillary R. Clinton (Dem) was born October 26, 1947 in Illinois. She currently serves as a Senator for New York and is a former First Lady of the United States and wife of former President Bill Clinton. Senator Clinton announced her candidacy last month. Clinton voted for the Iraq War but is not pleased with the way President Bush has been handling the war, stating that we need a plan. Republicans are hoping Clinton will run for presidency because they feel she is very polarizing and would be easy to beat. Clinton has been trying to work on her negative image and is trying to reach out to moderates with some of her ideas. Clinton keeps saying "I believe Democrats and Republicans can work together." If elected, Clinton would be the first woman President of the United States.

Senator Barack Obama (Dem) was born August 4, 1961 in Honolulu, Hawaii. He is a Senator in Illinois. Obama’s biological father was of Muslim roots from Kenya and his mother was an atheist from Kansas. Obama is a favorite with the Democrats because of his moderate ideas and ability to gather Republican votes. Obama is “constantly searching for the middle ground with Republicans and Democrats.” He has attended a number of schools including Yale for Law School. Obama is a big promoter of better health care for the average American. He also announced his candidacy last month.

Senator Sam Brownback (Rep) was born September 12, 1956 in Kansas. According to the Associated Press, Brownback - a Kansas State University alum pictured at right- has been receiving support from “social conservatives and Christian activists.” Brownback officially announced his candidacy January 20, 2007.

John Cox of Chicago (Rep) is a CPA investor and past president of the local Republican Party in Cook County. He has previously ran unsuccessfully in Republican primaries in Illinois for the House in 2000 and for the Senate in 2002. Cox would like to implement FairTax and require Iraq to pay for expenses relating to the Iraq War from oil profits.

Possible other future candidates include former Governor of Virginia Jim Gilmore; former Mayor of New York City Rudy Giuliani; former Governor of Arkansas Mike Huckabee. Senator John McCain (Rep) from Arizona may also decide to run because he believes he has a lot to offer concerning health care and the war in Iraq.

Groundhog Doesn’t See Shadow

Story by Crystal Riley

Groundhog Day, celebrated by Canadians and Americans only, was February 2. People believe on this day that the groundhog comes out of his winter hibernation to determine if winter will soon be over or if he should go back to sleep for awhile longer.

The official groundhog resides in Punxsutawney, Penn. and is known as Punxsutawney Phil. If Phil sees his shadow on a sunny day, this supposedly means six more weeks of bad weather meaning winter will stick around a little while longer and Phil will head back into his hole for some more sleep.

This year, the opposite occurred. Phil didn’t see his shadow on the cloudy day, indicating that spring is coming.

Groundhog Day is known for its supposed ability to predict weather and exactly how much more snow we will receive. The holiday comes from the Europeans, who celebrated a holiday they called Candelmas. Almost exactly like the tradition of Groundhog Day, if Candelmas (also February 2) was sunny, we would see more winter. This tradition hit America in the late 1800s when Clymer H. Fears and W. Smith organized a festival held every year in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania.

In 2007, it is said that there was no shadow at 7:28 AM with a 26 degree morning, overcast skies, snow and mist under a full moon. Guess it’s time for some spring cleaning!
SIDEWALK TALK
What are your Valentine’s Day plans?

Casey Orr
“I will probably go out and get some dinner and maybe catch a movie with someone special.”

Johnna Gonzales
“I will probably sit alone in my bog comfy chair in my room and watch movies all night.”

Wade Williams
“A moon-lit walk on the beach, followed by a romantic moon-lit picnic complete with champagne, strawberries, champagne and whip cream from a can.”

Suzi Barnes
“I will probably spend time with my boyfriend.”

SUDUKO
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9.

Poet’s Corner
Valentine Treasures
By Joanna Fuchs
Valentine treasures are people who have often crossed your mind, family, friends and others, too, who in your life have shined the warmth of love or a spark of light that makes you remember them; no matter how long since you’ve actually met, each one is a luminous gem who gleams and glows in your memory, bringing special pleasures, and that’s why this Valentine comes to you: You’re one of those sparkling treasures!
Valentine’s Day = Commercialism

Opinion submitted anonymously

When most people think of Valentine’s Day they think of flowers, chocolate, cupid and love. But for many people, Valentine’s Day is one of the most ridiculous days of the year.

It seems to me that there shouldn’t be one day of the year dedicated to showing someone how much you care about them. It should be an everyday occurrence. Also, most gifts given on Valentine’s Day have no real meaning. Seriously, look how many people are going to get roses and chocolate. These gifts aren’t given out of meaning but out of necessity. Guys know that their girlfriends expect to get flowers and candy so that’s what they get them.

Valentine’s Day has also become a very commercial holiday. Here are some fun facts about Valentine’s Day.

- Consumers purchased an estimated 180 million roses for Valentine’s Day in 2006 with 74 percent of rose purchases for Valentine’s Day being made by men, according to the Society of American Florists.
- Valentine’s Day is the number one floral market holiday, capturing 35 percent of holiday transactions and 34 percent of dollar volume, also according to the Society of American Florists.
- In February 2006, jewelry stores in the United States sold $2.4 billion worth of merchandise, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- Approximately 180 million cards are exchanged industry-wide (excluding packaged kids’ valentines for classroom exchanges), making Valentine’s Day the second largest holiday for giving greeting cards, according to Hallmark.
- More than 36 million heart-shaped boxes of chocolate are sold for Valentine’s Day, according to the Chocolate Manufacturers Association and National Confectioners Association.
- Valentine’s Day is the fourth biggest holiday of the year for confectionery purchases, after Halloween, Easter and Christmas, according to the National Confectioners Association.

