

THE CURRENT SAUCE



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01-03 NEWS

Every Natchitoches Christmas season brings in hundreds of tourists to the Christmas Festival, read about the measures local law enforcement takes to secure the city. In other news, a year later and the Ronald Caldwell Jr, case remains unsolved.

04-06 ARTS & LIVING

It's time for the Christmas Gala! Take a look at the behind-the-scenes of this NSU student production. While Natchitoches' Front Street scene is prominent during the holidays, Dark Woods Christmas gives locals and tourists a new attraction to visit. Two student organizations join efforts to help the First Baptist Church in Operation Christmas Child.

10-12 SPORTS

In this series of sports stories, we learn about the causes that the NBA, NFL and MLB athletes donate to during the holiday season. This year, the Grand Marshall for the Natchitoches Christmas Parade is LSU's gymnastics team, read about how NSU and LSU students feel about this decision. NSU Demons and Lady Demons basketball teams will host a toy drive in December to give back to their younger fans.

13-14 VIEWPOINTS

After this year's presidential elections, politics may be a topic of discussion during the holidays, but don't worry, we offer tips on how to have these conversations. NSU students shared how they celebrate the holidays.



Law enforcement braces for influx of traffic before the Natchitoches holiday season

Photo by Jayda Gee. With the start of the Christmas season in Natchitoches, local law enforcement braces for an influx of tourists.

BY NINA OVALLE

As December approaches, the small city of Natchitoches with a population of 17,195 transforms into a thriving Christmas destination known as the City of Lights. Roughly 100,000 locals and tourists alike come flooding in every weekend for the Natchitoches Christmas Festival. As the streets fill with tourists looking for holiday fun, the influx of traffic that comes with them creates a greater job for local authorities.

The Natchitoches Police Department works with the Northwestern State University of Louisiana University Police department and surrounding parishes police departments to control traffic during

this peak in tourism.

This season, the city does not only have to monitor the usual flow of traffic but assess drivers as they enter the in-construction roundabout at Highway 6.

While a large increase of visitors is bound to bring in traffic, the Natchitoches Christmas parade also plays a part in clogging streets. The parade route begins on NSU's campus, goes down to Front Street, loops around Second Street and ends back on campus. Because of this, many roads that locals use daily are closed for long periods of time, making Natchitoches drivers maneuver their way around the city.

John Greely, public information officer for the Natchitoches Police Department, explained that their deputies will put contraflows in place within key locations of Natchitoches during the festival to control traffic; contraflows are temporary instructions for vehicles to travel in the opposite direction of a lane's normal traffic flow.

"Basically, we'll put officers at the intersections of Jefferson, University, Second and the little roads in between," Greely said. "And every vehicle that heads towards University Parkway - we'll try to get them going west towards I-49."

This approach to controlling traffic

during the Christmas festival prioritizes exit routes in Natchitoches.

"It's all just crowd control and trying to keep everybody safe. You get a lot of folks that aren't very familiar with Natchitoches, so it's really just getting folks to exit points to try to get them out of town safely," Greely said.

To ensure a smooth operation in this initiative, several police departments from the surrounding areas offer their service to the Natchitoches community during the Christmas season.

In 2022, the Natchitoches Police Department published a press release to thank

all participating departments. The press release stated that a total of 140 officers and deputies of Louisiana Police departments came to Natchitoches to assist during the Christmas festival. This included 40 deputies from the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Office, 21 troopers from Louisiana State Police, 12 officers from the NSU Police Department, six officers from the Alexandria Police Department, six deputies from Rapides Parish Sheriff's Office, four officers from Lake Charles Police Department, three officers from Evangeline Parish Sheriff's Office, three deputies from Ouachita Parish Sheriff's Office, three deputies from Webster Parish Sheriff's Office, two deputies from Calcasieu Parish Sheriff's Office, two deputies from Grant Parish Sheriff's Office, one officer from Eunice Police Department and one deputy from Red River Sheriff's Office.

Deputies and officers from these departments are stationed sporadically throughout the historic district of Natchitoches for the festival.

"From Front, Second and Third Street, we'll have officers and deputies all down there and then, once the fireworks end, we'll expand citywide to try and help with traffic control," Greely said. "It sounds like it's a big production, but it's really quite easy once everybody gets on the same page."

Prior to any action toward these efforts, leadership from participating police departments meet members of the Natchitoches Convention and Visitors Bureau to discuss details of how to safely host the Christmas festival. Greely mentioned that a part of this meeting includes traffic control.

One large topic of discussion this year surrounded the ongoing construction of the Highway 6 roundabout.

"I believe they were told that it was gonna be completed by the festival weekend, but if it's not completed, then it is going to be deemed a traffic hazard, and we'll 100% have police down there to try and point folks in the right direction," Greely said.

Erin Mills, public information officer for the Louisiana Department of Development and Transportation, said that the original plan to have the roundabout completed by the first festival weekend is no longer in action. Rather, they hope to have all construction completed before Christmas itself. The project is currently estimated to be completed by the middle of December.

"It's well known that we've been trying to get this fully completed before what everybody knows is a very large holiday season for the city of Natchitoches, but it won't be done by this [Nov. 23 to 24] weekend," Mills said.

There are no official precautionary measures in place to station police officers near the roundabout construction site.

"We would monitor traffic and if there appears to be significant congestion or people just simply cannot manage to maneuver through there, just like any construction project, then we would enlist the help of law enforcement," Mills said.

The meeting was also to identify the specific responsibilities for officers and deputies during the Christmas festival season.

"Generally, the university police department handles the parade, where it first starts on campus," Greely said. "They generally help us with a lot of the floats and doing all the portable breath tests on anybody that's driving."

In addition to overseeing the parade floats, NSU University Police are stationed at all the exit points of University Parkway. Wesley Harrell, University Police captain, elaborated on these responsibilities.

"We assist them with traffic control on University Parkway throughout Christmas Festival Day," Harrell said. "We limit the flow of traffic to the downtown area and close parade routes."

Harrell views this sense of collaboration between police departments as an opportunity to better the community.

"We have a good working relationship with other Law Enforcement agencies in our region. We all work together on various events. The ability to be able to support each other is vital in keeping the Natchitoches and NSU communities safe," Harrell said.

Tommy Carnline, Chief of Staff and public information officer for Rapides Parish Sheriff's Office, agrees with Harrell

on the importance of collaboration between police departments.

"We've assisted in many festivals all over the state, that's kind of what law enforcement does," Carnline said. "Anytime there's a request for assistance, no matter what it's for, then you answer that call, so we're happy to do it."

Carnline shared that the Rapides Parish Sheriff's Office will typically send anywhere from six to 12 deputies depending on the need from Natchitoches.

"We are more than happy to assist them in their mission of providing a safe and happy family environment for the Natchitoches Christmas Festival. It is a yearly tradition that we all have honored and been part of," Carnline said.

With the delay of the roundabout completion and the start of a busy holiday season, law enforcement work together to monitor and secure the city.



