Tonight—We Rock the Mic Right

By: B.K. Miller

Tuesday, December 6, 2011, is Open Mic Night at The Brick, the downtown coffee house in Sayre. All students who have an artistic side are encouraged to join in the fun. Read your poetry, play a song, share a short story or a passage from a favorite book. Even if you don’t have a robust artistic side, come on down!

Rumor on the mill is: Bonus points for your English classes are available for participation. The event starts at 6:30 P.M. and will last until the last person is finished, or until they run the crazy college kids out of their fine business establishment; whichever comes first. The place is 109 East Main Street in Sayre; 6:30 P.M. is the time; so, be there with your face!

Events To Remember December — January

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By Katie Currell

The SGA canned food drive on the SWOSU-Sayre campus will be continued until December the 9th. A $100 prize will be given to the person that brings the most cans by weight. Participants are asked to drop off cans at the Financial Aid Office by noon on the cut-off day (Dec. 9th), and then they will be taken to the gym to be weighed. After being weighed, the cans will be taken to the First Baptist Church of Sayre to be put in the food pantry for the community. Four students are participating at this point in time, but we strongly encourage many more people to join in for the season of giving—and receiving! Why not collect cans from neighbors or family?

Also available is the Registrar’s Office is an Angel Tree. Pick a name and help a local child in need.

By Katie Currell

SWOSU-Sayre is hosting a “Biggest Loser” contest. This event begins next semester, with contestants weighing in and paying the $15 entry fee. This means the grand prize for the biggest loser will be big cash, as all the entry fees will go to the winner.

The weigh-ins will be conducted in the weight room of the Patterson Field House every two weeks for smaller prizes. A monitor, who has been sworn to secrecy, will be in charge of recording all weight statistics for this event. Losses will be based on a percentage so as to give all participants a more “level playing field.”

Assisting is the SGA and the PBL organizations. Donations are also being sought from local businesses, thanks to the hard work of Mr. Bill D’Allessandro, the Program Director for Hospitality, Restaurant, and Gaming Management.

The campus fitness center is free to SWOSU-Sayre students. It is located in the Patterson Field House, room #113. A student employee is available to help you sign in and use the weight equipment.

The final prize will be awarded after the weigh-in in April. Watch for more details in January!
Get into the Spirit of Giving

Many people may have noticed the Toy Drop Box located in the middle hall of the Mackey Building. The box has been put there by a former student who is trying to give back to the people who brought her so much joy during a time of pain.

Alley’s House brings toys to the children at OU Children’s Hospital. They also help provide financial support to the families with children who have chronic or terminal illnesses.

Cameron Vincent is one of those children. Cameron received several toys from Alley’s House during his hospital stays while battling leukemia.

These simple acts of kindness bring happiness to children that need it the most. During this joyful time of year, get into the spirit of giving! Drop a small new or used (clean, not broken) toy in the drop box and help make a child’s holiday brighter.

Here’s What You Suggested . . .

Two suggestion boxes on campus have been activated, and the following suggestions were received:

“Offer healthier food in the vending machines.”
Answer: Phil and Cynthia Malone own the vending machines on campus and keep them stocked with tasty treats, including Sun Chips and Special K Bars. A WatchDawg staff member has asked them what their thoughts were, and we are currently waiting for a reply. Perhaps you can suggest some particular healthful snacks you have in mind, and we can tell the Malones.

“A study hall for the Alexander building. Students with time between classes will have a place to study quietly without disturbing classes.”
Answer: We recommend you try studying in the library or the Bulldog Café. The Café has a sound-resistant glass room where you can close the door. When weather permits, the gazebo just northwest of Alexander is a pleasant place to study.

In addition to our handmade shoeboxes, a third mysterious Suggestion Box appeared in the Alexander Building. If anyone is aware of whom this box belongs to or has the key, please notify Mrs. Ford.

Important Changes for Subsidized Loans

When applying for financial assistance, students are offered two types of loans; subsidized and unsubsidized. The difference all lies in who pays the interest. With a subsidized loan, the government pays the interest so long as the student is maintaining at least six hours of class a week. With an unsubsidized loan, the interest builds and the student has the option of making payments toward the growing interest or allowing it to capitalize. Recently, changes have been made, now only allowing undergraduate students to receive subsidized loans. Graduate students will still have the same amount of money made available to them that they had before, but now the money will all be offered through unsubsidized loans, leaving graduate students to pay the interest.
By Zack White

The Bulldog Café is losing its friendly cooks after years of faithful service. Marita Kennemer, Debbie Breeze, and Lucia VanZandt are all leaving after Christmas Break. Marita Kennemer is retiring after devoting 21 years to the educational field. She spent 13 years at the Carter Public School system. Since then she has worked at the SWOSU Sayre campus for 8 years. Debbie Breeze is also retiring. She also worked at the Carter school before coming to The Bulldog. She has spent the last 5 years cooking the meals we all know and love. Lucia VanZandt is moving to Edmond to be closer to her daughter, after 5 years of service. All three will be greatly missed.