Another thing that bothers me about Valentine’s Day is what are all the single people supposed to do? I’m not aware of a National Singles Day. Maybe there should be a holiday for all of the single people to celebrate.

So if you’re planning on celebrating Valentine’s Day this year, make sure you do it for the right reasons. Don’t get caught up in the commercial and materialistic aspects of Valentine’s Day but celebrate for the right reasons.

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Norse Film Critics

The Ron Clark Story

Review by Crystal Riley

When you think of this movie, The Ron Clark Story, you should think of one word: inspiration.

When I saw this film, all I knew about it was that it was based on true events in the life of Ron Clark, and it starred Matthew Perry.

Sitting down and watching this was quite possibly one of the best experiences in my life. I am not overexaggerating this. This movie left me “full” in my heart, and wanting to become a better person.

For those of you who have seen the movie Dead Poets Society, think that movie on a more modern, grander scale and you will have The Ron Clark Story.

Matthew Perry excels in the role of Clark and leads a cast including Ernie Hudson and some lesser known children actors who portrayed the kids in this movie.

This film tells the story of real-life teacher Ron Clark, who decided to leave North Carolina in search of a bigger risk.

Moving to New York, he becomes a teacher at an underprivileged elementary school in lower Harlem. These children went from underachievers and nonbelievers, to children who tested higher than any other class in the state of New York on state exams, all because of Ron Clark.

This movie is true to his life and his work. If you want to feel inspired, or you just need a heartfelt film, this movie is for you!

Rent it today!

The Last Kiss

Review by Crystal Riley

The Last Kiss, given its title, is not a cute romantic comedy. It’s not even a comedy. It’s a sharp look at relationships, love, and the fact that despite holidays like Valentine’s Day, love hurts.

Michael, played by Zach Braff, is an architect with the perfect life: perfect job, perfect girlfriend, perfect everything. Yet he seems to reflect on the fact that everything seems a little too planned out.’

There are no more surprises in his mind, and the harsh biting reality of that scares him. His girlfriend, Jenna, is expecting their first child, and they just told her parents. Yet Michael allows himself to be drawn into another woman’s web of seduction and risks losing the very thing he learns he loves the most: the planned relationship with the perfect woman. He learns to come to terms with the fact that at the age of thirty, life can have surprises.

One warning though, this film, depending on where you are at in life, could spark some serious self-reflection.

Backed by a brilliant cast that involves Blythe Danner and Tom Wilkinson, this illuminating movie about the ebbs and flows of relationships takes a deeper look into why society cannot be happy and in love.

Look for The Last Kiss on VHS and DVD today!
Nationally Known NEO Equine Judging Team to host Clinic

NEO Press Release

The NEO Equine Judging team, 2006 AQHA World and Congress Reserve Champions, will host an informational clinic Tuesday, Feb. 13 at 4:30 p.m. and Saturday, Feb. 17 at 9 a.m. The team will lead participants on the judging of western pleasure, horsemanship and trail. They will also feature how to give reasons on halter. The clinic will be held at the NEO Indoor Arena.

Live horses and sample sets of reasons will be available at the clinic. The Equine Judging Team will be available to listen to reasons and provide critique. The team will also give a sample set of reasons for demonstration.

"I would encourage all judging teams and anyone who wants to learn how to judge to attend this clinic," Shannon Cunningham, coach, said. "It is good to learn the basics and also good for those who are a little more advanced."

The clinic is open to all ages. The cost to attend is $10 per person, but coaches are allowed to attend at no cost. All proceeds raised will help fund scholarships for the Equine program.

Registration for the Feb. 13 clinic will begin at 4 p.m. Registration for the Feb. 17 clinic will begin at 8:30 a.m. Those with questions may contact Shannon Cunningham, coach, at (918) 540-6262 or e-mail scunningham@neomas.edu.
Cattlemen Applaud Canada's Elimination of Bluetongue Testing

After years of debate over the practice of Bluetongue testing cattle entering Canada, officials have finally put an end to what many have thought of as a political requirement rather than scientific one.

NCBA Press Release

NASHVILLE (Feb. 3, 2007) – Reducing obsolete restrictions and government red tape is a critical goal for U.S. cattlemen that market live cattle internationally. That's why the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) praised Friday's decision by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to eliminate all bluetongue-related import restrictions on all U.S. cattle entering Canada.

"NCBA has fought long and hard on this issue, because our members felt strongly that these restrictions were costly and unnecessary," said Terry Stokes, NCBA chief executive officer. "It's gratifying to see these efforts pay off."

CFIA also reduced testing requirements for anaplasmosis, based on advances in diagnostic testing for the disease.

Import bans on sheep, goats, and other small ruminants from the United States were also lifted by CFIA. These animals may now enter Canada for breeding purposes, under certain conditions.

"We're focused on this victory as it relates to cattle," Stokes said. "But the progress made with regard to other species is important to our farmer and rancher members that have diversified operations."

Stokes said the decision by CFIA to move toward a science-based permit system for ruminant animal imports is extremely important for U.S. producers of breeding stock - eliminating unnecessary costs and procedures that impact their bottom line.

"If we're going to ask U.S. cattlemen to compete in a global economy, then our trading partners need to reciprocate and open their markets to our cattle without imposing unjustified trade barriers," Stokes said.

He stressed that Canada's new regulatory plan is also significant for producers that do not export live cattle, because it represents further progress toward reliable, science-based trade.

"We must build relationships with trading partners based on science and international trading guidelines, so we can increase our access to global markets," Stokes said. "When we do that, U.S. cattlemen are winners."

