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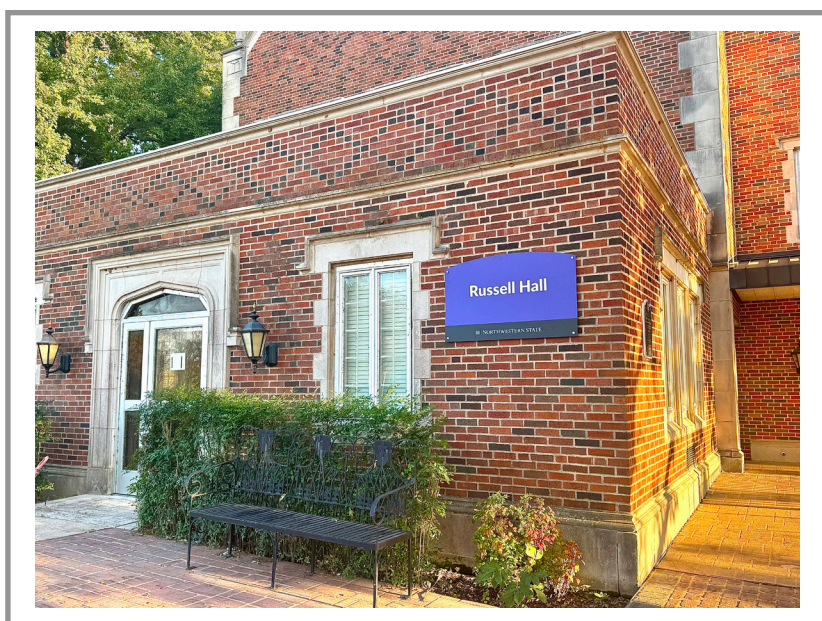


Photo by Zoey Fitts

Northwestern State University of Louisiana welcomes Scott Wysong as the new Dean of Business, effective January 2026.

Northwestern State University of Louisiana will welcome a new dean to the College of Business and Technology in the spring 2026 semester. Scott Wysong has been appointed as the next dean, pending approval of the University of Louisiana System Board of Supervisors. If confirmed, he will begin his role on Jan. 5.

Greg Handel, executive vice president and provost, explained that he recruited faculty, staff, alumni and business and industry leaders to serve on a search committee of about 16 people.

Laurie Morrow, executive director for economic development and university advancement, chaired the search committee at Handel's request. She coordinated the search process and facilitated communication with the candidates.

"One of the first things I did was meet with the committee to establish guidelines and explain what our responsibility was," Morrow said. "It was important to me that the committee under-

stood that our role is not to select the new candidate. Our role was simply to vet the candidates, to interview them and to make recommendations to the president and provost."

The search formally began in May when the committee finalized the job description and advertisement. The position was posted in higher education publications to promote applications.

The job description on the State of Louisiana Job Bulletin stated, "The next Dean of the College of Business and Technology at Northwestern State University will lead a first-class faculty, dedicated staff, and mission-driven student body. This leadership transition comes at a time of exciting transformation for the University, with a renewed strategic vision that will shape the College's future. The Dean will navigate emerging challenges in business and technology, particularly those facing underserved communities, while aligning academic programs with workforce demands."

NSU names new dean of the College of Business and Technology

By Heidi Gauthier
News Editor

After the application window closed on Aug. 1, NSU's Human Resources office thoroughly evaluated all of the applicants to ensure they met the required qualifications. Applicants were required to hold a terminal degree—the highest level of education—one can achieve in a specific field of study and have extensive academic and administrative experience.

The list of applicants narrowed down to about 30 qualified candidates. The committee then scored all of the candidates and held virtual interviews with the top eight. From there, the committee narrowed it down to the top three candidates and invited them to campus.

On Oct. 23, the finalists—Collins, Battaglio and Wysong—visited NSU's campus for a full day of in-person interviews. They met with the president and provost, the search committee, students, faculty and staff and local business industry professionals in individual sessions. Each group was able to give feedback that was considered in the decision-making progress.

