



Texas State student holds sign reading "There is still love in the world," to counter protest demonstration Wednesday, Nov. 6, 2024, at the Stallions statue. MEG BOLES | The University Star

Demonstrators spark counter-protest of hundreds at TXST

By Lucciana Choueiry, Blake Leschber and Marisa Nuñez

Trigger Warning: This story contains references to offensive language.

Two demonstrators with provocative signs drew a counter-protest of hundreds of students at the Stallions.

The demonstrators arrived before 12:20 p.m. and quickly had a crowd of at least 100 students surrounding them in opposition. The two demonstrators were with the Official Street Preachers, a news outlet that covers

events "from a Christian perspective." There were two signs the demonstrators held – one said "Homo sex is sin" the other said "Women are property" on the front and "Types of Property: Women, Slaves, Animals, Cars, Land etc." on the back.

According to Sandy Pantlik, vice president for marketing and communications, because Texas State is public property, the demonstrators had a right to be there even though they weren't students, faculty or staff.

SEE UNIVERSITY PAGE 2

Main Point: How The Star covered November 6

By Editorial Board

The University Star editorial board does not condone the demonstrators' message on Nov. 6.

At around 12:20, our managing editor saw the beginning of the demonstration. Hundreds of students surrounded the Stallions, angry at the message the two men portrayed. As a result, The University Star talked to Texas State officials to

figure out what happened to inform our audience; a story that amassed nearly 40,000 views on our website.

While some readers complained that we covered the demonstrators message at all, we wanted to share an inside look at our newsroom and the

decisions behind our approach to covering this story, helping you better understand our process.

The Society of Professional Journalist's (SPJ) Code of Ethics has four principles. The University Star uses these ethics as a framework for our coverage, including the demonstration on Nov. 6.

SEE EDITORIAL PAGE 5



KATLIN MARTINEZ | The University Star



JARELL CARR | The University Star

Retired faculty and staff reflect on Texas State legacy

By Jamie Moore
Life and Arts Contributor

As Texas State celebrates its 125th anniversary, the Retired Faculty & Staff Homecoming Reunion offers faculty, students and alumni a moment to reflect on the university's legacy and what makes Texas State special.

The Retired Faculty & Staff Homecoming Reunion is 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. on Nov. 13. This year's Homecoming holds added sentiment for the community, inviting reflection on the university's 125 year anniversary and its evolution over time.

According to its website, the Texas State Retired

Faculty and Staff Association (RFSA) hosts events year-round to strengthen ties between retirees and the university. This year's reunion will include Gold Star Society student members and Texas State's President Kelly Damphousse, creating opportunities for connection.

"[Texas State's 125th anniversary] is just a tribute to the appeal that the university has had and the impact that has had," Bob Gratz, RFSA president, said. "We, as retired faculty and staff, have known a lot of students over the years that we spent at Texas State... we know what impact Texas State has had on people."

SEE REUNION PAGE 7

Bobcats play for bowl eligibility Homecoming weekend

By Daven Meredith
Sports Reporter

The stage is set for Homecoming in San Marcos, in a week of reminiscing of history and tradition for Texas State and its alums. Texas State football looks to create new history by playing against Southern Miss for a shot at bowl eligibility for the second year in a row.

The Bobcats come off a 38-17 win over Louisiana-Monroe last week, snapping a two-game losing streak just in time for Homecoming weekend.

The Golden Eagles are currently on a seven-game losing streak after falling to the Marshall Thundering Herd 37-3, finding themselves at the bottom of the Sun Belt with a 1-8 record.

Golden Eagles interim head coach Reed Stringer spoke after the loss to Marshall saying their record doesn't tell the whole story.

"I am going to do everything I can do to hold this team together and get these guys to continue to play hard and hopefully get them to start playing better," Stringer said. "I don't see major gaps and voids. I know it's hard to say that when we're a one and eight football team, but there are some good players in this program."

SEE FOOTBALL PAGE 9

'Roots of Texas State': service project gives back to education

By Carlene Ottah
Life and Arts Editor

Students, staff and faculty have the opportunity to reconnect with Texas State's origins by helping education across Hays County with a new week-long service project.

This year's Homecoming Service Project is a school supply drive. Student organizations, university departments and individuals are encouraged to donate new or gently used supplies. Donations will

go to The Teacher Reuse, a local nonprofit that makes available classroom supplies and materials for teachers at no cost, Nov. 23.

Jason Garcia, coordinator for Community Service and Volunteer Programs, said Leadership and Service wanted to create a hands-on service with more impact, compared to the one-day service projects held throughout Homecoming week.

SEE COMMUNITY PAGE 8



FROM FRONT UNIVERSITY

“The whole campus is a free expression zone unless it’s inside the buildings,” Pantlik said. “...They don’t have to tell us they’re coming.”

However, Section 3.3 of Texas State’s free speech policy states signs with stakes are not allowed during demonstrations. As both the signs the demonstrators were holding at the Stallions had stakes, members of Texas State Student Involvement & Engagement made them remove the stakes but allowed them to continue their demonstration.

According to Pantlik, the demonstrators were also at the University of Texas at San Antonio earlier on Wednesday, Nov. 6.

UPD attempted to escort the demonstrators off campus through Derrick Hall, but they were followed by students and protesters from The Quad to Aspire San Marcos.

“These [Official] Street Preachers come and they rile, and they feed off of hatred and attention, and then they leave. We’re here to care for students. We’re here to be with students.”

Todd Salmi
United Campus Ministry Reverend

According to UPD Chief Matthew Carmichael, the two demonstrators were not arrested but escorted in a UPD car once they reached the Aspire building off campus at around 1:15 p.m.