NCBA members are expected to adopt a position today on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's proposed rule to allow imports of Canadian cattle up to eight years of age, and beef from cattle of any age. Currently, imports of both cattle and beef from Canada must be 30 months of age or less. Comments are due March 12 on the proposal.

FIRE from page 1

The monotony of classroom time grew a little tough for the campers, but they were well-equipped for the challenge. However, most of them agreed that the early morning hikes were the hardest part of the trip. "We had already covered a lot of the material in our fire class with Mike and were able to answer a lot of the questions the instructors asked during lecture time," said Charity Ball, sophomore Fire Dawg.

A total of 12 Fire Dawgs completed the fire academy course. In fact, they were the only college students in attendance at camp. Upon completion of the course, the campers received a diploma and wild-land fire-fighting certification from the Department of Interior and the Chickasaw Indian Tribe. "The kids were able to obtain a lot of information in a very short time from experienced instructors in one location," said Neal. "Our group doesn't get the chance to go to camp every year, but it's a good program because it gives them the opportunity to connect with other fire departments and make contacts for possible job offers."

The next step for the Fire Dawgs will be to complete a pack test toward the end of the semester. This will include walking for three miles under 45 minutes while carrying a 45-pound pack on their backs. After finishing the pack test successfully, the Fire Dawgs will then earn their red cards, which makes them eligible to work on any wild-land fire site in the nation. "I'm proud of the kids," said Neal. "They showed that they could compete academically and physically, and will gain several rewards from their new skills."

Aggie Calendar

Aggie Society Date Auction
NEO & M Arena Lobby
February 12 - 5:30 p.m.

Equine Judging Clinic
NEO Indoor Arena
February 13 - 4:30 p.m.
February 17 - 9:00 a.m.

Kansas State University Rodeo
Manhattan, Kan.
Feb. 23 - 25

Houston Livestock Judging Contest
Houston, Texas
March 14
We want you to call Northwestern your next college home.

At Northwestern Oklahoma State University, we place a high value on transfer students from other colleges. That's why we offer scholarships especially for transfer students, ranging from $500 to more than $2,500 per year, depending on GPA and completed credit hours. Plus, tuition and fees at Northwestern is only about $3,500 per year. If you are not from Oklahoma, don't worry. In many cases, we can waive the non-resident portion of your tuition.

Northwestern offers students a choice of more than 40 areas of study, leadership development programs, a growing Greek system, 10 intercollegiate sports and a myriad of clubs, organizations and campus activities. Scholarships are available in athletics, music, theatre, rodeo, cheerleading and in many other areas.

In addition, Northwestern provides seamless transfer opportunities in all of our academic programs. Call (580) 327-8546 to speak to a transfer specialist and begin your Northwestern experience.

Valentine's Day Dance

Hosted by SBG
Tuesday February 13
8:30 p.m.
@ the Student Activities Center
FREE Pizza & Drinks!
DJ Music!

Baseball Ready for Spring

Story by Adam Bohlender

Two years ago when NEO won the JUCO World Series, Coach Roger Ward decided he wanted to return and this year the Norsemen have a real chance of doing just that.

With several returning starters and 'one of the most talented incoming freshman teams ever,' the Norsemen are looking to yet another championship season. Coach Ward, in his ninth year, has already led the Norsemen to several regional championships and this year looks to go all the way.

With the return of catcher Marc Mimeault, who was named last year to the 1st team "all region" and the addition of NEO's own Rory Coppinger as assistant coach, the Norsemen ball club is geared up for one of our best season's ever. So make sure to come out and support NEO baseball.

VALENTINE'S DAY SALE

NEO Women

Tues. and Thurs. Feb. 13 & 14
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Lobby of the LA Building

Selling single & double roses in bud vases, baked goods and crystal items with a "love" theme

Profits will go toward scholarships and building outdoor playground equipment for the apartment complex
Seniors Brave Snow to Visit NEO Sr. Day

Story by Adam Bohlerand

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Story by Kristin Hoover

As temperatures continue to fluctuate wildly, the people of Ottawa County not only have to be concerned with staying warm, they now also need to be concerned with catching the flu.

According to a press release dated February 1, from the Oklahoma State Department of Health, northeast Oklahoma is undergoing an influenza outbreak. Craig and Ottawa counties seem to be the hardest hit so far and many schools are seeing a significant drop in attendance.

The OSDH is urging everyone to get a flu shot and State Health Commissioner Dr. Mike Crutcher says that doing so can still provide substantial protection against influenza and will help contain the spread and severity of this outbreak.

It normally takes 10-14 days for a flu vaccine to provide effective immunity, but there is some immunity shortly after taking the shot. FluMist®, a nasal spray containing a live flu virus, provides immunity in 3-4 days, however the nasal spray is not for everyone. The FluMist® spray is only for healthy individuals ages 5-49 years who are not pregnant.

A flu vaccine can be given to anyone over the age of 6 months, providing that person is not allergic to eggs or other components of the vaccine. By not getting a flu shot now people are putting themselves at greater risk for contracting the virus and also putting others at risk of catching it from them.

Those at highest health risk during this year’s flu season are children age 6 months to 5 years, pregnant women, people 50 years of age or older, people of any age with certain chronic illnesses such as asthma or emphysema, and people who live in nursing homes or other long-term care facilities. Those who care for those at risk are at risk themselves and that list includes household contacts of a person who is high-risk, household contacts and out-of-home caregivers to babies 6 months or younger and healthcare workers. At the beginning of the flu season this was the target group to be vaccinated, but since this recent outbreak in northeast Oklahoma the goal is to vaccinate everyone.