As of now, no one has been hired to fill their spots. If you know or hear of someone that may want to apply, please have them contact the campus.

got trees?

By Zack White

Nothing beats the smell and look of a live Christmas tree around the holidays. But this year, your perfect live tree may be harder to come by. The current drought’s latest victims have been the Christmas Trees here in Oklahoma and Texas.

The trees have been getting assaulted from two sides. If the tree has not died from the lack of water, one of the many ravenous wildfires might have claimed it. Farmers have lost many of their young un-established trees, which will be a major blow for future crops. Many farmers are having to import trees from South Carolina. With all of the cost of importing new trees and the loss of many crops, the price of the traditional real Christmas Tree is bound to go up.

But where does having a tree in your home for the holidays come from? Why do we find it important? To find this out, we have to go way back in history to the stone ages, before Christianity. Rock carvings have been found on walls in Sweden and also in nearby Norway. In these areas, more than 75,000 individual rock carvings of trees at over 5000 different sites have been found. Some researchers believe in the early times, people in that area of Sweden and Norway used dedications of trees, such as the spruces, as a sacred symbols.

The “evergreen” trees were mysteries to early man. When all the other plants seemed to die and turn grey in winter, the spruce remained green. The trees were a pagan symbol for life, survival, fertility, and immortality in many cultures worldwide.

The tradition of having a tree in our homes for the holidays did not come into being until the 1840s. In 1841, the British royal family used a decorated spruce tree for their Christmas celebration, the idea caught on, and the rest is history.
Stressed? Confidential On-Line Screenings Are Available!

By Ashley Brewer

The fall semester can be both exciting and stressful—leaving some students feeling overwhelmed. When left unattended, these everyday stressors can lead to more serious problems with depression, anxiety and unhealthy forms of self-medication. Many students may turn to alcohol to cope with stress, but alcohol itself is a depressant and can make depression and anxiety worse.

SWOSU Counseling Services now offers an online mental health check-up at Counseling Services confidential on-line screenings. This check-up consists of brief, anonymous screening questionnaires designed to provide students with insight into symptoms they might be experiencing and offers helpful treatment and referral information, if necessary.

In addition to stress over Final Exams, stress, as we all know, can come from a variety of sources – and at this time of year, turkey with the in-laws, hanging Christmas lights, and opening your post-holiday Visa bill are just some of the many sources of our escalating stress levels.

Survey findings show that added holiday stress, on top of already high stress levels associated with work and the economy, makes it hard to relax. Cited as “multiple stressors” in the APA research are lack of time (up to 69%), lack of money (up to 69%), and pressure to give or get gifts (up to 51%). In addition, men and women who experience elevated levels of stress, rate their psychological and physical health lower than those who are not experiencing stress – and are more likely to experience a range of health ailments and symptoms such as sadness (59%), sleep problems (56%), and lack of energy (55%).

Don’t risk your future. SWOSU Counseling Services staff is here to listen and help. Call 580.774.3776 if you would like to visit with one of our counselors.

SWOSU Goes Mobile with Friendlier App

The SWOSU website has gone mobile, according to Karen Wilson and Anjana Patel, of SWOSU Web Services.

Users now viewing www.swosu.edu on mobile devices will see a more user-friendly version of the SWOSU website. If at any time you want to view the Full Site version of the web page, it can be accessed from the Full Site link provided at the bottom of the mobile pages.

Note—The alumni, foundation and SWOSU-Sayre websites can be accessed via mobile phones but are available on the full-version only. These areas will be converted in the near future.

Remember—the go SWOSU mobile app is also available for additional interactive features.
Winter Weather Tips

By Rebecca Clanahan

Excessive heat, surprise tornadoes, earthquakes, extreme drought and flooding rains. Yup, Oklahoma is capable of producing every imaginable weather scenario, and cold weather and damaging ice storms are no exception to the crazy and always unpredictable weather patterns that we Oklahomans have grown used to. As most of you have probably noticed, our warm, sunny days are getting to be rare. That means that Old Man Winter is preparing to rear his ugly head.