Wysong has 25 years of experience at the University of Dallas, where he served as an associate professor of marketing and led the development and implementation of a Master of Business

Administration program in the Satish & Yasmin Gupta College of Business.

He received a bachelor's degree in economics at Vanderbilt University and completed both his MBA and Ph.D. in marketing at the University of Texas at Arlington. He also has a certificate in Business Strategy from Harvard Business School online.

In addition to his academic background, Wysong is the president of Wysong Brand Solutions, a company that conducts economic impact studies for concerts, festivals, parades and sporting events.

Currently living in Stonewall, Louisiana, Wysong has connections to the business industry in the area.

"The committee felt strongly that Wysong's connections in the area, especially in the Shreveport-Bossier area, would be very important to help forward the mission of the college and Northwestern," Handel said.



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NEWS

Wysong said that his first semester as dean will be a learning experience. He wants to observe how things are run before he makes any changes and listen to students, faculty and staff on their opinions.

“

“I plan on sitting in classes and having an open forum where students can come and provide feedback,”

Wysong said.

“Once I have gathered feedback, in the summer I will plan to make changes that will be implemented in the fall.”

”

NSU leaders hope that under his leadership, an MBA program can be added to NSU's academic programs.

“I am excited about Dr. Wysong joining the university because I feel like he is going to be such an asset to help us not only obtain additional degree programs but also partnerships that we believe he will bring to the college,” Morrow said.

Wysong's appointment marks a new chapter for the College of Business and Technology and an opportunity to strengthen its impact across the region.

“I hope my legacy as the dean of the College of Business and Technology is that the college is a great place for students to come and learn and leave with great jobs,” Wysong said.

PURPLE MEDIA NETWORK



ARTS & LIVING

Grounding a dream: The origin of StoryBrew Coffee Cafe

By Isabel Juarez Rubio
Arts and Living Editor

Tucked in the heart of Natchitoches, StoryBrew Coffee Cafe has become more than a local coffee shop—it is a clear reflection of hard work and dedication that turned a childhood dream into a reality.

Located at 780 Front St., Suite 104, StoryBrew is open six days a week and closed on Tuesdays.

When you walk into the coffee shop, you're greeted by a human-sized dragon and the murmurs of old friends catching up—all surrounded by fantasy-comic décor that makes you feel like you've stepped into a new world. Amber Beaudon, owner of StoryBrew, shared how her aspiration to become a business owner came to fruition.

“I remember we were driving somewhere, and I saw a bunch of books on the window. We walked in and I smelled fresh baked pastries. I saw people relaxing and drinking coffee, and I became hooked,” Beaudon said.



Starting off as a business major at Northwestern State University of Louisiana, Beaudon realized two years into the program that it wasn't what she truly was passionate about.

“I enjoyed more of the creative aspects of everything. I switched up to be an English major, but I kept business as my minor. I kept thinking about how I was going to make my coffee shop different,” Beaudon reflected.

Beaudon confessed that she took inspiration on the design for StoryBrew from an Anime Comic Convention she attended with one of her friends.

“I don't want to say it inspired StoryBrew, but it helped me go in the right direction for what I wanted,” she said. “I wanted people to feel welcome. I wanted them to feel like they didn't have to fit in a box.”

StoryBrew officially opened its doors in May 2020, though there were some complications due to COVID-19.

“I couldn't officially open the inside yet because there were a lot

of limitations, so I just set up by the front door, pulled a table and propped the door open. I put out a bookcase and waited for people to come,” Beaudon said.

Since then, StoryBrew has grown incredibly, expanding its drinks and pastries to draw in more clientele.

Beaudon admitted that she likes to experiment with her menu, and she's known to have a creative choice of drinks for almost every season.

“I figure out what theme I want to do, and I just base the flavorings and stuff off the theme. It's a lot of taste testing—I try to order new syrups we haven't tried before, and recently we have been trying to make our own syrups,” she said.