Signs and symptoms of the flu are fever between 100°F and 102°F or higher, headache, general aches and pain which can become severe, general fatigue, and weakness; extreme exhaustion, especially in the beginning of the illness; chest discomfort and cough and sometimes stuffy nose, sore throat, and sneezing. Symptoms can also include vomiting and diarrhea, but these are more common in children than in adults. Fatigue can last sometimes as long as 2 to 3 weeks after the other symptoms are gone.

The common cold shares some of these symptoms as well, but usually a cold does not come with a fever, headache, extreme exhaustion or severe body pain. If a person experiences symptoms of the flu it is important that they seek medical advice and treatment immediately. Antiviral medications, such as Tamiflu®, can lessen the duration and symptoms of the flu, but must be taken within the first 48 hours of the onset of symptoms and is taken for 5 days. These medications are only available through a doctor.

There are several things one can do to help prevent the spread of viruses, which come down to common sense practices that are not hard for anyone to do. Wash hands often using an antibacterial soap and warm water. The use of alcohol-based hand cleaners, such as GermX and Purell, are beneficial as well. When sneezing or coughing germs can fly as far as 30 feet, so it is recommended that you cover your mouth with a tissue or at the very least, your sleeve when doing so.

Avoid people who are sick and stay at home if you get sick. Also, try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth. These areas contain mucus and are susceptible to germs.

China Tests Missile Couple Wins Millions

Story by Tiffany Mead

January 22 Chinese officials confirmed China carried out a test that destroyed a satellite in a move that caused international alarm. China launched the missile to destroy one of their out of date satellites and by doing so, became the third country - the United States and former Soviet Union being the other two - to shoot down an object from space. It is the first known satellite intercept test for more than 20 years.

China used a ground-based medium-range ballistic missile to destroy the aged weather satellite. Several countries, including Japan, Australia and the US, have expressed concern at the test, amid worries it could trigger a space arms race. But China stresses that it has consistently advocated the peaceful development of outer space and it opposes the arming of space and military competition in space.

Liu Jianchao was quoted as saying "China has never, and will never, participate in any form of space arms race."

The test is thought to have occurred at more than 537 miles (865km) above the Earth.

Story by Crystal Riley

Although many lottery winners instantly opt for early retirement, this wasn't even an option for Missouri's newest lottery millionaires.

Jim Wilson III, 84, and his wife Shirley are the latest winners of the Missouri Lottery jackpot. Winning $254 million, these loyal ticket purchasers now can look forward to the rest of their lives with anticipation of relaxation and the finer things in life.

The couple intends to share their winnings with their three sons. One son, Terry Wilson, is most likely going to take a vacation to Australia.

The family, all from St. Louis, have been buying these tickets for years, with the intent to share everything if they ever won.

Jim Wilson bought the winning ticket just one hour before they closed the sales for Powerball tickets. The grocery store that sold the ticket will receive $50,000. This is the 10th largest single-ticket lottery prize in world history.
2008 Presidential Race Heating Up

Although November 2008 may seem far away, presidential hopefuls are already gearing up to earn their party nominations and planning their bids for the White House.

Story by Stephanie Jourdan

It is now February 2007 and the 2008 Presidential Election looms before us as the rest of the world eagerly awaits our decisions.

Washington is in full political swing and Republicans and Democrats are beginning to raise money for their parties. Republicans say the war in Iraq needs to be continued and Democrats are sending out the call for new leadership.

Current candidates for party nominations include:

Senator Hillary R. Clinton (Dem) was born October 26, 1947 in Illinois. She currently serves as a Senator for New York and is a former First Lady of the United States and wife of former President Bill Clinton. Senator Clinton announced her candidacy last month. Clinton voted for the Iraq War but is not pleased with the way President Bush has been handling the war, stating that we need a plan. Republicans are hoping Clinton will run for presidency because they feel she is very polarizing and would be easy to beat. Clinton has been trying to work on her negative image and is trying to reach out to moderates with some of her ideas. Clinton keeps saying, "I believe Democrats and Republicans can work together." If elected, Clinton would be the first woman President of the United States.

Senator Barack Obama (Dem) was born August 4, 1961 in Honolulu, Hawaii. He is a Senator in Illinois. Obama's biological father was of Muslim roots from Kenya and his mother was an atheist from Kansas. Obama is a favorite with the Democrats because of his moderate ideas and ability to gather Republican votes. Obama is "constantly searching for the middle ground with Republicans and Democrats." He has attended a number of schools including Yale for Law School. Obama is a big promoter of better health care for the average American. He also announced his candidacy last month.

Senator Sam Brownback (Rep) was born September 12, 1956 in Kansas. According to the Associated Press, Brownback - a Kansas State University alum pictured at right - has been receiving support from "social conservatives and Christian activists. Brownback officially announced his candidacy January 26, 2007.

John Cox of Chicago (Rep) is a CPA investor and past president of the local Republican Party in Cook County. He has previously ran unsuccessfully in Republican primaries in Illinois for the House in 2002 and for the Senate in 2002. Cox would like to implement FairTax and require Iraq to pay for expenses relating to the Iraq War from oil profits.

Possible other future candidates include: former Governor of Virginia Jim Gilmore; former Mayor of New York City Rudy Giuliani; former Governor of Arkansas Mike Huckabee; Senator John McCain (Rep) from Arizona may also decide to run because he believes he has a lot to offer concerning health care and the war in Iraq.

NEWS BRIEFS

Groundhog Doesn't See Shadow

Story by Crystal Riley

Groundhog Day, celebrated by Canadians and Americans only was February 2. People believe on this day that the groundhog comes out of his winter hibernation to determine if winter will soon be over or if he should go back to sleep for awhile longer.