Photo by Lia Portillo

Law enforcement officials spread throughout the festival to monitor the crowd.

A year later, justice eludes family of slain NSU football player Ronnie Caldwell

BY HALEY WIGGINS

Last fall, tragedy struck Northwestern State University of Louisiana when a beloved football player was gunned down steps from campus.

A little more than a year later, the killing of Ronnie Caldwell Jr. remains unsolved and there are few signs of a shooting that shook the community. On campus, it's business as usual.

"It's a shame that the killer has not been caught, I feel like the parents deserve justice for their son," Camden Strouther, senior communication major, said.

The case is still ongoing, and the person responsible for his death remains free. Even as they seek justice, Caldwell's loved ones have seen recent setbacks in a lawsuit they filed against NSU and others following the shooting.

Andrea Odom, the family spokesperson, did not respond to attempts of contact in time for deadline.

Caldwell, 21, was fatally shot Oct. 12, 2023, across from NSU's campus at the Quad Apartment Complex, managed by Campus Advantage, Inc.



Photo by Haley Wiggins.

A little more than a year later, the killing of Ronnie Caldwell Jr. remains unsolved and there are few signs of a shooting that shook the community.



Photo by Haley Wiggins.

On Nov. 16, grieving families and friends gathered at a march for justice in Natchitoches City Park to bring attention to gun violence and unsolved murders.

When Caldwell was killed, his roommate, John Mcintosh, 28, was identified as a suspect in a police report and then jailed on gun and drug charges.

More than a year later, police still have not arrested anyone for Caldwell's death - a killing that left an open wound in the community.

Over the summer, Mcintosh pleaded guilty to charges of illegal carrying of a weapon and possession of drug paraphernalia and was sentenced to six months of supervised probation. Police recovered a firearm, magazine and three types of bullets authorities said belonged to Mcintosh, but he has not been charged in Caldwell's killing.

In 2014 Mcintosh was arrested on one count of attempted second degree murder which was lessened to aggravated second degree battery.

His defense attorney, John Bokenfohr, did not respond to attempts of contact.

Another arrest was made after the shooting. Maurice Campbell II, a teammate and close friend of Caldwell, was booked on counts of obstruction of justice, possession of marijuana with intent to distribute and possession of a firearm in the presence of a controlled dangerous substance. A plea is set for Jan. 14, 2025.

Campbell was not able to be reached for comment before deadline.

Many players on the team considered Caldwell a brother and were looking forward to completing the 2023 season in his honor. But the university canceled the team's remaining five games in the wake of the shooting.

Tyler Vander Waal was a NSU football player who transferred after the cancellation of the season. "When we found

out that they were canceling the season, we were like, 'we have to play, we have to honor Ronnie's memory, this is what Ronnie would've wanted,'" Vander Waal said. "It wasn't a player's decision; it was a coach's decision."

Travon Jones was on the team last year. Jones, Caldwell's teammates and other student athletes experienced the aftermath of the shooting firsthand.

He said several of his fraternity members had been at the Quad celebrating another fraternity member's birthday when they heard the gunshots. "When they looked out," Jones said, "they looked to the left and saw his body right there."

It's not clear whether the shooting was captured on surveillance video. The Quad did not respond to requests for comment.

The Caldwell family filed a lawsuit Dec. 28, alleging negligence on the part of NSU, Campus Advantage Inc. and former Demons head coach Brad Laird. The family said Laird had been warned Caldwell was in a dangerous living situation and had urged him to take action.

Days before the shooting, Caldwell told his father that Mcintosh had pulled a gun on him, according to the lawsuit, which alleges the two "were not a good match" and had a series of "verbal altercations" during their short stint as roommates.

Ronald Caldwell Sr., Caldwell's father, later spoke out in a press conference in late October 2023. "All I have to say is this could have been prevented. I called the coach, I texted him and asked him to please move my son, somebody pulled a gun on him. I need you to move him, get him away from that, get him in a hotel until I can get there, I'll be there this weekend," he said. Next thing I know, next phone call I get from this man is at 2:07, Thursday that my son is deceased."

In the same press conference, Tony Pradia, the family's lawyer, spoke about the parties being sued. "We can say that the university, the coach, they failed Ronnie Jr., and the apartment complex also, which is Campus Advantage, which is an Austin, (Texas) based company who manages properties for universities to house students," Pradia said.

However, in Laird's affidavit he challenged the statements of Caldwell Sr.

"On Tuesday, Oct. 10, 2023, I met with Ronald Caldwell, Jr. to discuss the information provided to me by his father on Oct. 9, 2023. Ronald Caldwell, Jr. told me his roommate had a gun, but Ronald Caldwell, Jr. never said the roommate had 'pulled a gun on him.'

"Ronald Caldwell, Jr., said he and his roommate had an argument brought about by the roommate's jealousy over

Ronald Caldwell, Jr.'s having an athletic scholarship and not having to work. Ronald Caldwell, Jr. said the argument had ended; the argument was not a 'big deal,' and there was no problem.

"Ronald Caldwell, Jr. also told me his father was being 'overprotective,' and that Ronald Caldwell, Jr. did not need to move from The Quad Apartment Complex. Ronald Caldwell, Jr. further told me his father was not coming to Natchitoches with regard to the roommate situation or his living at The Quad Apartment Complex, because there was nothing to worry about."

The suit against Laird was dismissed in June, and the claims against the university were also thrown out on Nov. 14. However, the claims against Campus Advantage Inc. have not been dismissed.

The Natchitoches Police Department did not respond to requests for updates on the Caldwell case.

As it remains an ongoing investigation, many are left wondering what happened the night Caldwell took his last breath. Following his death, Natchitoches Parish faced an increase in gun related incidents.

On Nov. 16, grieving families and friends gathered at a march for justice in Natchitoches City Park to bring attention to gun violence and unsolved murders. They walked together chanting "We want justice, put the guns down," and called out the names of lost loved ones. Deaths related to gun violence affect not only those involved, but the entire community.

"I do hope the person responsible is found. I just don't understand how something that big was talked about and nothing has really come out of it yet," Quincy Beasley, Spirit of Northwestern Marching Band member, said. "I thought it was handled by the first couple of months or so."

The death of Caldwell impacted many people, and the case still being unsolved can be discouraging to those affected as well as those wanting answers related to the lives lost to gun violence.

Correction 11/27

This article originally mentioned that Ronald Caldwell Jr. was a member of a fraternity. It has been updated as he was not a member of the fraternity.



Photo by Haley Wiggins.
On Oct. 19, 2023, the Demons football team played in honor of Ronald Caldwell Jr. The season was cancelled shortly after this game.

Dark Woods Christmas shines bright with new additions to the park

BY MADELYN MURPHY

It's that time of year. The air has a chilled feeling to it, everyone is out shopping and the Natchitoches Christmas Festival is going on. Instead of joining the bustling crowd downtown, some people enjoy Christmas elsewhere. At a place along University Parkway, people smile and sip their hot cocoa, mesmerized by the twinkling, dazzling Christmas lights surrounding them. Carefree of whatever notifications their phone has, the only thing they're thinking about is the nice time they're having with loved ones.