Everybody already knows the cold weather basics. **Dress in layers** to stay warm. It is better to be too hot and be able to remove a layer than to be too cold and not have enough clothing to stay warm. This is a good plan in the event that you get wet; the wet layer is easily removed. **Boots and gloves** are also a cold weather must have. Other common knowledge is to use caution when walking on icy sidewalks and steps. **Always use handrails** if available and keep hands free and out of pockets to help prevent slips and falls. But what about preparing your home, vehicle, and even your pets for the cold months ahead? The following are just a few tips to help make this winter a little less difficult.

**Register for SWOSU Alert** – SWOSU Alert is designed for students, faculty, and staff who will be affected directly by an emergency on the University grounds. Registrants will receive texts or emails informing them of emergencies in which there is an imminent threat to public safety or for campus closures due to inclement weather. Registration is free and only takes a few minutes. You will be asked to create a username and password. You will also need your mobile phone handy. You will be able to select whether you want to receive notifications about Sayre or Weatherford campuses. Visit [www.swosu.edu/resources/alert-register.asp](http://www.swosu.edu/resources/alert-register.asp) to start receiving these valuable updates.

**Tips for winterizing your home** – Inspect your furnace, replace the filter monthly. Remove any flammable material from around the furnace and hot water heater. Check all doors and windows for drafts. Any drafty spots can be sealed using weather stripping that can be purchased from any local hardware store. Do not forget about the light switches and electrical outlets.

These are holes in the wall where cold air freely flows. Stop the draft by placing foam gaskets behind the plates.

Install carbon monoxide detectors near your furnace. To prevent the plumbing from freezing, insulate all exposed plumbing pipes, heat tape is a good option and can be purchased at any local hardware store. When leaving for an extended period, leave the heat turned on to 55 degrees.

**Tips for winterizing for outside** – Drain the gas from your lawn mowers and any other outdoor equipment. Drain and store water hoses inside to prevent cracking. Replace worn outdoor equipment. Drain and store water. Gas from your lawn mowers and any other equipment can be purchased at any local hardware store. When leaving for an extended period, store the gas from your lawn mowers and any other equipment.

**Basic guidelines for winterizing your car**— Check the antifreeze to make sure you have the correct mixture. A tester is cheap and can be found at any automotive store. Make sure the battery is in good condition and the terminals are clean. Check the brake fluid to ensure the proper levels and to see that it is clear, not cloudy. Windshield wipers need to be in good condition to keep snow and ice clear when you are driving. Finally, the proper inflation of your tires is crucial to keeping you safely on the road.

**Pet safety** – If possible, keep pets indoors. Dry your dog’s paws, legs and stomach when you bring them in to remove any salt or mud. If your dog is sensitive to the weather due to age, illness or type of breed, only take them out to relieve themselves. If inside is not an option for you, make sure that your pet has adequate shelter with plenty of dry bedding. Position the opening away from the wind. Remember that cats especially are in danger. Many seek shelter under car hoods to stay warm. Before you start the engine of your car, bang loudly on the hood. A running engine poses potentially fatal circumstances for a cat.

**Emergency Kits**— An emergency kit for your car should include:
- Cell phone and car charger
- An ice scraper and windshield de-icer
- Flares
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Non-perishable food, a non-electric can opener, and bottled water
- First-aid kit
- Jumper cables
- Inflated spare tire and tire changing tools
- Small fire extinguisher
- Some sort of dry food such as energy bars and bottled water
- Sand or kitty litter for traction

An emergency kit for your home should include:
- Candles and matches
- Back-up heat such as a fireplace or gas heaters
- Battery-powered radio, clock, flashlight or lantern and extra batteries
- Blankets
- First-aid kit
- Rock salt and a snow shovel
Enrollment Is Up; Better Hurry!
By Liz Terry

The end of the semester is near! That is why we all need to enroll for next semester as soon as possible for the spring 2012 semester.

Interim Dean of the Sayre campus, Mrs. Sherron Manning, reported that the enrollment for 2012 spring semester is 3.46% higher than last spring!

And this was reported at the end of the sixth week of pre-enrollment.

Financial Aid will be the same as last year, but starting in 2013, graduate students cannot receive subsidized loans, only unsubsidized loans. Undergraduates can still receive subsidized loans, which means the interest doesn’t accumulate until after the person graduates.

Spring semester will begin Wednesday, January 11.

Hopefully everyone will come back this spring and keep working toward their goals.

Med Techs plan February Fundraiser
By Liz Terry

The students in the Medical Laboratory Technician Program have an annual fundraiser to help pay the cost of attending the National Convention every year.

Last year’s convention was held in Miami, Florida, and this year’s convention will be in San Antonio, Texas.

Last year’s Valentine Fundraiser was very successful, so the students plan to once again sell delicious homemade treats and/or stuffed animals.