The official groundhog resides in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, known as Punxsutawney Phil. If Phil sees his shadow on a sunny day, this supposedly means six more weeks of bad weather, meaning winter will stick around a little while longer and Phil is headed back into his hole for some more sleep.

This year the opposite occurred. Phil didn't see his shadow on the cloudy day, indicating that spring is coming.

Groundhog Day is known for its supposed ability to predict weather and exactly how much more snow we will receive. The holiday comes from the Europeans, who celebrated a holiday they called Candlemas. Almost exactly like the tradition of Groundhog Day, if Candlemas (also February 2) was sunny, we would see more winter. This tradition hit America in the late 1800s when Clymer H. Freas and W. Smith organized a festival held every year in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania.

In 2007, it is said that there was no shadow at 7:28 AM with a 26 degree morning, overcast skies, snow and mist under a full moon. Guess it's time for some springcleaning!
SIDEWALK TALK
What are your Valentine’s Day plans?

Casey Orr
“I will probably go out and get some dinner and maybe catch a movie with someone special.”

Johnna Gonzales
“I will probably sit alone in my comfy chair in my room and watch movies all night.”

Wade Williams
“A moon-lit walk on the beach, followed by a romantic moon-lit picnic complete with champagne, strawberries, champagne and whip cream from a can.”

Suzi Barnes
“I will probably spend time with my boyfriend.”

SUDUKO
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9.

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1 8
3 8
9 4 9
7 3 4
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Poet’s Corner

Valentine Treasures
By Joanna Fuchs

Valentine treasures are people who have often crossed your mind, family, friends and others, too, who in your life have shined the warmth of love or a spark of light that makes you remember them; no matter how long since you’ve actually met, each one is a luminous gem who gleams and glows in your memory, bringing special pleasures, and that’s why this Valentine comes to you:

You’re one of those sparkling treasures!
Valentine’s Day = Commercialism

Opinion submitted anonymously

When most people think of Valentine’s Day they think of flowers, chocolate, cupid and love. But for many people, Valentine’s Day is one of the most ridiculous days of the year.

It seems to me that there shouldn’t be one day of the year designated to showing someone how much you care about them. It should be an everyday occurrence. Also, most gifts given on Valentine’s Day have no real meaning. Seriously, look how many people are going to get roses and chocolate. These gifts aren’t given out of meaning but out of necessity. Guys know that their girlfriends expect to get flowers and candy, so that’s what they get them.

Valentine’s Day has also become a very commercial holiday. Here are some fun facts about Valentine’s Day.

- Consumers purchased an estimated 180 million roses for Valentine’s Day in 2006 with 74 percent of rose purchases for Valentine’s Day being made by men, according to the Society of American Florists.
- Valentine’s Day is the number one floral market holiday, capturing 35 percent of holiday transactions and 34 percent of dollar volume, also according to the Society of American Florists.
- In February 2006, jewelry stores in the United States sold $2.4 billion worth of merchandise, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- Approximately 180 million cards are exchanged industry-wide (excluding packaged kids’ valentines for classroom exchanges), making Valentine’s Day the second largest holiday for giving greeting cards, according to Hallmark.
- More than 36 million heart-shaped boxes of chocolate are sold for Valentine’s Day, according to the Chocolate Manufacturers Association and National Confectioners Association.
- Valentine’s Day is the fourth biggest holiday of the year for confectionery purchases, after Halloween, Easter and Christmas, according to the National Confectioners Association.

Another thing that bothers me about Valentine’s Day is what are all the single people supposed to do? I’m not aware of a National Singles Day. Maybe there should be a holiday for all of the single people to celebrate.

So if you’re planning on celebrating Valentine’s Day this year, make sure you do it for the right reasons. Don’t get caught up in the commercial and materialistic aspects of Valentine’s Day but, celebrate for the right reasons.

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Norse Film Critics

The Ron Clark Story

Review by Crystal Riley

When you think of this movie, The Ron Clark Story, you should think of one word: inspiration.

When I saw this film, all I knew about it was that it was based on true events in the life of Ron Clark, and it starred Matthew Perry.

Sitting down and watching this was quite possibly one of the best experiences in my life. I am not overexaggerating this. This movie left me “full” in my heart, and wanting to become a better person.

For those of you who have seen the movie Dead Poets Society, think that movie on a more modern, grander scale and you will have The Ron Clark Story.

Matthew Perry excels in the role of Clark and leads a cast including Ernie Hudson and some lesser known children actors who portrayed the kids in this movie.

This film tells the story of real-life teacher Ron Clark, who decided to leave North Carolina in search of a bigger risk.

Moving to New York, he becomes a teacher at an underprivileged elementary school in lower Harlem. These children went from underachievers and nonbelievers, to children who tested higher than any other class in the state of New York on state exams, all because of Ron Clark.

This movie is true to his life and his work. If you want to feel inspired, or you just need a heartfelt film, this movie is for you!

Rent it today!

The Last Kiss

Review by Crystal Riley

The Last Kiss, given its title, is not a cute romantic comedy. It’s not even a comedy. It’s a sharp look at relationships, love, and the fact that despite holidays like Valentine’s Day, love hurts.

Michael, played by Zach Braff, is an architect with the perfect life: perfect job, perfect girlfriend, perfect everything. Yet he seems to reflect on the fact that everything seems a little too planned out.

There are no more surprises in his mind, and the harsh biting reality of that scares him. His girlfriend, Jenna, is expecting their first child, and they just told her parents. Yet Michael allows himself to be drawn into another woman’s web of seduction and risks losing the very thing he learns he loves the most: the planned relationship with the perfect woman. He learns to come to terms with the fact that at the age of thirty, life can have surprises.