With over 300,000 Christmas lights, Dark Woods Christmas is an immersive experience filled with entertainment, a variety of sweet treats, food, photo opportunities and more. It is one of the special events Dark Woods Adventure Park has.

The owners, Jason Summerlin and Mardy Summerlin, first came up with the concept of Dark Woods Adventure Park 11 years ago. Currently, this family-owned adventure park includes Dark Woods Outfitters, Dark Woods Lost Treasure Mining Company, Dark Woods Haunted Attraction and Dark Woods Christmas. The Dark Woods Haunted Attraction is where it all began, as Jason Summerlin had over 20 years in the haunt industry after working at haunted houses with his dad from a young age.

When they came up with this idea, Mardy Summerlin said, "well, if you get

haunt, I get Christmas because that's one of my favorites."

Jason Summerlin immediately started thinking about how to make this happen for Mardy Summerlin. When Mardy asks, he always delivers. "He does that for me a lot," she said.

Jason Summerlin and Mardy Summerlin got married in 2012. They first met in Natchitoches, Louisiana while doing a project for the Association for the Preservation of Historic Natchitoches.

"That's where we first met," Mardy Summerlin said. "27 years ago ... Isn't that crazy?"

While some people feel it's best to never work with a spouse, the Summerlins disagree. "We like it, we like being together every day. It works for us," Mardy Summerlin shared.

This 2024 season will mark the 10th anniversary of Dark Woods Christmas season. When the couple first began building out, they wanted a Christmas attraction but couldn't afford it all at once.

"We went into a store that was selling Christmas, and all of their stuff was 90% off. It was tens of thousands of dollars worth of stuff, and I just looked at Jason. He said, 'just get it and we can start,'" Mardy Summerlin recalled. "Everybody was shopping, and I just got a manager

and I said, 'stop, we'll take everything.'"

The Summerlins were given the perfect opportunity to open the park for Christmas, so that's exactly what they did. What started as a small, walk-through Christmas program has turned into an entire event with numerous attractions.

When people first walk in, they're surrounded by Christmas lights. Not only are there lights at the entrance, but they are present throughout the park. There's a 128-foot-long bridge that leads to the back of the park, and lights are all around it. The trails within the woods even have lights.

The Christmas lights alone make the event so captivating, but the food, drinks and treats accentuate the holiday spirit feel.

"The donuts and the hot chocolates are so pretty that, the second you bring them out, people are like, 'oh my gosh,'" Mardy Summerlin said. "We make all our food Instagram worthy."

Located in the park, Molly Moo's Soft Serve and Sweets has treats such as Dippin' Dots, Dole Whip pineapple soft-serve and the soft-serve Dark Woods Shiver, which is customizable with toppings and can be paired with a Coca-Cola drink product.

This year, they are opening a brand new cafe called Black Cat Cafe.

"Black Cat Cafe is a completely new building - big counter service," Jason Summerlin said.

Black Cat Cafe will serve food such as miniature donuts, pizza, meat pies and more.

The park also offers gourmet hot chocolate with a range of different flavors: triple chocolate, s'mores, The Grinch, peppermint, salted caramel and gingerbread.

There are s'mores-making kits for sale, so families can sit by the fire pits, indulge in the sweet treat, warm up and sing Christmas carols. They can even sing along with the Mistletones, singing Christmas trees located in the park.

Other attractions include the opportunity to meet and take holiday photos with Santa, Mrs. Claus, elves and other characters, snow machines and The Bear Factory at Dark Woods.

The Bear Factory at Dark Woods has over 25 bears and buddies to choose

from, and they are all made out of recycled plastic materials. For the Christmas season, they have themed bears and outfits for them.

In addition to these fun-for-all attractions, this Christmas season will be the soft launch for the Dark Woods Buccaneer Bayou Adventure Mini Golf.

"We've just built a million-dollar miniature golf course," Mardy Summerlin said. "It's amazing. There's nothing like it in the state of Louisiana."

Buccaneer Bayou is a gulf coast and Caribbean pirate-themed golf course with five ponds, two waterfalls and 19 holes. Rather than being on a flat area, the course is divided into three major levels.

"As we're developing ourselves into a park, we're going to other vendors that can help us bring this local attraction up to a national level," Jason Summerlin said. "So the theming company has worked for years with Dollywood and Silver Dollar City. They've done imagining work for Disney."

The grand opening for Buccaneer Bayou will be this March, but this Christmas season will allow people the opportunity to play before it's officially opened.

With new attractions coming to Dark Woods and the seasonal attractions taking center stage, the Summerlins work as a team to make all of this possible.

"I do the ordering and decorating and merchandising, and he puts it all together and plugs it in and says it's working," Mardy Summerlin said.

However, the Summerlins explained they could not do all of this by themselves. Not only are all four of the Summerlins' children and their spouses involved in Dark Woods, but they also have year-round and seasonal workers.

Jason Summerlin said they have three to four weeks to set up for Dark Woods Christmas, so there are multiple 12-to-16-hour work days for preparation. Only around 15 people help set up.

"No, we don't have the city crews," Jason Summerlin said.

Toward the last couple of weeks, the setup crew starts coming in later in the day until around midnight. In the end, though, all of the late nights and hours upon hours spent preparing are rewarding, Mardy Summerlin said.

"I love watching people sit around, pack



Courtesy of Dark Woods

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Current Sauce is the official student-run newspaper for Northwestern State University. The content and stories within the paper may not necessarily reflect the views of administration, faculty and staff.

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Photo by Madelyn Murphy. Jason Summerlin (left) and Mardy Summerlin (right) sit on their brand new, soon-to-be-opened Buccaneer Bayou Adventure Mini Golf course.

up around the fire pits and just sit and visit, and they put their phones away," she said. "The kids are playing, and they're just visiting and talking with no electronics and just enjoying the Christmas music and being together."

The atmosphere created within Dark Woods Christmas serves as a unique getaway for all.

"Y'know, businesses have to make money, but it's not just about business out here. We say this is a family environment, and it is, but, even for the people behind the scenes, it's a family, too," Joe Hyatt, a manager at Dark Woods who has worked there since 2017, said. "They (Jason and Mardy) treat everybody like family. They created kind of this space where everybody feels welcome, included and part of the process."

Working at Dark Woods Christmas has allowed Hyatt to make new sales for his small business, Cane River Rustic Decor.

"They (Jason and Mardy) actually offered to have me as a vendor. I got into woodwork about probably 8 years ago, and I make things like American flags out of wood; I do other things like signs, welcome signs," Hyatt shared.

Normally, Hyatt is on the haunted side of Dark Woods for set up, and he attends Dark Woods Christmas as a vendor. This year, though, he is helping to set up lights, too.

"It's always amazing to see how it goes from this dark and eerie, haunted thing in October to this festive, all lit-up thing. The transition to me is amazing," Hyatt said. "I think being part of the process and watching the change is going to be really cool."

Dark Woods Christmas is an event for people to attend whether they are visiting or locals.