As for pastries, she also likes to associate them with the themes but keeps some signature ones year-round.

“Pastry-wise my king-sized cinnamon rolls—they are huge, probably double if not triple the size of a normal cinnamon roll—my chocolate chip cookies, blueberry muffins and scones have become really popular,” Beaudon listed.

She also shared that they now have even incorporated a ‘get sconed day.’

“We try to feature every scone we have, and we also try to introduce new scone flavors. I'm working on some savory scones and recipes now,” Beaudon said.

Their seasonal menu is based on the Sugar Plum Fairy, featuring five signature holiday specials.

The Sugar Cookie Shaken Espresso includes the classic sugar cookie flavor, espresso and almond milk, topped with butter vanilla cold foam and sanding sugar.



Photo by Isabel Juarez Rubio

StoryBrew Coffee Cafe is a local staple on Front Street, blending unique taste and experimental creativity within every sip.

The Pink Velvet Frost is a caffeine-free blend of pink vanilla cake batter topped with peppermint whipped cream and crushed peppermint.

Served either hot or iced, the Fireside Dreams Latte is a butter-scotch, salted caramel flavored espresso topped with English toffee and caramel drizzle.

The Christmas Rose Latte, which is also served either hot or iced, is rose, peppermint and white chocolate flavored. The Land of Sweets is white-hot chocolate with peppermint topped with peppermint whipped cream and crushed peppermint.

Although most people stop in for the drinks and pastries, StoryBrew also provides a family-oriented environment where customers can relax and students can find a study spot close to campus.

The sense of comfort and homey feeling is no accident. Before StoryBrew existed, Beaudon had already started to collect different items in hopes of one day being able to use them in her own coffee shop.



“I collected a lot of stuff, thankfully I had a lot of family that was willing to help with whatever I needed on the inside. My parents and my uncle built the espresso bar area for me, my sister donated the couch and the chairs. So little bits and pieces of this shop are like a part of my family,” Beaudon said.

What started as a dream turned into a reality for Beaudon, and she encourages young people to take the risk and do what they believe in.

“There's going to be trial and error, there's going to be bumpy roads, but if you have a dream or an aspiration, don't let other people's opinions or worries stop you from pursuing it,” Beaudon encourages.

And who knows? Maybe a cup of coffee from StoryBrew Coffee Cafe can help you fuel that dream.

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The 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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Join The Current Sauce's weekly newsletter: Dose of Sauce. Each Friday at 1 p.m., the newsletter will feature the stories posted in the past week and highlight photos and things happening around campus. Use the link below to sign up or use the link on our Instagram bio!



David and Sherry Morgan Health Performance Center completion set for February 2026

By Chase McLaurin
Reporter

Northwestern State University of Louisiana expects to wrap up construction of the multi-million dollar David and Sherry Morgan Health Performance Center next year.

NNSU announced plans in April 2022 to build a new workout facility for athletes, with the Morgans' \$1.5 million contribution. On Aug. 26, 2022, the university received the green light to build the performance center to replace the Fieldhouse, which has been the facility for athletes at NSU since 1977. The annex will be located in the Donald G. Kelly Athletic Complex.

On Dec. 13, 2023, NSU hosted a celebration to honor the new facility and construction was set to begin in March 2024 for the 11,600 square foot weight room. However, the project was pushed back due to sewage pipes found in the ground and heavy rain, with athletes and staff anticipating move-in to finally occur in the first week of February 2026.

"As of right now, we'll be able to move into the main new building, which will have a weight room and nutrition center, in the first week of February. My hope is we can get moved in even closer to now. My goal is to try and get it by mid-January," Kevin Bostian, NSU athletic director, said. "When the kids move back in for the spring semester, we want to have it open for them."

Bostian and his staff have been working with President James Genovese; Jennifer Kelly, who oversees the project from within the university; the state of Louisiana; general contractors and faculty on campus to ensure the project gets done by his February goal.

Bostian has been head of athletics at NSU since February 2022, and he's finally seeing the project take its first steps towards completion.