One warning, though, this film, depending on where you are at in life, could spark some serious self-reflection.

Backed by a brilliant cast that involves Blythe Danner and Tom Wilkinson, this illuminating movie about the ebb and flow of relationships takes a deeper look into why society cannot be happy and in love.

Look for The Last Kiss on VHS and DVD today!
NEO Equine Management Program Looks to Expand

Story by Jill Banzet

The NEO Agriculture Department holds many attractions for prospective students, but in the last year one of its programs has seen intensive change. Under the direction of Shannon Cunningham, instructor and horse judging coach, the Equine Management Program has become a main attraction to several students.

Currently, the equine program offers 12 courses that will prepare students for a degree in Farm and Ranch Management with an Equine Option. These include:
- Introduction to Equine
- Equine Reproduction
- Advanced Equine Reproduction
- Marketing the Performance Horse
- Equine Health and Disease
- Equine Training & Management I & II
- Equine Selection
- Basic Horsemanship
- Equine Business Management
- Horseshoeing
- Advanced Horseshoeing

For the past semester, Cunningham has focused intently on developing the Advanced Reproduction Class and has had tremendous success. "Only Him," a 15.3 hand sorrel, stud horse donated to the NEO equine program in the Fall 2006 semester by Bob Mills Quarter Horses, significantly boosted Cunningham's ambition for the equine classes.

"We've been fortunate to have a lot of people donate equine reproduction equipment such as stall kits, stocks, an incubator, halters, etc.," said Cunningham, "Only Him," casually referred to as "Rowdy," was a great addition that will further students' learning and experience.

Although "Rowdy" is not physically sound to ride, he is sound to breed, and therein lies his purpose at the NEO school farm. Students will be trained how to collect semen from stud horses while using "Rowdy" as a practice horse. However, his semen will not be sold for commercial reproduction.

After the donation of a densiometer (a $3500 piece of equine reproduction equipment that calculates semen), it was obvious that there was public and private interest in the program. The only thing lacking in the whole scheme is a suitable facility to house the new stud horse and reproduction classes. "We would like to have more kids come into our program, and a proper facility would definitely help to attract students and better prepare them for a future in equine reproduction," said Cunningham.

The ag department has also considered the possibility of developing a certification program for equine reproduction. Even so, the fate of that venture rests on the formation of a new facility.

If anyone has questions about the equine reproduction program or is interested in helping to bring a new facility to the school farm, they are encouraged to talk to Shannon, whose office is on the first floor of Abilities Hall.

Nationally Known NEO Equine Judging Team to host Clinic

NEO Press Release

The NEO Equine Judging team, 2006 AQHA World and Congress Reserve Champions, will host an informational clinic Tuesday, Feb. 13 at 4:30 p.m. and Saturday, Feb. 17 at 9 a.m. The team will lead participants on the judging of western pleasure, horsemanship and trail. They will also feature how to give reasons on halter. The clinic will be held at the NEO Indoor Arena.

Live horses and sample sets of reasons will be available at the clinic. The Equine Judging Team will be available to listen to reasons and provide critique. The team will also give a sample set of reasons for demonstration.

"I would encourage all judging teams and anyone who wants to learn how to judge to attend this clinic," Shannon Cunningham, coach, said. "It is good to learn the basics and also good for those who are a little more advanced."

The clinic is open to all ages. The cost to attend is $10 per person, but coaches are allowed to attend at no cost. All proceeds raised will help fund scholarships for the Equine program.

Registration for the Feb. 13 clinic will begin at 4 p.m. Registration for the Feb. 17 clinic will begin at 8:30 a.m. Those with questions may contact Shannon Cunningham, coach, at (918) 540-6262 or e-mail scunningham@neoam.edu.
Cattlemen Applaud Canada’s Elimination of Bluetongue Testing

After years of debate over the practice of Bluetongue testing cattle entering Canada, officials have finally put an end to what many have thought of as a political requirement rather than a scientific one.

NCBA Press Release

NASHVILLE (Feb. 3, 2007) – Reducing obsolete restrictions and government red tape is a critical goal for U.S. cattlemen that market live cattle internationally. That’s why the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) praised Friday’s decision by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to eliminate all bluetongue-related import restrictions on all U.S. cattle entering Canada.

"NCBA has fought long and hard on this issue, because our members felt strongly that these restrictions were costly and unnecessary," said Terry Stokes, NCBA chief executive officer. "It’s gratifying to see these efforts pay off."

CFIA also reduced testing requirements for anaplasmosis, based on advances in diagnostic testing for the disease. Import bans on sheep, goats, and other small ruminants from the United States were also lifted by CFIA. These animals may now enter Canada for breeding purposes, under certain conditions.

"We’re focused on this victory as it relates to cattle," Stokes said. "But the progress made with regard to other species is important to our farmer and rancher members that have diversified operations."

Stokes said the decision by CFIA to move toward a science-based permit system for ruminant animal imports is extremely important for U.S. producers of breeding stock - eliminating unnecessary costs and procedures that impact their bottom line.

"If we’re going to ask U.S. cattlemen to compete in a global economy, then our trading partners need to reciprocate and open their markets to our cattle without imposing unjustified trade barriers," Stokes said.

He stressed that Canada’s new regulatory plan is also significant for producers that do not export live cattle, because it represents further progress toward reliable, science-based trade.

"We must build relationships with trading partners based on science and international trading guidelines, so we can increase our access to global markets," Stokes said. "When we do that, U.S. cattlemen are winners."