"I think it's just a fun family event to do, especially for visitors from out of town. Y'know the riverfront is great always,

but this is kind of an alternate attraction to come and see," Hyatt said. "Here, you actually get to get close to the lights and see it up close without a river in between you; it's more personal."

Located at 4343 University Parkway, Dark Woods Christmas will have its "turn on the lights" weekend of Nov. 29 to 30. After this, the program will resume every Wednesday through Sunday from Dec. 6 to Dec. 25. It will be open from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on weekdays and 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. on weekends.

"If you're ready to engage and get into the holiday spirit, this is a good place to start it," Mardy Summerlin said.

Tickets can be purchased onsite at the

box office each night. For people aged 4 and up, tickets are \$8. Children aged 3 and younger get in free.

"We're open Christmas Eve and Christmas night, too, so I think it's cool that people want to spend that time here," Jason Summerlin said. "You can go anywhere and do that. You can stay home, you can go down the riverbank ... but there's a lot of people that just come here; they want to come here on Christmas Eve or Christmas. They can go anywhere, but they come here."

When the Christmas season comes to an end, it doesn't mean Dark Woods will come to an end. This March, Dark Woods Adventure Park will launch Buccaneer Bayou Adventure Mini Golf and celebrate their 10th anniversary.



Photo by Madelyn Murphy. Daisy, who is Dark Woods employee Joel Patton's dog, has been around the park for 10 years. "She's been at this park every day for 10 years; she's my boss," Patton said.

A behind the scenes look of the 36th annual Christmas Gala



Photo by Lia Portillo.
This year's student stage manager is Annie Rivera-Flores. As student stage manager, her job is to be the channel of communication between directors, designers and student performers.

BY ISABEL JUAREZ RUBIO

Lights, camera, action! Northwestern State University of Louisiana's Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts students prepare for its annual Christmas Gala to be performed from Dec. 4 to 6.

Behind this spectacle are long hours of rehearsals, fittings and strategic planning, in which more than 300 students and staff from CAPA unite and work tirelessly to deliver four performances during a three-day period.

"They all start prepping with a lot of anticipation or as much anticipation as they can get, this semester we've had a lot of shows back to back so it's a lot going on at once," Annie Rivera-Flores, a senior double majoring in theatre and communication, said. She is this year's student stage manager for Gala.

As student stage manager, her job is to be the channel of communication between directors, designers and student performers. She also organizes production meetings, runs rehearsals alongside the director, makes appointments for costume fittings, gives cues and makes sure everybody knows what's going on. Rivera-Flores has the responsibility to "call" the show, meaning that she calls everything that needs to happen and be brought on stage.

Luckily, Rivera-Flores has two student assistants who help her keep everything organized and moving on track. "They are the ones doing the backstage magic, while I'm doing the magic upstairs calling the show," she said.

Not only do students play a big role for Gala, but directors also make this performance happen. This is the first year Sean Bartley, an assistant professor of theatre history, will direct the Christmas

Gala. His job as director includes many duties, but the main one is planning the show. His job is to tie in all the performances, establish context and ensure all departments play their part.

"The most challenging part I would say is determining the running order. I also work out the transitions between all of the pieces," Bartley said. "And that job is about logistics. For example, how can I space out the dance numbers with scenes and songs and will that be enough time to set up for the next act and will that be enough time for the performers to change to different costumes and be back onstage."

Bartley shared that he started prepping for the show last spring when he volunteered and was chosen to be the director. He has made sure to meet with all the directors once a month since the beginning of this semester to brainstorm ideas and implement their ideas along with his.

He described this Gala as a collage, as it's going to be a series of continuous small acts, Bartley said. He also shared that the concept of this year's Gala is the celebrations of old and new Gala traditions.

"So we are both bringing back some Gala traditions that we have gotten away from in recent years and also introducing some new elements, but in particular, new music; there is going to be a large hip-hop number."

With a large production like this one, tech and sound play a huge part in the backstage of the show.

Robert Richoux, an associate professor of production and design and the technical director of Gala, is in charge of all the

technical production needed to run the show. He also makes sure that the backstage production paths are clear and safe for prompts to be brought on stage.

"We are basically putting all of the performers together with the elements of technical work," Richoux said. "We are putting people on microphones for the first time, running lights, doing sound and mic checks - things like that."

Technical check practices start the Sunday after Thanksgiving, Richoux said.

Part of helping backstage is not seeing the final production of the show; this is why they have a crew watch, which is a chance for the backstage crew to watch the finished product.

"One problem with working backstage is that you never see the final product so we always try to give our students the opportunity to see the show before they are running the show," Richoux said.

With limited time, students and directors work tirelessly to make sure everyone is ready for the show.

Director of choral activities Shane Thomas is a testament to this.

"Lyrica and Orpheus only meet twice a week; chamber choir meets four times a week. So some of these groups have had a little more time with the music, some have literally only had four rehearsals, and so I think people think we spend all semester rehearsing, but we truly don't; we spend limited time," Thomas said.

Three of the four choral ensembles will be participating in the Gala this year, this will also be Thomas' first year as the choir director of Gala. The choir will be the largest group participating - individually and as a group.

"Chamber of choir will do a number, Lyrica and Orpheus will combine and do a number and then, finally, all 80 singers will be on stage," Thomas said. "So this has influenced our rehearsal process."

Thomas said all 80 students will only rehearse together once before the show due to conflicting schedules and finals week for the students.

At the same time the chamber choir is rehearsing for Gala, they are also having rehearsals for the Natchitoches Christmas Festival where they will offer their caroling services.

"This is the way we give back, even though all of our students are involved, and it turns into a pretty hectic week leading up to it," Thomas said. "I think it also provides our students the joy of bringing their own season together however they choose to celebrate it."

Students and faculty are committed to each and every show performed, and the Christmas Gala exemplifies this.

The NSU annual Christmas Gala will be presented Wednesday, Dec. 4 at 7 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 5 at 7 p.m. and Dec. 6 at 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. To purchase tickets, visit Christmas-gala-nsu. NSU, BPCC@NSU and LSMSA students get in free with a current student ID.



Photo by Lia Portillo.
The 36th annual Christmas Gala will be held Dec. 4 through 6 at A.A. Fredericks Auditorium.

BCM, Theta Chi help First Baptist Church gift magic to children through Operation Christmas Child

BY BELLA MICHLER

Every year, families from all around the world gather to celebrate Christmas by giving gifts to their loved ones.

For children who are not as fortunate, Operation Christmas Child is a program that gives those children the opportunity to receive a gift during the holiday season. This is an annual program overseen by the Samaritan's Purse, in which various donations are packaged to be shipped out to children all over the globe.

At Northwestern State University of Louisiana, student organizations like the Baptist Collegiate Ministry and the Theta Chi Fraternity Eta Omicron chapter volunteer to help the First Baptist Church in Natchitoches complete this mission.