"It's taken a little time—a lot longer than I thought it would be. But they are finally making a lot of progress to get [the performance center] done as soon as possible," he said.

The center will benefit spring sports, giving athletes access to brand new equipment and facilities as soon as they move back in for the spring semester. In addition, the Fieldhouse won't be completely out of use, instead providing new offerings for NSU's athletes.

“The old equipment room and old weight room in the Fieldhouse will become a new athletic training room and rehab center, and then the current training room will become an equipment room,” Bostian explained.

Jason Smelser, NSU's director of strength and conditioning, is looking forward to the brand-new sound system and weight racks that the performance center has promised student-athletes.

Smelser explained that the racks are designed with the Williams Strength company, which designs one-of-a-kind racks that best fit all the student-athletes at NSU.

“One of the coolest new features is they have power outlets throughout the racks that plug into the floor, that you can actually plug into the racks,” Smelser said.

Smelser is looking to add purple light-emitting diode lights to the racks, as well as equipment for velocity-based training. “You'll need cameras at every rack to track velocity to the bar, you'll also need iPads at every rack as well. We're looking at a couple companies to price those out,” Smelser said.

The spring semester promises lots of athletic activity, with men and women's basketball, track and field, tennis, baseball and softball preparing for their seasons while football, volleyball and soccer continue into their offseason competitions. Bostian and his staff are looking forward to finishing the facility's construction, so student-athletes can make the most of the state-of-the-art facilities this spring.



Photo by Lalaina Wood

Construction on Northwestern State's long-awaited David and Sherry Morgan Health Performance Center is on track to be completed by early spring 2026.

SPORTS

NSU softball and baseball teams prepare for their upcoming 2026 seasons

By Chase McLaurin
Reporter

Going into the spring semester, two of Northwestern State University of Louisiana's sports teams finally get to return to the diamonds. The Lady Demons softball team will kick off their season on Tuesday, Feb. 6, against Mississippi State University, while the Demons baseball team will play their first game against the University of Texas at Arlington on Friday, Feb. 13.

This softball season will be the second for head coach Jenny Fuller, who had the youngest team in the country last year, with 17 underclassmen and only one senior on the roster. However, she led the young Lady Demons to key victories and through historic milestones.

Although the Lady Demons ended last year with a 7-43 record, the team showed a lot of promise. Having lost 18 of those games by two runs or less, the Lady Demons hope to focus on improving their record this year.

Nonetheless, the team had a victorious offseason, going undefeated in their fall schedule, including wins against Trinity Valley Community College, Northeast Texas Community College, Tyler Junior College, Baton Rouge Community College and Galveston College.

Aly Delafield, a junior outfielder, shared her excitement for the 2026 season. “We won every game in the fall, which is different from last year. We’re all just competitive and get along so well,” Delafield said.

Delafield is one of the top hitters for NSU, with a batting average of .398 and an On Base Plus Slugging score—how often a player gets on base combined with how well they hit—of 1.047 in Southland Conference (SLC) play last year.

To go along with the young talent of the Lady Demons softball team, Fuller has recruited a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) record holder from the transfer portal.

JT Smith is a graduate senior outfielder originally from the University of Texas at Tyler. Smith is the NCAA single season record holder with 107 runs scored last year, and she has won two national championships and is a four times National Fastpitch Coaches Association All American.

Smith said that Fuller coached her as a child, which is one of the reasons that motivated her to transfer to NSU. “I love it! She’s definitely brought back the fun for me in playing softball. Just to get out there one more time, and to enjoy it is worth it,” Smith said.

The fall season offered transfers and new freshmen alike the chance to adapt to Lady Demons softball before the main season.

“I think our transfers have adjusted very well, and then our freshmen seem to have adjusted as well. They all had very good falls, so I think they’re ready to see what spring will be and what real college softball is like,” Fuller said.



Photo by Zoey Fitts

NSU softball looks forward to their 2026 season under second-year head coach Jenny Fuller.