“The officers walked with them for their safety just to make sure they’re okay because the crowd kept following them,” Carmichael said. “... But the whole goal is to help them safely get off the campus.”

United Campus Ministry Reverend Todd Salmi was at the Stallions as well holding two signs reading “Jesus

values and respects Texas State women” and “Jesus loves all y’all” countering the demonstrators.

“These [Official] Street Preachers come and they rile, and they feed off of hatred and attention, and then they leave,” Salmi said. “We’re here to care for students. We’re here to be with students.”

Texas State sent the following statement to The Star via email at 3:29 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 6.

“Texas State University’s (TXST) highest priority is the safety of our students, staff, and faculty at all times. As

a public institution, TXST supports the First Amendment and is required by state law to uphold freedom of speech in public areas on our campuses, even if such speech may understandably offend some members of our campus community. We have established policies and protocols that allow individuals to safely engage in expressive activity on university property conducted within institutional regulations. The demonstrators on the San Marcos Campus today had no TXST affiliation.”

Texas State President Kelly Damphousse also released

a statement on Nov. 7 condemning the message the demonstrators portrayed.

“I will not glorify the men or amplify their disgusting messages by sharing them here. Suffice it to say, any reasonable person would be disturbed by their words. I know I was,” Damphousse wrote in the email statement. “...I condemn the hateful words these two men wrote and spoke while they were on our campus. That kind of hate is not welcome here.”

Read Main Point about The Star’s protest coverage on page 5.

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THE UNIVERSITY STAR

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New policy prompts TXST faculty to question AI's involvement in class

By **Jamie Moore**
News Reporter

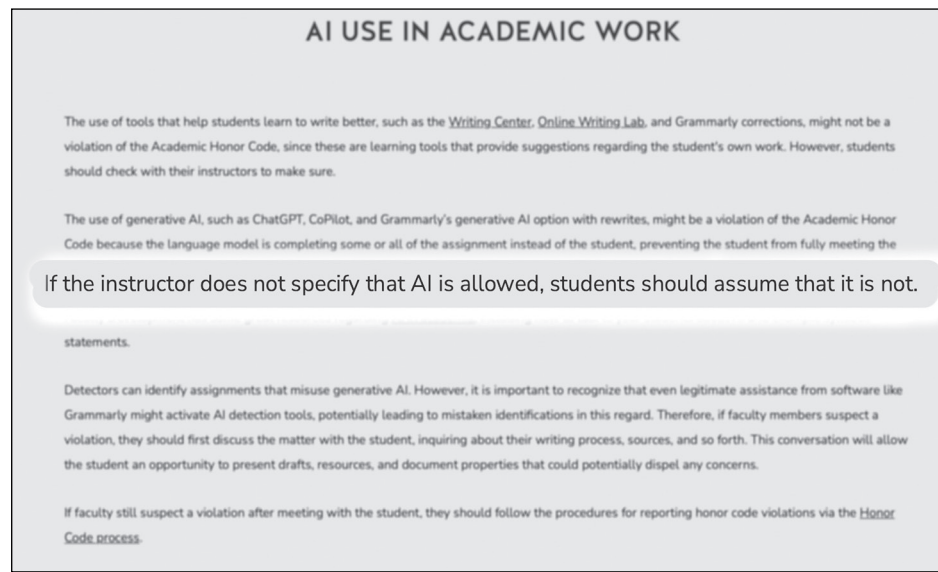
Texas State has a new Artificial Intelligence (AI) policy in the Honor Code: if a syllabus does not say anything about AI use, students should assume it's prohibited. Professors across campus are split, with some promoting AI use and others opting out.

Texas State's Honor Code on AI went into effect on Sept. 6, 2024, less than two weeks after the first day of the fall semester.

Texas State's Faculty Development Department provided resources to help faculty familiarize themselves with AI if they choose to, giving seminars, trainings and examples of different syllabus statements about AI.

"[Faculty are] in the best positions to decide what's best for their students," Candace Hastings, director of Faculty Development said. "Most of them are navigating this new space as well and saying, 'Okay, this is where it would help, and this is where it wouldn't.'"

One example of an AI syllabus statement on the faculty development



DJ ROSS | The University Star

website comes from Dr. Jelena Tešić, an assistant professor of computer science. It reads: "Treat ChatGPT like a fellow student in this class: Ask questions but do not copy the answers. Ask for help, but do not copy the code."

Hastings said there are two ways to use AI: one is transactional, where you passively receive information, and the other is transformational, where you engage with AI as a learning tool,

verifying its information rather than circumventing real understanding.

Carlos Balam-Kuk Solís, lecturer in the Occupational And Workforce Leadership Studies Department, said generative AI allows his students to spend less time on busy work. For one of his classes in which students develop apps, he allows them to use generative AI to create the app, allowing them to focus more on what the app does rather than its design.

"Everybody's concern was that AI was going to just allow people to side-step the guardrails that we have put in place through policy and practice around academic integrity. But over time, people have started to understand that AI is going to be part of our lives whether or not we like it," Balam-Kuk Solís said.

Balam-Kuk Solís said hesitation around AI is a typical response to any new technology, citing the internet as a similar example. However, he encourages his students to use AI responsibly by directing them to university-sanctioned tools that protect privacy, such as Copilot.

Scan the QR code to read the rest of the story.



TXST enrollment unaffected by FAFSA issues

By **Ryan Claycamp**
Senior News Reporter

Despite issues with the roll-out of the new Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the 2024-25 school year, Texas State saw an increase in financial aid money awarded to students.