During the third week of November, which is known as "National Collection Week," churches, schools, organizations and communities collect new or lightly used donations to pack shoe boxes with items such as toys, toiletries, school supplies and more. Shoebox packers choose whether their box will be for a girl or a boy and what age category their box will be for. Then, they package the box according to the age and gender they selected.

The different age categories for the boxes can range from 2-4 years, 5-9 years and 10-14 years, according to Brenda Ingram, logistics and collection center coordinator for West Central Louisiana's Operation Christmas Child.

Part of the operation's fuel supply is the hard work of volunteers at First Baptist Church, the BCM and other surrounding communities.

"At the BCM, the family group leaders are able to kind of lead the packing of boxes, but anyone who is a member of the BCM helps out in some way," Karly Stansell, informational cluster leader of BCM, said. "Whether it's donating supplies, donating money, helping to pack a box or just praying for the boxes and donations, it's easy and fun to participate in. Who doesn't love picking out stuffed animals and coloring books for kids who would need and love them?"

While the BCM helped with packing and donating items for boxes, NSU's Theta Chi Fraternity helped the FBC move the boxes into the delivery truck.

"My favorite part was the teamwork involved," Connor Benoit, Theta Chi secretary-elect, said. "We usually had six guys, and we would have two guys pick up the boxes, then they would take it to the two guys in the middle, and they would take it to the two guys at the end



Photo by Karly Stansell. First Baptist Church and BCM hold donation drop offs throughout the month of November, striving to make sure more boys and girls experience the magic of Christmas.

who would fit the boxes in the shipping container. Everyone just gave it their all, gave it their best." Benoit added that having the opportunity to give back to the community with his fraternity brothers was a chance for them to showcase their bond and doing it through Operation Christmas Child added special meaning to their service.

Each volunteer has a different motivation for helping out, but it all comes down to the impact their hours of packaging meaningful and useful items have on each child.

"We're all there for one reason," Josie Fowler, vice president and women's ministry leader of BCM, explained. "This may be some of the few items the child ever has. They also may receive these boxes one time in their life. It's our job to make it count. The best part about packing boxes is being able to selflessly gather items and pray for this child you will probably never meet. You probably won't ever know them or what circumstances they are in, but you can still make an impact."

Many people involved in this operation do so with the hopes of spreading the Word of Christ. Fowler feels that if more people knew the meaning behind what they're doing, they'd be inclined to join in. Everyone has the power to make a difference in someone's life; taking a few minutes to wrap a gift for someone can make their Christmas a bit merrier.

Photo by Lluvia Guillot. BCM packs boxes for Operation Christmas Child.



Theta Chi members help First Baptist Church pack delivery truck.



Theta Chi member helps his brothers move donation boxes.

Photos submitted by Theta Chi Eta Omicron Chapter.



Theta Chi members give back to the community by assisting in Operation Christmas Child.

Christmas Lights Festival

Photo by Jayda Gee



Photo by Jayda Gee

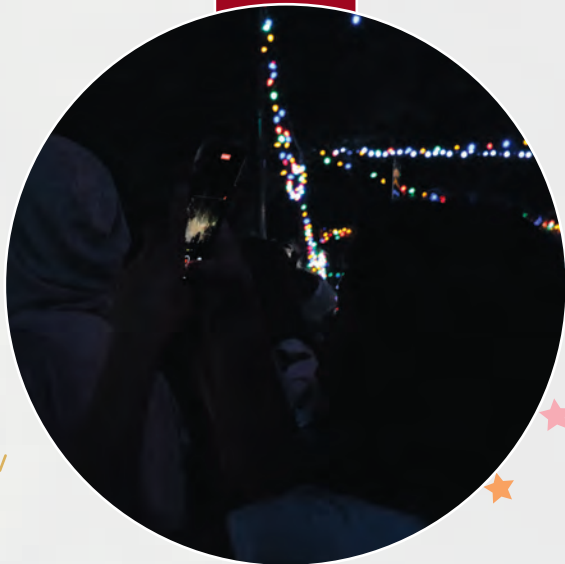


Photo by Jayda Gee





Festival Photo Gallery



Photos at night taken by Lia Portillo



National athletes go beyond the competition in their sport by making a difference during the holiday season

Courtesy of Defense Visual Information Distribution Service. NBA Cares hosted an All-Star Day of Service that was staffed by volunteers from local areas, visitors from across the country and service members from all five branches of the U.S. military, as well as current and former NBA athletes. Volunteers renovated houses for veterans and low-income families in the Algiers point neighborhood.

BY DAKOTA THOMAS

With the holiday season around the corner, athletes are making plays off the field by stepping up to make a difference through generous donations and acts of kindness.

From donating substantial sums to charitable causes to giving their time and resources to those in need, these sports stars are proving that the spirit of giving goes far beyond the game. Athletes across the National Football League, National Basketball Association and Major League Baseball gave various charitable initiatives to spread joy and support those in need.

According to CBS Sports, “Just in 2018, we’ve seen the magnificent impact of sports’ biggest names using their platforms for good like Houston Texans star J.J. Watt, for instance, announcing more than \$41 million in total raised donations for Hurricane Harvey relief.”

In 2020, former New Orleans Pelicans guard and current Boston Celtics guard Jrue Holiday and his wife used Holiday’s remaining salary for the season to help communities across the nation. His paycheck supported Black-owned businesses across 10 U.S. cities, Historically Black Colleges and Universities and nonprofit organizations and programs in both of their hometowns.

According to an ESPN article, Holiday said, “God has blessed us with so much. We know a couple of things that are important are time and money, and right now, we have both. To be able to give away our money to help further this movement and Black-owned businesses that have taken a hit in COVID-19, to us, it felt like the perfect time and opportunity.”

Los Angeles Lakers power forward LeBron James is also well known for his unrivaled commitment to supporting his community.

James has donated millions to charities and foundations in his home state of

Ohio and across the country. In 2018, he opened I Promise School in Akron, which aims to provide an enriching academic experience for at-risk students through new models of learning. Like James, Denver Nuggets point guard Russell Westbrook’s impact extends far beyond the basketball court.

In 2012, Westbrook founded the ‘Why Not?’ Foundation which provides support and encouragement to children facing adversity. Through this foundation, Westbrook has demonstrated a deep commitment to his community. Not only is he a recipient of the NBA Cares Bob Lanier Community Assist

Thompson, provided school supplies and gifts for over 600 students.

Celtics stars, including Kyrie Irving, sang carols and visited children at Boston Children’s Hospital, and Harrison Barnes of the Mavericks took families shopping for Christmas presents. Meanwhile, Timberwolves power forward Karl-Anthony Towns surprised children at Mayo Clinic with gifts and a private movie screening.

In the NFL, Vikings wide receiver Adam Thielen hosted a Christmas dinner for families, supported by The Salvation Army, which was completed with gifts and a facility tour.



Defense Visual Information Distribution Service. NBA cares is a community outreach program grounded in community service.

Award, which honors his dedication to making a positive difference. His initiatives include training at-risk young adults for future careers, offering cash assistance to families affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and more.

