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## Students participate in University research programs

*Cora Cummins, Guest Writer*

If you are familiar with the term research, then perhaps you understand how complex and detailed it can be. You may also be aware that research is often a lengthy process and requires a researcher to be flexible and adapt to unforeseen twists and turns. Two examples of current research programs at Southern Nazarene University are the McNair Scholars Program and a Computer Science research project funded through the National Science Foundation.

Robbie Diaz, a current McNair Scholar and student at SNU, shared about his research in a recent interview. Diaz spent time recently in San Gerardo de Dota, Costa Rica, at SNU's Quetzal Education Research Center (QERC). While

*Photo from snu.edu*

there, he studied and performed preliminary research on the flower *Fuchsia Paniculata*.

After completing his research for QERC, Diaz then used his research to write his paper and presentation for the McNair program.



Upon reflection, he realized that although his research was directed specifically toward the flower itself and the discovery of its component, it eventually expanded, allowing for more detailed research. Some of these additional research

components included how the *Fuchsia Paniculata* is affected by elevation and what its role looks like within the ecosystem.

Another McNair Scholar, Terra Frederick, spoke about research, saying, "[In research] one thing leads to another thing, which leads to another thing." As Diaz and Frederick said, research is often a long process that rarely turns out as planned.

This is also evident in a Computer Science research project at SNU. The project is funded through the National Science Foundation and focuses primarily on applying bio-inspired concepts of leadership to teams of simulated robots. One of the goals of this project is to improve the coordination and co-

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## Savaged to saved: Spiritual Life Retreat



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*Katelyn Lamb, Content Editor*

This year's Spiritual Life Retreat will take place from 5 pm Friday, February 28 - 2 pm Saturday, March 1. The event is the product of the Campus Ministries branch of SGA and seeks to provide both spiritual, physical and recreational refreshment for students. However, Campus Ministries Exec. and main event planner, Eric Smith, notes that this event will be quite different from other SGA activities. "This is not an event where we will compete to stay up the latest," said Smith, "but it will be a time of

spiritual renewal and rest." While the goal of Spiritual Life Retreat is more solemn than other student government events, Smith is quick to assure students that "we are going to have an incredible time together."

Students attending the event can expect both space and time to rejuvenate. The retreat will be held at Camp Bond, and writer and speaker Jason Sivewright will be leading sessions. Sivewright has previously spoken at Nazarene Youth Conference and a va-

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# The real life castaway: Jose Salvador Alvarenga

*Carlos Font, Staff Writer*

When you think about a castaway, the first thing that probably comes to mind is a guy that works for Fedex and gets stranded on an island after the company's plane fell from the sky.

You might also think about how Chuck Noland (played by Tom Hanks) becomes best friends with a volleyball named Wilson. The story you are about to read has nothing to do with Tom Hanks and is definitely not a cheesy sequel called "Castaway 2."

As if pulled from a Hollywood script, Jose Salvador Alvarenga, a native of El Salvador, survived 13 months in the Pacific Ocean. The fisherman, who was living in Mexico, claims to have gone out into the ocean in December 2012 on a one day fishing trip with a teenage companion. Alvarenga and the teenage companion were blown off-course by northerly winds and then were caught in a storm, eventually losing their boat engine due to malfunctions. The duo did not even have radio signal to report their predicament.

Alvarenga claims that the teenage boy who accompanied him died four weeks into being lost at sea. Alvarenga said that the teenage boy died because he refused to eat raw fish and turtles. When



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asked about the boy's body, Alvarenga said that he threw it overboard.

Alvarenga who, to this day, still cannot understand how he survived 13 months in the Pacific Ocean, somehow found his way to the Marshall Islands. The castaway had traveled about 6,000 miles in the open ocean. Two islanders found Alvarenga and immediately alerted authorities. The two Islanders, Amy Libokmeo and Russell Laikerdik, fed Alvarenga pancakes as they communicated.

According to CNN, Alvarenga and the rescuers communicated with each other using a mix of charades and hand-drawn pictures. One man's young son even helped translate the Salvadoran's story, using Spanish skills learned entirely from the animated children's series "Dora the Explorer."

Alvarenga was taken to a hospital where he was put through multiple medical and psychological tests. The doctors at the hospital in the Marshall Islands said that Alvarenga was a little off, which

is understandable considering the man did not have human interaction for a year. While the Marshall Island's government was making arrangements to send Alvarenga back to Mexico, it was discovered that he had been living illegally in the country. However, after the Mexican government heard the story, they are allowing Alvarenga back into the country. As of February 11, Alvarenga had been transported back to his native El Salvador where his health is continuing to be monitored.

## Students participate in University research cont.

operation of robot teams.

Under the leadership of Dr. Brent Eskridge, a professor in the Computer Science and Network Engineering department, a team of undergraduate research assistants, including Jeremy Acre, Blake Jordan, Tim Solum and Elizabeth Valle have been working to understand how leaders and followers emerge in nature and how those concepts can be applied to improve robot teams.

As Tim Solum stated, "Everything we're [currently] doing is biology inspired." Eventually, they plan on applying their discoveries to real robots, but their research is still in its early stages and is only using simulated robots at present. Recently, results of this research have been presented by Dr. Eskridge and some of the undergraduate assistants at conferences both in the United States and abroad.

In this research project, like many others, side tangent and deviations have emerged, occasionally the research has even evolved, leading to new and potentially relevant discoveries. Tim Solum stated that, from his experience, working on the Computer Science research project, they have been able to branch out and incorporate new ideas and concepts into their research that weren't initially planned.