The increase in the number of students who were awarded aid this school year surpassed the increase in number of students enrolled. According to a Sept. 12 announcement by Texas State, enrollment increased by 1,805 students, which is about 75% of the increase in students awarded.

"So there's \$131.5 million that was made available and that was \$4.3 million more than last year, or a 3.4% increase," Vice President of Financial Aid and Scholarships Christopher Murr said.

The new financial aid form was meant to make the process easier for students and expand financial aid coverage. Instead, the form was plagued by issues such as a delayed launch, delayed reports to universities and issues with tax data.

"[We receive] data typically in October, prior to the start of the academic year. And this year, we did not receive that data from the Department of Education until early April," Murr said.

According to Murr, the changes presented issues to students and the university, which prompted them to move the priority admissions deadline.

"We were very stressed [with students] inability to access and complete the FAFSA, and that's why you saw the university, for instance, extend its priority deadline from March 15 to April 15," Murr said.

Despite the university's efforts and an increase in the amount of aid awarded, some students were still impacted by issues with the new FAFSA form, with

some questioning if they would receive aid in time to enroll in fall classes. Jayne Sanchez, a public relations freshman said that she didn't have her financial aid figured out going into the semester.

"They opened [FAFSA] late this year, like the whole thing changed this year, where they went from October to December," Sanchez said. "So I did it very early in January."

Sanchez said that frustrations and delays with FAFSA have forced her to seek other methods to pay for her tuition and housing.

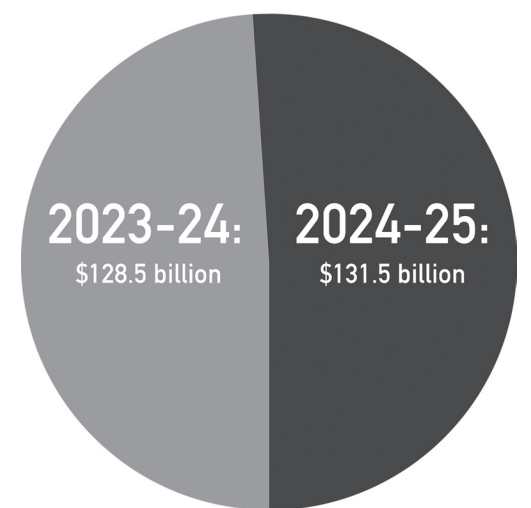
"As of right now, my parents are splitting it, so we're paying the 25% [down payment] and then they're just going to split it and put it on the credit card and then I'm going to try to pay them," Sanchez said.

Sanchez was not the only student who was unable to complete her FAFSA form. According to the National College Attainment Network (NCAN), as of Nov. 1, there was an 8.8% decrease in FAFSA completion for the 2024-25 school year.

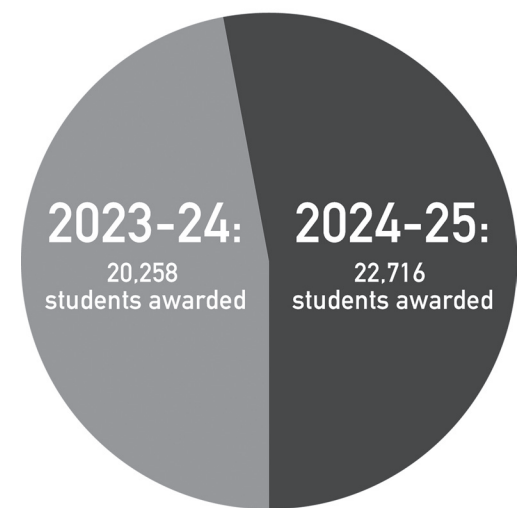
Scan the QR code to read the rest of the story.



Aid Available



Students awarded



MADELINE CARPENTER | The University Star

Driver hits pedestrian near Sigma Chi Halloween party

By **Lucciana Choueiry**
News Editor

A driver struck a 19-year-old woman on Ranch Road 12 as she was on her way to a Sigma Chi Halloween party on Oct. 31, leaving her in critical condition.

At around 10:30 p.m. on Oct. 31, Mia Pace and eight friends parked their car and began walking toward the Sigma Chi fraternity house. As four of the eight friends crossed the road to reach the house, a car struck Mia, according to her sister, Liana Pace. Neither Mia nor the driver is affiliated with Texas State University or Sigma Chi, however, Mia was in San Marcos visiting her friend, who is a Texas State student, for Halloween weekend.

"We arrived and saw a female being loaded into an ambulance. We know that she was in the street and hit by a vehicle," Hays County Sheriff Lt. Clint Pulpan wrote in an email to *The Star*.

Liana said the car did not run Mia over, nor did she roll over the windshield. Although the speed limit on Ranch Road 12 is 60 mph, it's unclear how fast the driver was going when they struck Mia.

As a result of the brute force, however, Liana said Mia broke both her legs, her left arm, back and nose. Mia also has a ruptured bladder, lacerated spleen and liver and a concussion. She has been in the Intensive Care Unit since Oct. 31.

Pulpan wrote the sher-

iff's office does not work any wrecks with death or serious bodily injury so the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) is investigating the case. *The Star* reached out to DPS but has yet to hear a response.

"When I walked into the hospital room and saw her for the first time it was really scary because she's unconscious, she had a mouth tube in she looked pretty terrible and beat up and I was just in there standing by her... I just remember seeing her and automatically started crying," Liana said.