Golden State Warriors point guard Stephen Curry surprised homeless youth with new shoes and a catered meal, while his Warriors teammate, Klay

Cardinals defensive end Chandler Jones pledged \$20,000 per sack to Phoenix Children’s Hospital, and Eagles wide receiver Golden Tate sponsored the Toys for Kids Foundation and a charity challenge.

Dolphins players treated 150 children to toys, activities and a puppy party. Vikings tight end Kyle Rudolph organized a “North Pole” trip for hospital patients and continued supporting his therapy

center at the University of Minnesota, Kyle Rudolph’s End Zone, while Saints running back Mark Ingram took children of incarcerated parents on a shopping spree.

MLB players joined in the season of giving with the Texas Rangers delivering toys to low-income families and visiting hospitalized children.

According to an article by CBS Sports, Astros pitcher Justin Verlander hosted a Christmas event for veterans and their families as part of his year-round commitment to supporting the military.

Additionally, players like the Arizona Diamondbacks Steven Souza Jr., Tampa Bay Rays Blake Snell, New York Mets Michael Conforto and MLB stars participated in the Base By Pros’ Holiday Fan-Fest for kids; all proceeds from the event went towards ending human trafficking in the Philippines.

Through these efforts, professional athletes brought holiday cheer and meaningful support to their communities. Some critics, though, believe that athletes act charitably for tax benefits or even to enhance their public platforms.

However, Jen Shang, a philanthropic psychologist at Plymouth University, explained to BBC that the motivation of athletes may not be superficial. “Looking at philanthropy in sports, and other professions, one may start out in one’s career being motivated by external factors such as money or honors. But after a period of time it is unlikely that people are motivated so much by external rewards, and more by internal drives.”

Athletes’ commitments to giving back to their own communities demonstrates their acts of generosity that go beyond the competition. While their accomplishments on the field and court are celebrated, national athletes remind fans around the world of the true holiday spirit by giving back to local communities.

NSU and LSU students react to 2024 Natchitoches Christmas Parade Grand Marshal



Photo by Lia Portillo

Locals and tourists spread out through the parade route to watch the floats and people marching.

BY KALLIE BOURGEOIS

In early September, the Natchitoches Historic District Business Association announced that the Louisiana State University women's gymnastics team will be the Grand Marshal of this year's 98th annual Natchitoches Christmas Parade.

The Tigers will lead the parade after their record breaking success in the gymnasium at the 2024 Women's National Collegiate Athletic Association Gymnastics Championships that was held at Dickies Arena in Fort Worth, Texas earlier this April.

"We are beyond excited to welcome the LSU Gymnastics Team as the Grand Marshal of the 2024 Natchitoches Christmas Parade. Their dedication and excellence inspires everyone in Louisiana, and we are honored to celebrate their achievements during this magical time of year. Thanks to Liviniti's support, this will be a parade to remember," festival director Jill Leo addressed in an article by Natchitoches Christmas.

LSU's gymnastics team will be presented by Liviniti, a local and national pharmaceutical company that supports the well-being of people across the nation. LeAnn Boyd, CEO of Liviniti, said in an article by Natchitoches Christmas, "We are proud of our deep Louisiana roots. Christmas is a time to cherish with family, friends and time-honored traditions. We are excited to bring the LSU Gymnastics Team to our city as we gather as a community to celebrate the holiday season."

According to the NCAA, LSU's gymnastics team earned the 2024 Women's NCAA Gymnastics Championship title for the first time in its program's history. The Tigers were able to climb their way back to first against the University of California Bears, University of Utah Red Rocks and University of Florida Gators after ending with 198.2250 points. LSU managed to advance from second

to first place, while the Bears placed second with a total of 197.8500 points in Rotation 4. Along with a championship title, the Tigers ended their season with a 31-3 overall record and a 24-meet win streak, according to the NCAA.

After the team's victory at the championships in Texas, many Northwestern State University of Louisiana students are conflicted with the decision of this year's grand marshal.

Despite LSU's involvement, Brady Mathis, senior hospitality, management and tourism major, shared his excitement for the parade this year as Demon Heat color guard captain.

"I'm really excited for the parade, it's one of my favorite things to do during the season and it's a long day, but it's definitely very rewarding to see everybody having a good time during Christmas," Mathis said.

While it is a great honor for the Tigers, Mathis explained his conflicting thoughts on the gymnastics team leading the parade this year.

"I'm honestly kind of confused, but I think it's very interesting because they're a different college," Mathis said. "At the same time, it's cool that we're intermingling our schools and that they get to showcase themselves in our Christmas parade."

Much like Mathis, sophomore communication major Ella Robinson is confused by LSU's involvement in the parade, but she is also ready to share the holiday spirit during the parade.

"I think it's kind of odd and it could be fun, but I don't understand why. I feel like it's taking away from the NSU family," Robinson said. "The parade will be a blast and everyone should experience it."

Although some NSU students are unsure of LSU Camryn Loving, sophomore



Photo by Lia Portillo.

During the 2023 Natchitoches Christmas Parade, NSU student organizations, local organizations and school spirit groups around the area were part of the parade.

animal science major at LSU, explained why this could be a good opportunity for students and schools across the state to connect.

"The parade is about celebrating Christmas and other traditions that are part of our Louisiana culture, and there are fans, students and faculty from schools across the state who will attend the parade," Loving said. "It's definitely a place we can all bond and connect while celebrating."

While she is not attending the parade in Natchitoches, Loving expressed her excitement to see the women's gymnastics team be honored.

"I love to see the gymnastics team celebrating their big win across the state. I was lucky enough to go to a couple gym meets last season and had a blast," Loving said. "That team is so talented and deserves to be celebrated."

Landry Smith, sophomore nutrition and food science major at LSU, explained

how this can bring both institutions together.

"LSU and NSU are both important to Louisiana, and this is an opportunity to bridge any gaps and foster a sense of statewide unity. LSU gymnastics represents excellence in sports and inspires so many across the state – not just LSU fans – so events like this can help bring communities and schools closer together," Smith said.

She emphasized the importance that the title her school's gymnastics team holds symbolizes hard work and resilience. "It's inspiring to see them being recognized and celebrated beyond Baton Rouge. This parade is a great way to bring the whole state together to honor their success and share in the holiday spirit," Smith said.

Alongside their championship title, the Tigers will be recognized as this year's Grand Marshal of the 98th annual Natchitoches Christmas Parade on Saturday, Dec. 7 at 1 p.m.

NSU men's and women's basketball teams holds toy drive for local youth



Photo by Chris Reich. Last season, NSU Demons men's basketball met with younger fans and signed their schedule posters.

BY CHRISTIAN ROBINSON



Whether it's hosting food drives or volunteering to help train the next generation of athletes, Northwestern State University of Louisiana athletics supports the Natchitoches community. During the holiday season, the men's and women's basketball teams will hold their annual toy drive during home games in December.

Both teams use this opportunity to give back to the community that has supported them for years. Rick Cabrera, men's head basketball coach, explained how the toy drive allows the players to become involved in the community.