NCBA members are expected to adopt a position today on the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s proposed rule to allow imports of Canadian cattle up to eight years of age, and beef from cattle of any age. Currently, imports of both cattle and beef from Canada must be 30 months of age or less. Comments are due March 12 on the proposal.

FIRE from page 1

The monotony of classroom time grew a little tough for the campers, but they were well-equipped for the challenge. However, most of them agreed that the early morning hikes were the hardest part of the trip. "We had already covered a lot of the material in our fire class with Mike and were able to answer a lot of the questions the instructions asked during lecture time," said Charity Ball, sophomore Fire Dawg.

A total of 12 Fire Dawgs completed the fire academy course. In fact, they were the only college students in attendance at camp. Upon completion of the course, the campers received a diploma and wild-land fire-fighting certification from the Department of Interior and the Chickasaw Indian Tribe. "The kids were able to obtain a lot of information in a very short time from experienced instructors in one location," said Neal. "Our group doesn’t get the chance to go to camp every year, but it’s a good program because it gives them the opportunity to connect with other fire departments and make contacts for possible job offers."

The next step for the Fire Dawgs will be to complete a pack test toward the end of the semester. This will include walking for 3 miles under 45 minutes while carrying a 45-pound pack on their backs. After finishing the pack test successfully, the Fire Dawgs will then earn their red cards, which makes them eligible to work on any wild-land fire site in the nation. "I’m proud of the kids," said Neal. "They showed that they could compete academically and physically, and will gain several rewards from their new skills."

Aggie Calendar

Aggie Society Date Auction
NEO A&M Arena Lobby
February 12 - 5:30 p.m.

Equine Judging Clinic
NEO Indoor Arena
February 13 - 4:30 p.m.
February 17 - 9:00 a.m.

Kansas State University Rodeo
Manhattan, Kan.
Feb. 23 - 25

Houston Livestock Judging Contest
Houston, Texas
March 14
We want you to call Northwestern your next college home.

At Northwestern Oklahoma State University, we place a high value on transfer students from other colleges. That's why we offer scholarships especially for transfer students, ranging from $500 to more than $2,500 per year, depending on GPA and completed credit hours. Plus, tuition and fees at Northwestern is only about $3,500 per year. If you are not from Oklahoma, don't worry. In many cases, we can waive the non-resident portion of your tuition.

Northwestern offers students a choice of more than 40 areas of study, leadership development programs, a growing Greek system, 10 intercollegiate sports and a myriad of clubs, organizations and campus activities. Scholarships are available in athletics, music, theatre, rodeo, cheerleading and in many other areas.

In addition, Northwestern provides seamless transfer opportunities in all of our academic programs. Call (580) 327-8546 to speak to a transfer specialist and begin your Northwestern experience.

Transfer to Northwestern for the 2007 spring semester, live in Alva, and you may be eligible to receive a $500 tuition scholarship and a $500 room scholarship.

Baseball Ready for Spring

Story by Adam Bohlender

Two years ago when NEO won the JUCO World Series, Coach Roger Ward decided he wanted to return and this year the Norsemen have a real chance of doing just that.

With several returning starters and "one of the most talented incoming freshman teams" ever, the Norsemen are looking to yet another championship season. Coach Ward, in his ninth year, has already led the Norsemen to several regional championships and this year looks to go all the way.

With the return of catcher Marc Mimeault, who was named last year to the 1st team "all region" and the addition of NEO's own Rory Coppinger as assistant coach, the Norsemen ball club is geared up for one of our best season's ever. So make sure to come out and support NEO baseball.

VALENTINE'S DAY DANCE

Hosted by SBG
Tuesday February 13
8:30 p.m.
@ the Student Activities Center
FREE Pizza & Drinks!
DJ Music!

NEO WOMEN VALENTINE'S DAY SALE

Tues. and Thurs. Feb. 13 & 14
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Lobby of the LA Building

Selling single & double roses in bud vases, baked goods and crystal items with a "love" theme

Profits will go toward scholarships and building outdoor playground equipment for the apartment complex
Colts Win Soggy Super Bowl

Story by Associated Press

MIAMI (Feb. 4, 2007) -- Tony Dungy, beaming and sporting an NFL champions cap, waded through the mob on the soggy field until he found his quarterback, Peyton Manning.

And there they stood in the rain, the winning Super Bowl coach and the MVP, finally savoring a moment that was a long time coming.

A wet and wild night of Super Bowl festivities brought Dungy, Manning and the Indianapolis Colts to the top of the NFL with a 29-17 victory over the Chicago Bears.

A team built for indoors found its footing on a rain-soaked track. The Colts were far less sloppy, particularly their star quarterback, who proved he can indeed win the big game -- the biggest game.

"Peyton is a tremendous player, a great leader," Dungy said. "He prepares, he works, does everything you can do to win games and lead your team. If people think he needed to win a Super Bowl, that is just wrong. This guy is a Hall of Fame player and one of the greatest ever to play."

And now he is a champion. So is his coach.

"It's hard to put into words," said Manning, who completed 25 of 38 passes for 247 yards with one touchdown and one interception. "I'm proud to be part of this team. We stuck together, won this game for our leader, Tony Dungy."

Dungy became the first black coach to win the championship, beating good friend and protege Lovie Smith in a game that featured the first two black coaches in the Super Bowl.

Dungy's ring wasn't the only first. It also was the first rainy Super Bowl and the first time an opening kickoff was run back for a touchdown, when sensational Bears rookie Devin Hester sped downfield for 92 yards.

And not since the Buffalo Bills self-destructed with nine turnovers in losing to Dallas 14 years ago had there been so much messiness. The first half was marred by six turnovers, three for each team. Even football's most clutch kicker, Adam Vinatieri, missed a chip-shot field goal for the Colts, who botched an extra point attempt, too.