Emergency Medical Services, the Hays County Sheriff's Office and DPS arrived on-scene minutes after Mia was hit and closed off Ranch Road 12 for approxi-

mately two hours until 12:45 a.m. when officers cleared the scene, according to President of Sigma Chi Lance Stonebreaker.

"Me, my risk manager and four cops were out there at all times directing traffic for the next three and a half hours after that," Stonebreaker said.

The Sigma Chi party was a registered social event with Texas State. That means the university was aware of the party and members of the fraternity must undergo risk management training in preparation.

Stonebreaker said they hired security to patrol the party on Oct. 31.

"We have security guards that we hire every party that makes sure no one's leaving our property on foot, and

they have to be in an Uber and they have to be behind our gates as well," Stonebreaker said.

Mia's recovery is progressing well, Liana said. Though Mia couldn't speak for the first two days after the accident and hasn't yet walked, she's on track to regain her mobility.

"She stood up and she was moving her leg, which is very good, but she said she was in a lot of pain, but I'm just proud of her for getting up," Liana said.

Liana has launched a GoFundMe to help her family pay for Mia's medical bills, which includes the surgeries, rehab and physical therapy.

Opinions in The University Star are not necessarily those of our entire publication, Texas State University's administration, Board of Regents, School of Journalism and Mass Communication or Student Publications Board.

Neglecting student safety at TXST is unacceptable

By **Aubrey Haynes**
Opinions Contributor

Following a demonstration that took place at the Stallions statue on Nov. 6, Texas State responded in a way that raises concerns about the administration's seriousness toward student safety and the tolerance of hate speech.

The two males leading the demonstration were with the Official Street Preachers. The organization's website is dedicated to political and religious articles. On campus, they held hateful signs to get a reaction from students.

As a public university, Texas State is required to allow free speech and open expression, while maintaining campus safety.

A statement sent to the Texas State community read, "Texas State University's highest priority is the safety of our students, staff, and faculty at all times. TXST supports the First Amendment and is required by state law to uphold freedom of speech in public areas on our campuses, even if such speech may understandably offend some members of our campus community."

Although the same free speech rules and protective measures are enforced for those not affiliated with the university, there is a lack of action when hate incidents directly impact Texas State students.

Joel DeLeon, a member of the Texas State Black Student Union, said the demonstration on Wednesday had an emotional effect on students who may not feel safe or heard by the administration.

"It's hard enough feeling like you don't belong here sometimes, and then these people show up saying



The Fighting Stallions statue sits on the west end of The Quad, Monday, Nov. 11, 2024, at Texas State. MANDALYN LEWALLEN | The University Star

things like 'women are property,'" DeLeon said.

While students have passionately rallied for justice on campus, such as the pro-Palestine sit in, the university has shown certain bias and has failed to adequately address the rampant use of hate speech on campus, particularly in areas like the Stallions statue.

How is it that two outsiders are allowed onto campus to spread hate messages, but Texas State seems unwilling or unable to protect its own students from hate? This double standard will not stand.

It is strikingly evident that Texas State needs to create a more inclusive environment while protecting free speech on campus to ensure equitable

and just responses.

The indifference to harmful language directly undermines the university's commitment to fostering an inclusive environment. Addressing the hostile rhetoric students encounter on campus is critical to ensuring safety and upholding the values of equity and respect.

Across the country, students have taken action after university administrations failed to address hate driven incidents. At the University of Missouri, protests over repeated racism led to administrative resignations, and at Syracuse University students staged protests in response to racist graffiti.

When institutions fail in handling issues of hate speech and discrimina-

tion, it creates a loss of faith among students. Permitting such groups to have a platform to spread hate speech emboldens them and leaves students feeling unsafe.

Reverend Todd Salmi, of the United Campus Ministry, was among those who counter-protested.

"I stood up against the demonstrators because their message attempted to intimidate and scandalize, rather than reason and persuade," Salmi said. "These demonstrators feed off of hatred and attention."

Texas State should implement clear anti-harassment policies, and offer free speech inclusion training and expression forums that would ensure both safety and free speech. These policies would assure a proper balance between the right to speak freely and protection for all students.

At the University of Michigan, for example, protections for student rights and protections under the First Amendment are balanced through anti-harassment policies, the reporting of bias incidents and providing educational programs on the subjects of free expression and inclusion. These moves protect speech while taking into consideration harassment and discrimination.

Texas State needs to revisit its policy and find a balance between free speech and student safety. The First Amendment will continue to protect free expression, but it does not mean universities are exempt from ensuring hate speech does not create a climate of intimidation and fear.

- *Aubrey Haynes is a journalism freshman*

FROM FRONT EDITORIAL

The Main Point is an opinion written by The University Star's Editorial Board. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of our entire publication.

The first principle is to "seek the truth and report it." We did this by talking to Texas State officials, University Police Department (UPD) officers and people present at the demonstration. We found out what was happening and reported the truth; nothing more and nothing less.

The second principle is to "minimize harm." We are doing this by not including the voice of Official Street Preachers in our coverage and not showing any pictures of the signs without a trigger warning. This is also why our main image for the story is not of the signs, because we do not want to cause harm to our readers.

The third principle is to "act independently." We did this by avoiding conflicts of interest and seeking official sources who spoke impartially. We did not let our personal beliefs or positions influence our coverage.

Finally, the last principle is to "be

accountable and transparent." We're doing this right now by telling our audience how we will report on this and future demonstrations. We recognize the responsibility and accountability we have in which messages we choose to cover and how our coverage amplifies these messages.

We believe deeply in and live by the First Amendment every day.