"It may not always be direct contact, but the fact that we can be part of something that makes our community more connected and a bit happier connects us on a deeper level," Cabrera said.

Addison Patterson, junior liberal arts major and forward, shared the team's excitement to give back to those who supported the men's team.

"People that have given back from what I have benefited from," Patterson said. "It is only right that we give back to the ones who have supported us and came to watch us play."

Jon Sanders, senior business and administration major and guard, discussed the importance of giving back to the younger fans during the holidays.

"It is a big event, you know, ever since I have been here we have done stuff like this and it is always nice to give back, especially for the holidays and making sure people are having a great time during the holidays," Sanders said.

Although this is not an official tradition of the NSU men's basketball team, Cabrera explained how he would like to make it a yearly and seasonal thing.

"As far as I know, this is only my second year here, but whether it is an established tradition or not, we are all for doing it and establishing it or continuing it either way," Cabrera said.

NSU athletics' bond with the local community goes far beyond the game. Cabrera explained the importance of building a relationship with the community and how the relationship can help build a driving force on and off the court.

"The support of the community makes for a great atmosphere in Prather Coliseum, but the relationship is a two-way street," Cabrera said.



Photos by Kallie Bourgeois Lady Demons basketball team prepares for the upcoming toy drive game during the holiday season.

This is why fundraising for the local youth in Natchitoches is vital for fostering this connection. Cabrera said, "In college towns like Natchitoches, the relationship between the university and community is a driving force – one we do not take lightly."

The men's team will hold their toy drive as they face off against the Southern University at New Orleans Knights on Friday, Dec. 20 at 1 p.m. in Prather Coliseum. The women's team will hold their toy drive as they face off against the University of Central Arkansas Bears on Saturday, Dec. 14 at 1 p.m. in Prather Coliseum.

Navigating going home for the holidays after the 2024 Presidential Election

BY KALLIE BOURGEOIS

As Northwestern State University of Louisiana's students travel back home for the holidays, there are usually hot topics bound to be brought up at the dinner table.

After the conclusion of the 2024 presidential election, many students are preparing themselves for what the holiday season will look like at home, regardless of what party or candidate they chose to support.

If your family is the type to bring up politics, you are often put in difficult situations. No one really talks about what to do in those uncomfortable situations; just know you're not alone, no matter how isolated you feel.

When I'm put in these situations, I often ask myself: Do I engage in conversation and potentially get attacked for my opinion? Do I keep my mouth shut and protect my peace for as long as I can? Where is the dog so I can find an excuse to escape this conversation?

According to an article written by the Evergreen Psychotherapy Center, there are a few strategies and tips to get you through the holiday season while still having healthy communication with your family.

Firstly, don't expect or try to change another family member's mind. This will probably spark a frustrating argument that won't end well during this time of joyful cheer. If you do end up bringing up topics relating to politics or social issues, make sure you watch your tone and approach the conversation with respect and kindness.

Even if you don't agree with another family member's belief, you should still take the time to listen. Being all ears is key to healthy communication, and you may even change your perspective on something. This also helps the other person feel validated and heard, which could potentially diffuse the conflict.

When the conversation feels like it's getting out of hand, you can try to divert the conversation to another topic like complimenting the hosts' food or what goals you have going into the new year. Even when you remain respectful as you engage in a conversation, you need to know when to step away.

If you choose to engage in a conversation, just remember that you're speaking with your family. The article by Ever-

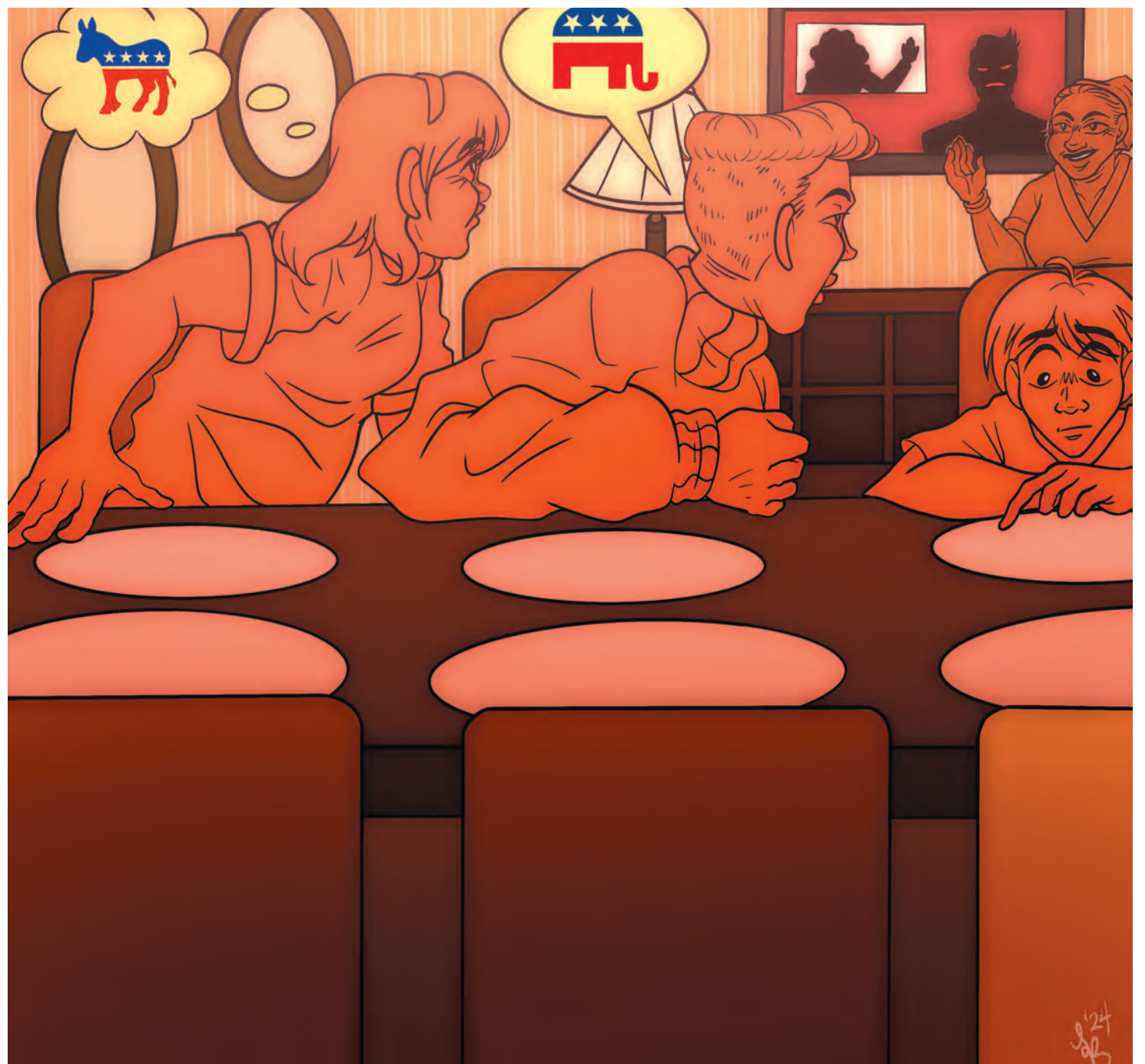


Illustration by Stephani Bradley.