Fuller’s expectations for the upcoming season are high, and she hopes that this season will be more successful than the last. “I think we have great players, and our expectations are very high. This team has really high standards, and they’re really excited for their first tournament and to really set the tone that weekend,” Fuller explained.

The Lady Demons’ first tournament will be the Getterman Classic in Waco, Texas, where they will face the Mississippi State University Bulldogs on Friday, Feb. 6, at 10 A.M. Last year, the Lady Demons faced the Bulldogs and scored their first win against a ranked team since 2004, upsetting the No. 20 ranked Bulldogs and leaving NSU hopeful that they can start their season with a victory this year.

Another sport looking forward to its rapidly approaching season is NSU’s baseball team. Last year brought a historic season, with the team going 35-21 in their regular season and 19-11 in SLC play, even managing to defeat the No. 4 ranked Louisiana State University Tigers.

Going into the 2026 season with even more talent, the team’s expectations are high. Head coach Chris Bertrand is looking to build on the success of last year and take another massive step forward as a team and a program.

“We feel like what was accomplished in all phases of the program on the baseball field and within the facilities is leading us in the direction we want to be headed,” he said. “We feel like we

are poised to take a massive step forward. We’ve built a baseball team and a baseball program that is poised to take another huge step forward, and to build on the success that last year was.”

Dylan Belanger, recruiting coordinator and assistant coach, and Bertrand dedicated the fall season to bringing in a lot of freshmen and transfer students, all of whom have been working every day in preparation for the season opener.

“It’s been a great offseason for everyone. It’s been competitive from a pitching standpoint, from the hitters and from the defense. We have a lot of great players, a lot of new freshmen and a lot of transfers. Everyone’s great, but fall is over, so now it’s what we do after the break in the spring that matters most,” Trent Hillen, a senior right-handed pitcher, said.

Hillen is coming off a great season last year. He led the Demons in wins and innings pitched. He has strived, along with his fellow upperclassmen, to make the transitions of their new team members smooth, and his best advice for the freshmen coming in is to “just trust the process.”

Sophomore second baseman Hudson Brignac joined the baseball team last year and has seen the growth in his new teammates. “They have really stepped up already, and the team has been very competitive. Throughout intersquads, throughout practice, we just compete, and I really think the competitive nature of this team is going to translate when we all come together in the spring and help us find ways to win,” Brignac said.

The team is very close and winning the SLC is one of their biggest goals. “Last year we came short in a heartbreaking way, but I think this team can do it. We can step up and win a conference tournament with this team,” Brignac said.

With both NSU spring teams underway, coaches, players and fans look forward to what the 2026 season will bring.

Northwestern State University of Louisiana's University Program Council hosted its annual Winter Wonderland on Nov. 18, 2025, where students enjoyed holiday crafts and games.

Photos by
Katie Rion



WINTER



WONDERLAND



VIEWPOINTS

Discourse about Christmas songs resurfaces every holiday season

By Phillip Voorhees
Viewpoints Editor

Whether it's traditional hymns or new radio hits, we have no shortage of songs to fill the air during this holiday season. In recent years, our standards of what makes a "good Christmas song" have changed, creating discourse surrounding controversial holiday tunes.

One of the most divisive Christmas songs is "Baby It's Cold Outside." Originally written in 1944 by Frank Loesser, the song is performed by two singers, a man and a woman. The woman tries to find reasons to leave the man's house, but the man insists that she stay because it's too cold to go outside. While some people consider it flirty and cheeky, others sense a more sinister undertone.

National Public Radio explains that to a modern audience, the song comes across as the man forcing advances. Lines such as "What's in this drink?" even seem to imply date rape. Some radio stations including WDOK in Cleveland banned the song due to this content. The article states, "The call and response duet has a female voice trying to tear herself away from her date in myriad ways."

The real meaning of the song might be benign after all. According to The Guardian, the song makes sense in its historical context. "Others have read the song as a knowing portrait of a time when women were not allowed to be openly sexual," the article explains.