While *The University Star* firmly opposes the harmful messages displayed by the demonstrators, as journalists we must uphold a fundamental truth: hate speech, however offensive, is still protected as free speech. The Supreme Court has affirmed this in landmark cases like *Matal v. Tam*, which underscores that the First Amendment does not allow the government, or public institutions like Texas State, to silence viewpoints based solely on their offensiveness.

If another event like this happens, we will cover the facts like we did on Nov. 6, but we will not reprint hateful messages. We will also no longer include pictures of signs like the ones the Official Street Preachers held. While we want to keep our audience informed, it's important that we minimize harm and not overexpose or amplify messages that can hurt the community we proudly serve.

The presence of both the demonstrators and the hundreds of count-

er-protesters highlights the principle that free speech applies to all voices. This commitment to free speech is essential, not to shield hate, but to prevent the erosion of rights for everyone. For over a century, *The University Star* has championed this fundamental freedom, standing firm in our mission of defending the First Amendment since 1911.

MAIN POINT



The University Star welcomes Letters to the Editor from its readers. All submissions are reviewed and considered by the Editor in Chief and Opinions Editor for publication. Not all letters are guaranteed for publication.



SUDOKU

Game by sudoku-solutions.com

	1		6	4	5			
4					8	5		
9		8		7				4
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	2						4	
7		3	1					
1				9		7		6
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			4		6		1	

Word Scramble

(1)Bat, (2)Bone, (3)Skull, (4)Grave (5)Potion, (6)Ghoul

Crossword

(1)Cackle (2)Blood, (3)Michael, (4)Jack, (5-Down)Saw, (5-Across)Spider

9	4	1	6	2	7	8	5	3
8	5	7	3	1	4	9	6	2
6	3	2	9	8	5	1	7	4
7	6	3	2	9	8	5	4	1
1	8	4	5	6	3	7	2	9
2	9	5	4	7	1	6	3	8
5	1	8	7	4	2	3	9	6
4	7	9	8	3	6	2	1	5
3	2	6	1	5	9	4	8	7

WORD SCRAMBLE

Take a breather.

1. TRA
2. SICUM
3. RLOOC
4. NDERFSI
5. IMFAYL
6. SIEOMV

CROSSWORD

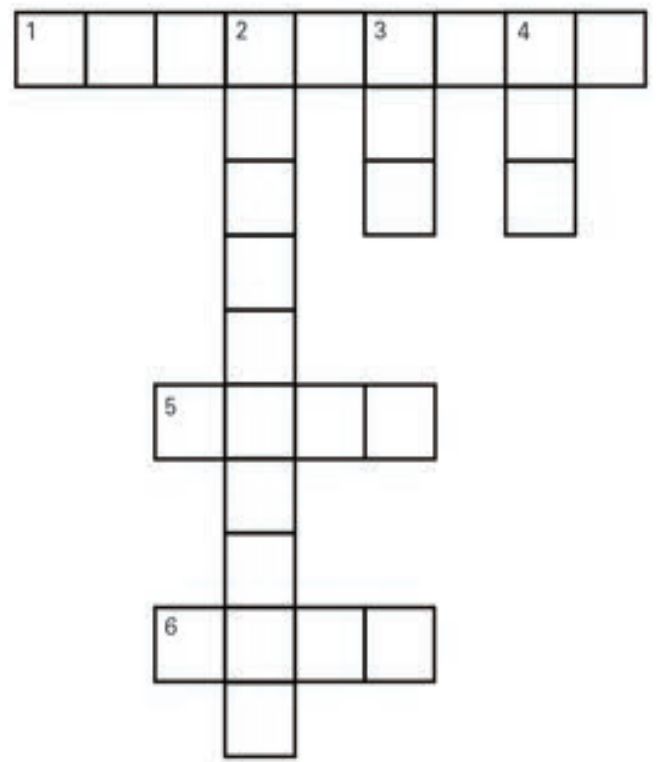
Take a breather.

DOWN:

2. The act or practice of mindfulness.
3. A short light sleep.
4. A steeped drink known for its calming properties.

ACROSS:

1. A group of people who share the feeling of fellow ship and share a characteristic in common.
5. When water drops fall from the sky.
6. Food for the soul.



San Marcos celebrates annual Veterans Day Parade

By **Jamie Moore**
Life and Arts Contributor

San Marcos honored Veterans Day with its annual parade bringing the community together to remember those who served on Nov. 9. Families packed the city's Downtown Square as over 50 parade entries passed through the streets.

Members of Donaciano Cervantez's family attended the parade to honor his memory and service in the Army during World War II. Each year, they set up a booth with a photo of him in his uniform and provide donuts and coffee to veterans who come by.

Rachel Martinez, daughter of Cervantez, said events like the parade can serve as a way to teach younger generations about veterans' stories and create more respect for the country.

"As you can see, some of our veterans on our float are World War II vets," Martinez said. "Our younger generation really doesn't know their stories, and it's important that we sit and talk with them and listen to their stories."