If your family is the type to bring up politics, you are often put in difficult situations. No one really talks about what to do in those uncomfortable situations; just know you're not alone, no matter how isolated you feel.

green Psychotherapy Center reads, "Remind yourself that you love the people you disagree with. It's easy to become derailed in a relationship when anger and resentment build. Just because family members have different beliefs, they are not the enemy."

Whether you choose to engage in conversation or not, just know that it is okay to feel uncomfortable during this time. Coming from a non-confrontational person and someone who is afraid of arguments, I often just stay silent and try to redirect the conversation toward something more positive.

Remember that you are entitled to your own opinion which you don't have to share with anyone else. It is important to take note of your environment and how your family could potentially react to a certain topic. Make sure that, if you do decide to speak up, you are safe while doing so.

Although it can seem scary when hot topics are brought up, they don't always have to be negative. You could spark an honest and open conversation with your family.

Certain political and social issues need to be talked about, but maybe while

your uncle is carving the turkey or while you're helping your mom wrap presents isn't the best time or place.

You never know what could happen, so don't expect the worst and over-analyze what could happen. I know it's easier said than done but focus on being present and in the moment with your family, and have a safe, fun time as you travel home for the holidays.

How do NSU students celebrate the holidays

BY LIA PORTILLO



Abigail Gaspard
Senior
English

Question:

What's your favorite thing about Christmas?

Answer:

"Honestly, seeing my family. We get together throughout the year, but Christmas is always a day that I know I will be able to see everybody that I want to see and everybody that I haven't seen."



Dana Barreto Arellano
Senior
Communication

Question:

What are you doing for the holiday break?

Answer:

"This Christmas, I will be going to spend time with my friend at his family's house in Montana. It's my first Christmas here in the United States and I will enjoy the cold weather and the snow. I'm looking forward to enjoying their company and cook Colombia food for them."



Susana Polo
Freshman
Dance

Question:

What's your favorite holiday tradition?

Answer:

"Candle Day in Colombia. My mother loves this day, and we wake up early to light the candles and we pass out hot chocolate and sandwiches to the whole neighborhood."



Atziary Perez
Sophomore
Social Work

Question:

What is your favorite holiday and why?

Answer:

"My favorite holiday is New Year's because it's the perfect time for new beginnings and one of my favorite traditions I do for New Year's is eating the 12 grapes under the table so I can find the love of my life this year."



Dominick Saldivar
Junior
Music Education

Question:

What are you looking forward to this holiday season?

Answer:

"What I'm looking forward to in the holidays is seeing family because it brings me back to childhood memories. It's really great to see family again and spend time with them, and I think that's what makes the holidays so great for me."



Priscilla Rubio
Sophomore
Early Childhood Education

Question:

What are you doing this holiday season?

Answer:

"This holiday season I will be going to Mexico with my family and while in Mexico I will be going to posadas [religious holiday gatherings] that happen every year."

Holiday Word Search

Words can be found in any direction (including diagonals) and can overlap each other. Use the word bank below.

R B F C O O K I E S X B T Q Q D T X K N
 T N I M R E P P E P R G W I N T E R W G
 I G C V Z B R F U E F A O V K E F C A Y
 G I E W Q X Q N E Q F G W K N U Z V Y H
 R N K M C O X D D I G Q Y S E L D N A C
 X G E R L P N K I Y L M Q H Z M P Y L P
 F E T N Q I T F A F O A A E S C H L F M
 T R A D E C E M B E R K A L S A M L X A
 H B L R Z W E Y N S K N I T E H T O T C
 L R O H K P U C F U A L N Y E D D H D A
 B E C B S U Q J N N K E O I W L I F V H
 T A O L R E L A A M S J T G A F F E R Q
 W D H O R A H M D E K S N O W B V I R S
 W Y C D E N S G R M C H R I S T M A S D
 O K T L T Y L P S S W Q K M X X B F E D
 U I O G A L T I N S E L X Y V C T C T K
 H G H I E W V T V X A A Z N A W K H V A
 V W T L W J S T H G I L K E E P R O R Z
 U H W N S J I N G L E B E L L S X T O E
 K Y E V D M B F M E N O R A H C X F H E

Word Bank

1. Candles
2. Christmas
3. Cookies
4. December
5. Dreidel
6. Gingerbread
7. Hanukkah
8. Holly
9. Hot Chocolate
10. Jingle Bells
11. Kwanzaa
12. Lights
13. Menorah
14. Peppermint
15. Presents
16. Reindeer
17. Snow
18. Sweater
19. Tinsel
20. Winter

The CS Staff Holiday Playlist

Lia	Belen Campanas De Belen
Madelyn	Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas by Sam Smith
Isabel	Noche De Paz by Carla Morrison
Nina	It's The Most Wonderful Time of The Year
Kallie	Christmas Lights by Coldplay
Maria	Louisiana Christmas Day by Aaron Neville
Hayley	All I Want for Christmas Is You by Mariah Carey
Lalaina	Last Christmas by WHAM!
Tyra	Underneath The Tree by Kelly Clarkson
Katie	Jingle Bell Rock
Stephani	Silent Night by The Temptations
Christian	Grandma Got Run Over By a Reindeer
Dakota	Baby It's Cold Outside
Madison	Santa Tell Me by Ariana Granda
Chris	Let it Snow

Our Staff's Favorite Holiday Traditions

<p>Lia Porfille My favorite Christmas Tradition is doing fireworks till it hits midnight or cooking tamales that remind me of home.</p>	<p>Hayley Keeler Baking and decorating Christmas sugar cookies.</p>
<p>Madelyn Murphy Playing white elephant with my mom's side of the family!</p>	<p>Lalaina Wood My grandma always makes a big basket with all types of items. We have to guess the price of each item & whoever is closest to the total price wins the basket.</p>
<p>Nina Ovalle Setting up the Christmas tree while watching the polar express.</p>	<p>Katie Grace Rien I watch Charlie Brown Christmas with my mom every year!</p>
<p>Kallie Bourgeois Building a bonfire with my family to light on Christmas eve.</p>	<p>Stephani Bradley Drinking eggnog with my brother and sisters every holiday.</p>
<p>Cody Rutz Everyone meets at my grandparents house and we get to pull our presents out of a giant red sack.</p>	<p>Christian Robinson Crappy Christmas- one random person gets nothing but crappy presents.</p>
<p>Maria Walthers Recalling memories of family members both past and present while playing games.</p>	<p>Isabel Juarez Rubio My favorite tradition is going to posadas on Christmas eve.</p>
<p>Juliana Nobles On Christmas we travel to a different city, get matching Christmas sweaters and go out to see the city lights.</p>	<p>Chris James Eat at a Chinese buffet.</p>



**THE CURRENT
SAUCE**

*wishes you
a happy
holiday season*