The woman's denial in the song might show her trying to protect her image, despite actually wanting advances. The "What's in this drink?" line was likely referring to alcohol and not a more dangerous substance. The female character might be playing hard-to-get because it was the societal expectation, not because she is genuinely uncomfortable.

"Baby It's Cold Outside" is a holiday favorite for many people, but for others it is an uncomfortable reminder of gender inequality in the past and the present.

Another song to reconsider is "Do They Know It's Christmas?" by Band Aid. The song was originally written in 1984 by Bob Geldof and Midge Ure to raise money for Ethiopians as they faced famine. According to Ure in a British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) documentary, the song raised £8 million within a year, leaving a major impact.

It has been re-released multiple times over the last decades to support similar causes around the world, with the most recent 40th anniversary edition being released in 2024.

Although this charitable cause demonstrates the holiday spirit of giving, the song itself leaves much to be desired. It has been

criticized for misrepresenting Africa and perpetuating harmful stereotypes in its lyrics.

Band Aid was a supergroup composed of many artists from the United Kingdom and Ireland who came together specifically for the purpose of charity. The lyrics of the original 1984 version call those in more wealthy countries to, "say a prayer, pray for the other ones ... thank God it's them instead of you." It also asks the question of the famine victims, "do they know it's Christmas time at all?"

Activists believed that these lyrics portrayed Ethiopia as pitiful and helpless, and most egregiously, misrepresented their religious beliefs. Although African countries may seem absurdly alien to the Western World, they are not.

Ethiopia has one of the largest and oldest Christian communities in the world, according to the Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook. To imply that they don't know about Christmas is ridiculous. The lyrics portray Ethiopians as heathens who need to be exposed to the Christian God, but this is an inaccurate stereotype.

Today, humanitarian efforts try to avoid this kind of misrepresentation. When raising awareness about problems around the world, it is important to portray the issues realistically.

According to Patrick Gathara, a Kenyan writer interviewed by the BBC, "There has been a push within humanitarian agencies to start seeing people in a crisis first as human beings and not as victims. The idea that these people were incapable of doing anything for themselves was always a misconception."

It is also true that the song may not have sold as well if it weren't for this portrayal of Ethiopia. The images in the song conjure feelings of pity, and this strong emotion draws people to action.

The song made a real difference to many people back in 1984, and these positive effects continued when it was re-released in subsequent decades.

Despite this, we should still be considerate of how we portray other cultures.

While the holidays give us opportunities to honor the past, it is necessary to look closely at the traditions we participate in and the songs we sing. Do these songs align with our modern understandings of social issues? Are they appropriate for this holly jolly season? We must find a balance between appreciating historical context and embracing new perspectives.