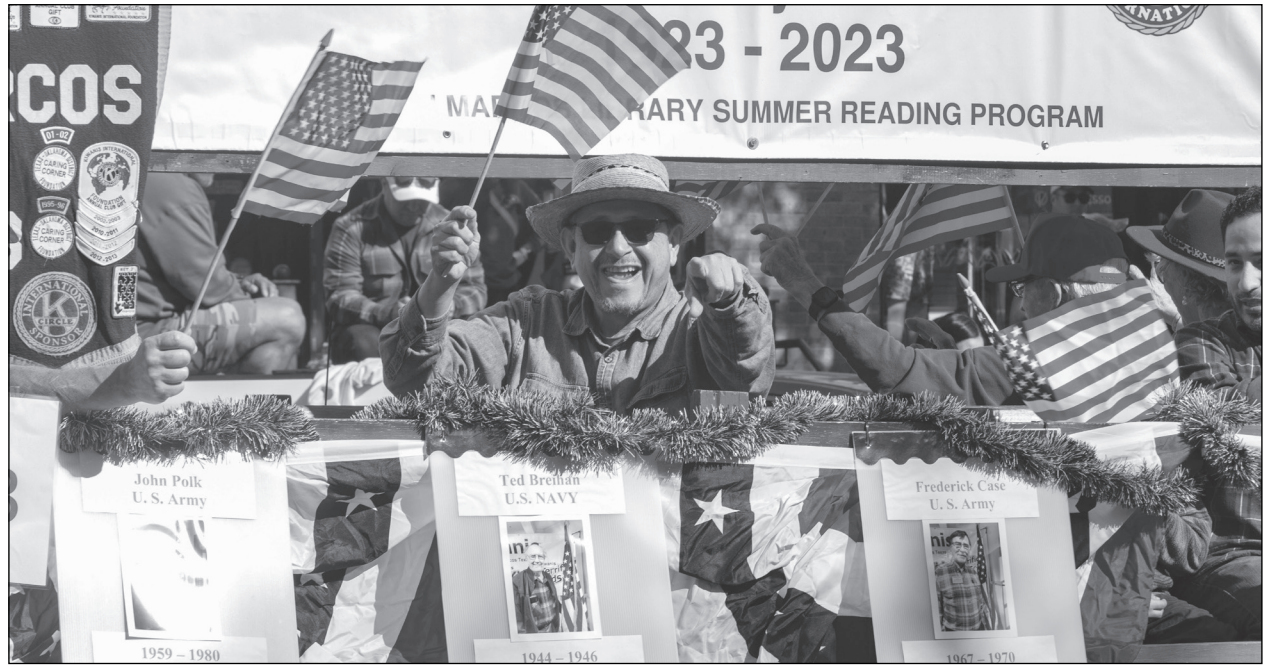
Among the crowd were several veterans who, like many others, took a moment to reflect on their service while watching the parade. One of them was Andrew Kretschmar, a Marine who served on active duty from 1981 to 1985.

Kretschmar said it's always good to bring everybody together for any reason, especially for a cause like rejoicing and remembering fallen soldiers and fallen family members.

"It's important to remember the heritage and all we've done for the country and keep people motivated and maybe keep serving in the future, too," Kretschmar said.

While Veterans Day is officially observed on Nov. 11, San Marcos has a tradition of holding its parade each year on the Saturday before, allowing locals to gather and reflect on the significance of the day.

"We pray for their abundant blessings, for their selfless service, sacrifices they made and the trials they have endured," Mike Hollifield, chaplain of the



A veteran on the San Marcos Kiwanis Club's float waves and points to crowd members during the San Marcos Veterans Day Parade, Saturday, Nov. 9, 2024, through Downtown San Marcos.
ALLISON DRINNON | The University Star

San Marcos Police Department, said in the prayer before the parade. "May each be deeply appreciated by this community, let none feel forgotten or overlooked."

Entries in the parade include the grand marshal, different officials from the Hays County Commissioners Court, different schools, including San Marcos High School, Wonderland School and San Marcos Academy and veterans from different branches, some of whom served in World War II.

The streets were full long before the parade began, as A Capella Unlimited, a local community choir, performed. This was the 10th time A Capella Unlimited sang at the Veterans Day Parade, with Katy Dane, A Capella Unlimited member and Texas State alumni, stating this year's turnout was the largest that she saw in years.

"We have a number of veterans that are in our choir... so part of [playing at the Veteran's Day Parade] is because it relates closely to our experi-

ence as people, but also just to be a part of the San Marcos community," Dane said. "It really helps us to connect with our own San Marcos people."

Jamie Lee Case, San Marcos Parks and Recreation director, and Peter Baen, the parade's official volunteer emcee, narrated the pre-parade and parade activities.

Baen said events like the parade give the community an opportunity to come out and celebrate life, liberty and the pursuit of freedom. Case said the parade brings the community for one central purpose of pride.

"[Veterans] served their country, their families have also served by virtue of supporting them whenever they're abroad," Case said. "This is just our way of honoring their sacrifices made over the years and we just look forward to doing this every year."

FROM FRONT REUNION

Gratz, who retired about 10 years ago, worked at Texas State for 45 years, starting as a faculty member in the Department of Communication Studies, later serving as an associate vice president and dean, a vice president and a special assistant to the president.

Gratz said during the time he was at Texas State, there was around 9,600 students, a stark difference from 2024's enrollment of 40,678 students.

"One thing that over 45 years at Texas State continued to amaze me is as the university grew, it really was remarkable to see how personal the contact among people at Texas State was, how faculty and staff still had the time to help students who needed help," Gratz said.

Gratz said he is confident Texas State will continue to be a friendly place where people care for one another, as he has witnessed throughout his decades at the university.

While the reunion honors those who shaped Texas State's past, current students and faculty are also part of its shared legacy. Ann Burnette, a professor and regents' teaching professor at Texas State since 1991, teaches classes in the same department where Gratz once taught. She watched the college and communication studies department grow in reputation and numbers.

"I think one of the things that has stayed constant



KATLIN MARTINEZ | The University Star

is that Texas State University and the Department of Communication Studies put students first," Burnette said. "We know that the reason that we're here is to work with students and to give them the best education possible."