So plan now to buy your valentine gifts from the Med Tech students and help them achieve their goal to attend the national convention in the summer of 2012.

Will We Survive 2012?

“French village faces influx of apocalypse believers . . . They believe the world will end on 21 December 2012, the end of a 5,125-year-long cycle in the ancient Maya calendar,” states the BBC News. This idea has made headlines for some time now.

As the date nears, what do Bulldawgs think about the end of the world?

Brandon Millar of OKC, said, “Hokum. Absolute hokum. I’ll be partying in the streets.”

“I just did a whole research paper on the Mayans, and I think there is a lot of truth, but the world ending? No, I don’t believe that. Not yet at least,” said Eileen Murray, of Hammon.

“They just ran out of rock to write on,” said Jeremy Leverett of Elk City.

Said Katie Dumas, while crocheting in the Lit Pit, “I don’t think anybody can determine when the world will end.”

Mitchell Clark of Mangum looked up from his studies and agreed.

“Generations come and go, but the earth abides forever,” promises Ecclesiastes 1:4,” said instructor Terry Ford. “No need to worry. The earth has to be here for the meek to inherit it!”

“2012? It was a great movie,” stated Librarian April Miller.

Assistant librarian Dianna Mosburg said of the end of the world, “Been there, done that, in Y2K.”
There's a New Sheriff in Town!

By Kaci Taylor

Rick Hudson, the Sayre campus janitor and maintenance man, will be wearing a new hat, so to speak. To his many duties, he is training to be a CLEET certified officer.

CLEET is a type of training to become a reserve police officer. It teaches you when to do what. Hudson began training in November and will continue training in Weatherford through April 9th.

“In this training, you learn your basic duties as an officer,” Hudson states. He is learning many useful skills as an officer, including how to fill out reports, the skills to detect drugs and paraphernalia, qualify with a pistol, and hand-to-hand conflicts (arrests).

When asked how he feels about carrying a weapon, he told us that he felt comfortable with it because he was in the service, has been a hunter all his life and had other times in his life where he had dealt with guns. However, using it may be a different story!

Officers must complete 240 hours of class, which is approximately four months of training. Upon completing those hours, they must take a final exam in order to graduate the program.

Hudson will join fellow employee Alan Shockey, who is already certified. Both are a wonderful addition to the safety and well-being of the campus.

Bulldawgs Shares Christmas Traditions

By Kaci Taylor

Christmas traditions are a part of many families' lives. According to Webster's Dictionary, “tradition” is an “inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior.” Families today have many ways of celebrating Christmas. The memories made are priceless and will always have a special place in the heart. This time of year makes you want to spend time with the people you love, sit by the fire, and drink a hot cup of hot chocolate. So, we asked students to tell about their favorite part of Christmas.

“My favorite Christmas tradition is choosing a tree and decorating it. I love the smell and the whole family being able to do this together. I also love all the lights and Christmas candles.” —Julie Olson.

“We have recently started a new Christmas tradition. Last year I found a beautiful copy of The Night Before Christmas. We read it together for the first time last Christmas Eve. I am looking forward to this year’s reading and for all the others to come.”—Alyssa Brandon

“My family’s Christmas tradition is having a birthday cake for Jesus.”—Becca Sims

“My tradition is waking up in my Superman onesie.”—Aaron Fultz

“My favorite part of Christmas is going to Grandma’s and playing Dirty Santa. Everyone’s objective is to steal whatever Dad wants!”—Ashley Brewer

“My dad would dress up every year and bring our Christmas presents as Santa. At age 4, I noticed Santa’s shoes were exactly like my dad’s shoes—and that my dad was Santa.”—Samantha Johnson

“My favorite Christmas tradition is giving gifts. I love the expression on a child’s face when he or she receives a gift. Adults also receive gifts, but it’s not the same as it is for a child.”—Bianca Sanchez.

“I think the best Christmas I ever had as a child was the year my mom bought all of our gifts from Dollar General, so they were cheap little toys like yo-yo’s and jump ropes, but it was the first and only year we had so many presents under the tree.”—Lacy Lamm

“At our Christmas get-togethers, my aunt rights and reads a story about the Hathaway family, and in the story she includes certain words that mean to pass the presents to the left or to the right. When the story comes to an end, you are left with one of the presents in your hand.”—Jada Hathaway

“My favorite tradition is sitting around the table eating . . . I pile my plate full . . . I eat a little, then stand up to stretch, and then sit down and eat more until I get done. Then it’s nap time.”—Chastity Dyer

Traditions vary, but they all bring happiness to your heart. Merry Christmas!