Photo by Adrian MB

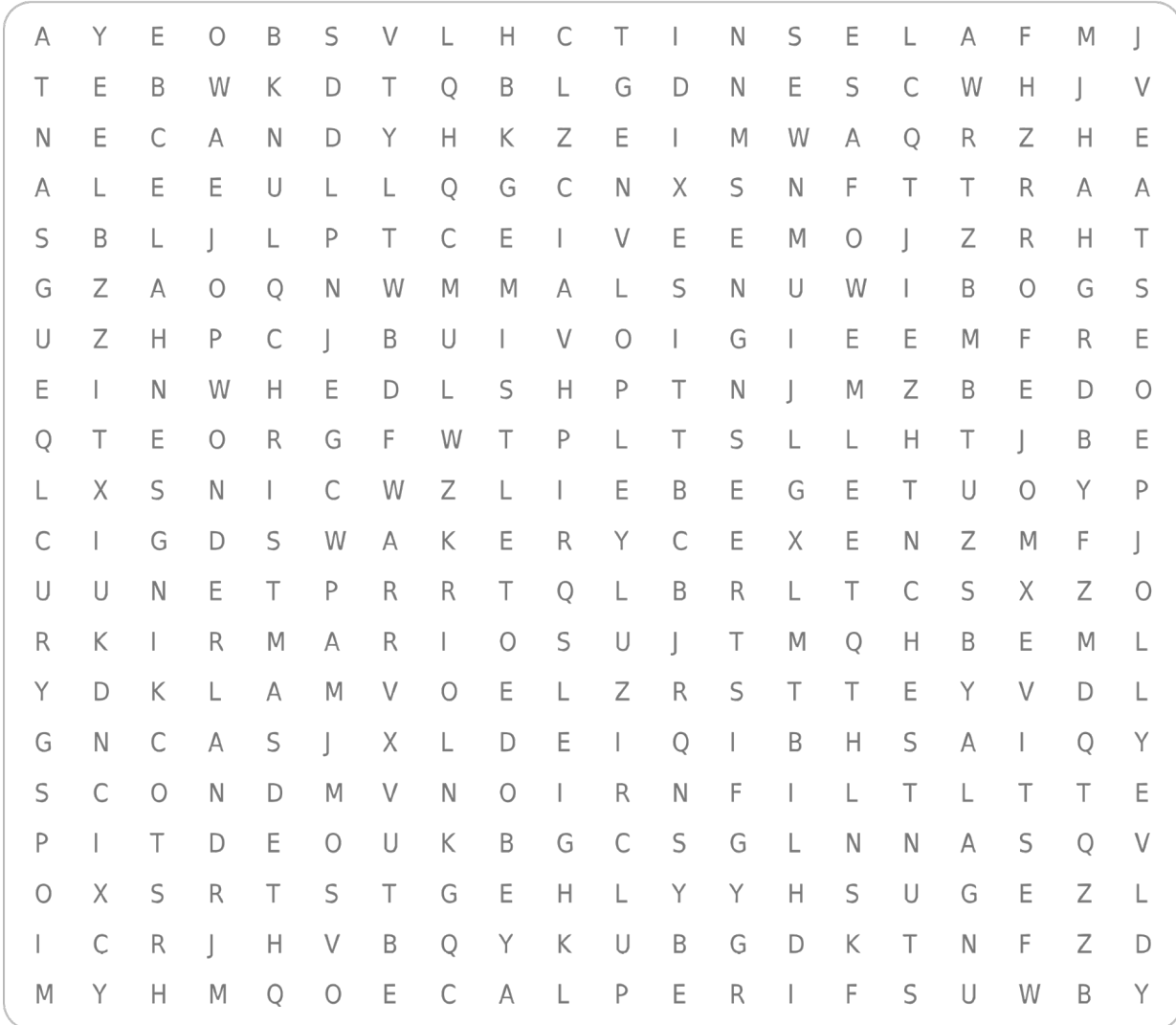
Each holiday season, traditional Christmas songs come under scrutiny for their controversial themes and interpretations.