Burnette said she saw Texas State become locally,

state and nationally recognized throughout the years. In the fall 2024 State of TXST Address, Damphousse highlighted expansion success, including more construction on both the San Marcos and Round Rock campus, another campus in Mexico and more partnerships with community colleges.

As Texas State expands, the student experience is shaped by the growth. Mali Cisneros, exercise and sports science senior is the president of the Student Alumni Council (SAC) and will attend the RFSA Homecoming Reunion as a Gold Star Society member.

As the president of SAC, Cisneros received advice from Texas State alumni. She said what stands out the most from the advice they give her is to be proud of where she came from: Texas State.

"That 125th mark is very exciting because I've seen Texas State grow in a way that I never thought about it, because for me, when I came to Texas State, I thought only about my progress... but not about the university itself," Cisneros said. "It's very meaningful to me, especially because everything that I have, it's also in part of the opportunities that Texas has given me."



Boko Glow Run



6:30-9 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 12, 2024 at West Sports Field

Boko's Homecoming Bash

5-9 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 13, 2024 at LBJ Mall and Bobcat Trail

Celebrate 125

7-10 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 14, 2024 at UFCU Stadium

Spirit Parade



2-3:30p.m. on Friday, Nov. 15, 2024 at TBA

Box Derby



4-5:30p.m. on Friday, Nov. 15, 2024 on Woods Street

Alumni Tailgate with Royalty Court



3-5 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 16, 2024 at UFCU - West Side

Football Game:

Texas State vs. Southern Miss

6:00 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 16, 2024 at UFCU Stadium



FROM FRONT COMMUNITY



The Homecoming Service Project School Supply Drive donation bin, Monday, Nov. 11, 2024, in the Shirley R. Harris Student Lounge at the LBJ Student Center. KOBE ARRIAGA |The University Star

“For this [service project], [Leadership and Service] really wanted to bring it back to the roots of Texas State,” Garcia said. “We thought about a campaign drive to really support

Texas State’s beginnings as a teacher’s college.”

Texas State was established as Southwest Texas State Normal School on May 10, 1899. According to Texas State’s website, the school’s

purpose was to train future teachers due to a 200% increase of Texas’ public education system between 1880 and 1900. It changed its name multiple times over the years to reflect its size

“These supplies go straight from Teacher Reuse to teachers who come to essentially shop for free and get supplies for the classroom. So, we just want to provide them new or gently used items that are not outdated and stuff like that.”

Jason Garcia
Coordinator for Community Service and Volunteer Programs

and scope in education and other subjects.

Leadership and Service searched for education nonprofits in San Marcos and found Teacher Reuse. It contacted the nonprofit and discussed plans for the service project with it.

Cheryl Gillmore, Teacher Reuse volunteer, said she wanted to contact the university since she moved to San Marcos last year. The nonprofit previously worked with the community during SMTX Gives Back and other professors and city groups but was excited to get the call from the department.

“Anytime any group reaches out and wants to help you, especially when you’re a struggling nonprofit, that’s exciting because it takes a lot of effort,” Gillmore said.

When touring Teacher Reuse on July 30, Leadership and Service noticed the nonprofit’s storage consisted of half-broken crayons and other used items and wanted to give it new supplies.

“These supplies go straight from Teacher Reuse to teachers who come to essentially shop for free and get supplies for the classroom,” Garcia said. “So, we just want to provide them new or gently used items that are not outdated and stuff like that.”

Gillmore said while teachers visit the nonprofit during the back-to-school season, they come throughout the year to replenish their materials.

“[Teachers], especially at the beginning of the new semester, come January, they will be coming back to replenish their classroom supplies,” Gillmore said.

Glorie Faulkner, fashion merchandise junior and store manager intern at Teacher Reuse, believes the service project will benefit Teacher Reuse and Texas State.

“I feel like what [the service project] will really do is show people to be more mindful about throwing things away and being more sustainable overall,” Faulkner said.

Garcia said the supply drive’s success will help explore how future drives and causes will go, regardless of its relation to Homecoming.

“I’m very hopeful that students really do turn out, whether it’s for competition or not, just to really go back into the season of giving, especially because that’s what Homecoming’s all about,” Garcia said. “It’s how we give back to our community and really feel like we’re a part of this together.”

Scan the QR code for more information about the Homecoming Service Project.



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Alumni invest in Taraflex for Texas State Volleyball

By Hope Monte
Sports Reporter

Texas State volleyball unlocked new potential and exhibits program value following the implementation of a new Taraflex volleyball court in October through the support of athletics boosters.

Taraflex is a vinyl sports flooring brand manufactured by Gerflor. It uses innovative technology to provide protection and reduce the impact on athletes' bodies when they fall, dive or slide onto the court floor.

The desire to bring Taraflex to Strahan Arena has been a long time coming for Head Coach Sean Huiet, but it wasn't until April that conversation with Texas State boosters for the investment started.

"Taraflex is something that our kids have been asking for for a long time," Huiet said. "When I met with the boosters, I just said, 'Hey, this is, this is something I think that would really help us from a recruiting standpoint, from our current team standpoint, and just down the line,' and so they generously got on board and helped us raise the money."

Huiet credited Chris and Shannon Rasmussen as the key contributors to receiving funding for the court, which

cost nearly \$140,000. The Rasmussens previously invested in Bobcat athletics, including a \$500,000 donation to baseball and softball facilities in 2023.