When much-maligned Bears quarterback Rex Grossman's wobbly pass was picked off and returned 56 yards for a touchdown by Kelvin Hayden with 11:44 remaining in the fourth quarter, it was over.

"I'm so proud of our guys," Dungy said. "We took the hit early with Devin Hester. We talked about it; it's going to be a storm. Sometimes you have to work for it: Our guys played so hard and I can't tell you how proud I am of our group, our organization and our city." 

Chicago (15-4), which led the league in takeaways this season, finished with five turnovers, including two interceptions by Grossman.

"A frustrating loss," Grossman said. "There were definitely opportunities for us to take that game, and we didn't do it."

The Colts (16-4) will take it. It's their first title since the 1970 season, when they played in Baltimore.

It was confirmation of Manning's brilliance, even if he didn't need to be dynamic. The son of a quarterback who never got to the playoffs, Manning has been a star throughout his college career at Tennessee and his nine pro seasons with the Colts.

It also was a validation of Dungy's leadership. He helped build Tampa Bay, one of the NFL's worst franchises, into a contender before being fired after the 2001 season. The next year, the Bucs won the Super Bowl under Jon Gruden.

Now it was finally was Dungy's turn.

As his players hoisted their coach on their shoulders, he switched his blue Colts cap for a white one that read "NFL champions."

The Colts reached the pinnacle by winning four postseason games with a defense that made a complete turnaround in the playoffs.

And with a running game that perfectly complemented Manning, thanks to Dominic Rhodes and Joseph Addai, who combined for 190 yards -- 113 on 21 carries by Rhodes and 77 on 19 carries by Addai, who also caught 10 passes for 66 yards.

It rained from start to finish. "We knew handling the ball would be tough," Dungy said. "We showed we could win many ways."

Hester's spectacular return provided a stunning beginning -- and a severe jolt to the Colts. The local product and only rookie All-Pro this season pumped his arms to excite the crowd before the kickoff, then lifted the fans from their seats with an electrifying run on which he never was touched.

He barely touched the ball again as Indy went to squibbing kickoffs.

Leading 16-14 at halftime, the Colts spent half the third quarter with a march to Vinatieri's 24-yard field goal. Twice on the drive, Manning fell to the ground while throwing. But he completed them.

Grossman had it even worse on Chicago's initial possession of the second half, slipping and getting sacked on back-to-back plays. Maybe he would have done better on icy turf.

Thomas Jones, forced to carry the Bears' entire rushing load when Cedric Benson was hurt in the first half, was Chicago's best player. But with Grossman ineffective, even inept, all the Bears managed in the second half was Robbie Gould's 44-yard field goal late in the third period.

After Hester's opening dagger, Manning tried to force a pass to Marvin Harrison in double coverage and was picked off by Chris Harris to spoil Indy's first possession, but the Colts struck back on their next series, converting a trio of third downs. The final one was the most important -- Manning got everything on a long pass to the uncovered Reggie Wayne even though Tank Johnson had his hands on the quarterback. Wayne trotted into the end zone for a 47-yard score.

Then the rain ruined three plays in a row. Holder Hunter Smith dropped the snap on the extra point and Vinatieri couldn't get off a kick. Then Vinatieri, well aware of who was lurking deep, squibbed the kickoff to tight end Gabe Reid, who fumbled at his 35, with Vyijan Hagler recovering for the Colts.

Vinatieri nailed a 29-yard field goal early in the second period, but was wide left from 32 yards at the end of the half.

Vinatieri still set a record with 49 postseason points.
Spotlight by Nathan Fent

This week's student spotlight falls on a brother and sister horse judging duo from Colorado Springs, Colorado. Brian and Tiffany Mead, both sophomores here at NEO, have not only excelled in horse judging but in the classroom as well.

Although they are both sophomores, their ages differ. Tiffany is 20 and Brian is 21.

The children of Allen and Jackie Mead, Brian and Tiffany both have an outgoing personality that makes them well-known on campus.

Brian and Tiffany both showed Quarter Horses while growing up. They also were very active in 4-H, filling many leadership positions.

They both have been judging horses for ten years. This year Brian placed fifth overall at the American Quarter Horse Congress while Tiffany received third overall at the National Reining Horse Association Futurity.

Tiffany plans to continue at a four-year university to pursue a degree in Ag Business while continuing to competitively judge horses on the intercollegiate level.

Brian plans to continue his trade profession of attaining his journeyman's license.

To nominate someone you know for the student spotlight, call the Horse Wind office at 540-6343 or e-mail mgalloway@neoam.edu.

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**Upcoming NEO Events**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>February 12</td>
<td>Aggie Society Date Auction</td>
<td>5:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>February 13</td>
<td>SBG Valentine's Day Dance</td>
<td>4:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>Equine Judging Clinic</td>
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<td>Valentine's Day</td>
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<td>Spring Play (Fine Arts Auditorium)</td>
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<td>SBG Meeting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Spring Play (Fine Arts Auditorium)</td>
<td>7:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>District 9 Vocal Contest</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equine Judging Clinic</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spring Play (Fine Arts Auditorium)</td>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spring Play (Fine Arts Auditorium)</td>
<td>7:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 19 - 23</td>
<td>High School Vocal Festival</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 30</td>
<td>NEO 13 Film Festival (FA Auditorium)</td>
<td>7 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 21</td>
<td>High School Musical Instrument Festival</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SPRING BREAK!</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bm My Valentine</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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The Norsewind – the NEO A&M College Newspaper

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