**Burning
Conversations**



Merry Christmas

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

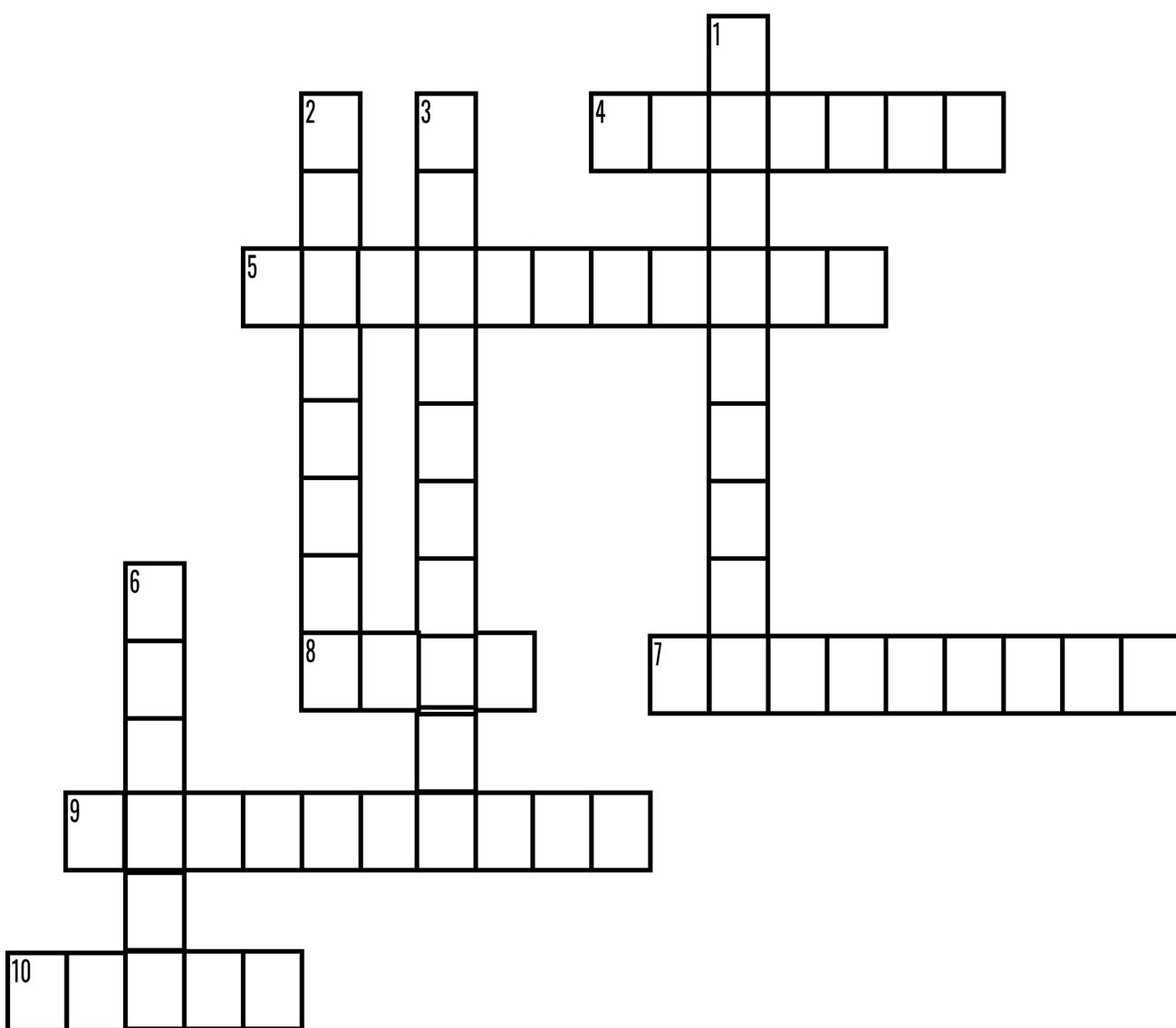


Word Bank

1. Lights
2. Chestnuts
3. Candy
4. Wonderland
5. Tree
6. Mistletoe
7. Santa
8. Festive
9. Jolly
10. Gala
11. Holly
12. Sleigh
13. Letters
14. Tinsel
15. December
16. Winter
17. Canes
18. Caroling
19. Christmas
20. Merry
21. Stockings
22. Fireplace

Happy Holidays!

Answer the clues each themed around a different holiday.



Across

3. African American holiday celebrating family, community, and culture.
6. British holiday on December 26th for giving gifts to the less fortunate.
8. Christian holiday on January 6th celebrating the visit of the Magi.
9. Canadian festival with ice sculptures, skating, and snow activities.
10. Ancient Roman festival honoring the god Saturn with feasting and gift-giving.

Down

1. Celebrated on December 25th with gift-giving and feasting.
2. Jewish festival of lights lasting eight days.
4. Hindu festival of lights symbolizing the victory of light over darkness.
5. Pagan festival celebrating the winter solstice.
7. Mexican tradition reenacting Mary and Joseph's search for shelter.

CLASSIFIEDS

Tourists from all around visit Natchitoches every Christmas holiday to commemorate the renowned City of Lights.

Illustration by
Stephani Bradley