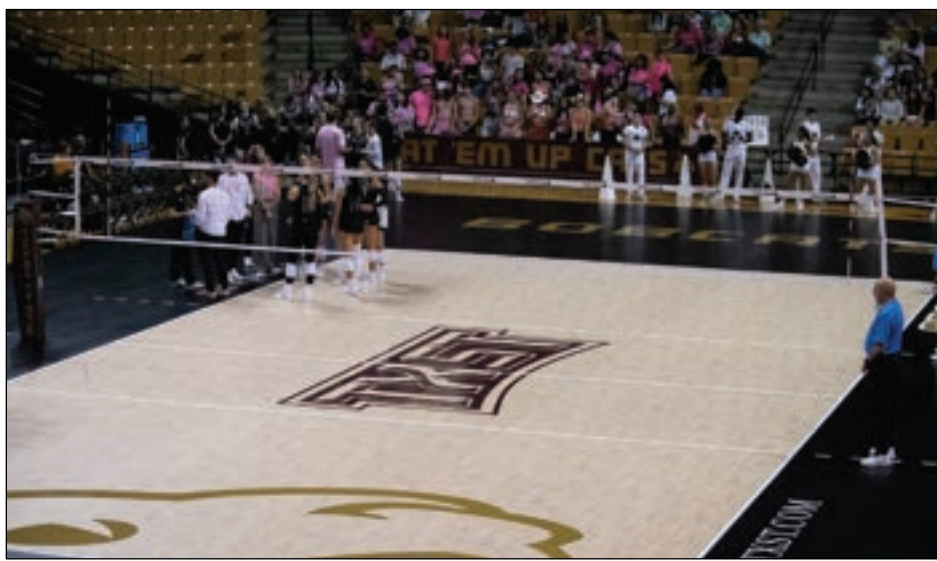
The addition of the Taraflex court symbolizes a new step of growth and evolution to propel Bobcat Volleyball among other top Division I programs.

"The investment [shows] how volleyball is an important sport," Huiet said. "Here we play for championships, year in and year out... so the investment of the Taraflex show[s] our athletes [and] show[s] future athletes that volleyball is a priority here at Texas State."

Having access to Taraflex at the home court not only for games, but also practice provides further relief and protection from the daily wear and tear previously suffered from the harsher original hardwood court.

"Running is easier, turning is easier, diving astronomically easier, it helps with bruising... So when I'm on back row it's really nice," freshman outside hitter M.J. McCarthy said.

Due to the benefits of player health protection and the exhibition of investment in volleyball at Texas State, the Taraflex will likely grow future recruitment prospects.



The Texas State volleyball team huddles together between sets during the game versus Arkansas State, Saturday, Oct. 19, 2024, at Strahan Arena. MEG BOLES |The University Star

"I always knew that Texas State does prioritize volleyball, and [the court is] just a big testament to that, so I think it's like reassuring for us [the team], but also reassuring for recruits," McCarthy said.

As a senior, libero Alyssa Ortega endured a lifelong career of absorbing impact from hardwood courts. She expressed her optimism for future Texas State athletes who will have their own Taraflex court going forward.

"[Taraflex] would just be so much better on [young athletes'] bodies as the years going because, like me, growing up on hardwood floor, playing on that, it has like aged me," Ortega said. "I know a lot of programs that don't get that [financial support]. So we're very grateful and thankful for everybody that put money into the Taraflex, I appreciate them so much."

FROM FRONT FOOTBALL



SOPHIE PICKERRELL |The University Star

Homecoming Game Comparison	
Texas State	
Record	5-4
Points per game	33.1
Yards per game	444.4
Yards allowed per game	351.6
VS	
Southern Miss	
Record	1-8
Points per game	15.6
Yards per game	290.7
Yards allowed per game	447.5

The last time these two teams faced off, the Maroon and Gold came out on top 50-36 in 2023 the largest margin of victory in the series for the Bobcats in Head Coach G.J. Kinne's first season as head coach. The record between the two sits at 2-2 overall, a series where the Bobcats haven't won at home since joining the Sun Belt in 2013.

Coming into the homecoming matchup reigning Sun Belt Conference Player of the Year Jordan McCloud saw the start last week and was responsible for a touchdown through the air and one on

the ground, but true freshman quarterback Brad Jackson saw the majority of snaps against the Warhawks en route to 126 yards rushing, two scores on the ground and 16 yards through the air.

Kinne spoke on the change at signal caller and the health of McCloud after the Bobcat win.

"Jordan's our guy, and we had to protect him. He wasn't 100% and we had to find a way to win the ball game," Kinne said. "I thought Brad had a great week of practice, and we knew Brad could run and throw. He's a really good player but he's just a young

pup trying to figure it out." Kick-off between Texas State and Southern Mississippi is scheduled for 6 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 16, at Jim Wacker Field at UFCU Stadium in San Marcos. The game will be available to watch on ESPN+.

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This Week at Texas State



Grupo Folklorico Ocotochtli performs at the Dia De Los Muertos celebration held by Texas State's DHRL and SACA, Monday, Nov. 4, 2024, at the LBJ Student Center. MEG BOLES | The University Star



Texas State psychology freshman Marshall McConnell holds a sign reading 'You Are Loved' Thursday, Nov. 7, 2024, at the Stallions statue. ISABELLE CANTU | The University Star

Singer and guitarist Conner Redden performs on stage with his band, Flight By Nothing, Saturday, Nov. 9, 2024, at Tantra in downtown San Marcos. KATHERINE REA | The University Star



(Left) Texas State early childhood education senior Sarah Wilson and (Right) pre-nursing freshman Yasmin Seibert holds signs reading "free hugs," Thursday, Nov. 7, 2024, at the Stallions statue. ISABELLE CANTU | The University Star

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