These programs are only two of several research opportunities available at Southern Nazarene University in which both faculty and students collaborate. If you enjoyed learning about these research programs or the idea of exploring new topics and expanding your knowledge sounds interesting to you, contact a faculty member to discover how you can get involved in research during your college career.

# The significance of Black History Month

*Saydi Dowd, Staff Writer*

Black history is rich and vast; it does not simply belong to blacks but has universal significance. Whether it be in the sciences, in politics or in human rights, all of humanity has benefited from the contributions of African American communities. Nonetheless, these contributions, as extraordinary as they may be, remain unnoticed, both in our school's curricula and in our daily lives.

Today, stereotypes and prejudices against blacks continue to be reinforced in the media. Therefore, Black History Month is an opportunity to counter this one-sided vision of our societies and offer an alternative vision that better reflects a reality where individuals of different origins see themselves represented and feel respected. Then, this celebration of difference becomes a celebration of belonging for us all, on equal footing, as members of the human race.

Black History Month was of-

ficially begun in 1976. However, it was Carter G. Woodson, a historian who started the *Journal of Negro History*, who, in 1926, came up with the idea of celebrating Negro History Week, beginning the second Sunday of February, the date closest to Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass' birthday. In 1969, black students at Kent State University proposed expanding the week to a month, and Kent State first celebrated Black History Month in February, 1970.

Mr. Woodson believed that African-Americans needed to understand their history and traditions to survive as a people, but understanding that history is important to all Americans, not just black Americans. Without that understanding, others cannot really know what it means to be an American.

Initially, it was meant to bring attention to the cultural accomplishments African Americans had contributed to American history. Woodson thought it would be good to have a time-honored, fixed



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date when people would find out as much about African American history and their legacies as possible.

Black History Month is not just a time for blacks; it is a time for our nation as a whole to reflect and see how far we have come. It is a powerful thing to look back and remember all the faces, both black and white, that impacted the Civil Rights Movement, fought prejudices and helped eradicate stereo-

types. It is a time for people to recognize who has paved the road for African Americans today, and give them something to look forward to in the future.

It is still significant and relevant to recognize Black History Month because Black History is American History. Until most Americans regard it as such, though, they will need a month of formal recognition to learn from it, even if it is the shortest month of the year.

## Contribute to THE ECHO

### *Have something you want to see in The Echo?*

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**Leave a comment on our website**

**Come to our meetings at 5:30, room 221 in the Library**

**Email Ronna Fisher (rfisher@mail.snu.edu) with questions**

## Savaged to saved: Spiritual Life Retreat cont.

riety of summer camps. Smith endorses his ability to connect with college students and describes him as a “very articulate and exciting speaker.”

The theme for this year’s retreat is “Savaged to Saved.” Smith defines this focus as the recognition that our world is savaged and broken but, in the midst of it all, there is a faithful God who is actively working for redemption. Realizing the fallenness and pain around us is the first step to being a vessel of the Lord’s grace and healing; this is a crucial lesson the leaders behind Spiritual Life Retreat hope to impart to its participants.

Highlights from previous years include worship, engaging speakers, campfires, free food, group games and the opportunity to grow with God and fellow students. This year, though, Smith is

excited about the retreat’s agenda, stating that “we will be doing several things a little different than in previous years. We are trying to be creative and purposeful in everything that we have planned for students in order to make it a fun, exciting and memorable experience.”

The event costs \$10 or \$5 with a Crimson Card and includes a t-shirt, transportation, lodging and food for the weekend. To learn more about the speaker, follow this link (<http://jasonsivewright.wordpress.com/>) to Jason Sivewright’s blog. Contact Eric Smith or the Campus Ministries team for further information. Spiritual Life Retreat is a unique opportunity for students to get off campus, spend some intentional time with the Lord and friends and experience saving grace in a savaged world. Don’t miss it!



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## UPCOMING CAMPUS EVENTS

### SGA Events

Feb. 21 - SGA Exec apps due

Feb. 21 - Broomball @7:00pm

### Misc.

Feb. 20 - West Texas College Days

Feb. 24 - Solace @7:30pm

Feb. 26 - Leap Day

### Sports

Feb. 20- Home Basketball game @5:30pm

Feb. 21- Home Baseball @ 1:00pm

Feb 22- Home Baseball game @12:00pm

# STORMSPORTS

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## Black Balled: the impact of black athletes

**Cass White, Staff Writer**

Every February is considered Black History Month, and every day of this month we honor great African American leaders by giving thanks. We reflect on these powerful leaders and those who have made huge impacts in various areas. One such area is sports. We can see the influence of African American individuals by studying a few successful individuals both from recent years and decades past.

First of all, sports would not be the same without the influence of Tiger Woods. Woods shook the golf world up when he won the Masters, the U.S Open and the British Open. He was the first Black golfer to accomplish these sorts of feats in a typically Caucasian-dominated sport. Also, Woods was the youngest golfer to win these championships.

Another set of notable ath-

letes are the Williams Sisters; Serena and Venus have had a huge impact in women's tennis. The women have had unbelievable success, both winning the Australian Open, French Open, Wimbledon and the U.S Open. Venus signed one of the biggest endorsement deals for a female athlete in history with Reebok, another landmark event. The Williams Sisters have dominated tennis which, again, is usually a primarily white sport, influencing all races to venture and strive for success.

Then there is Michael Jordan, one of the biggest names in sports history. Jordan's popular appeal, talent and great business tactics made him a role model for all races. Jordan revolutionized the game by bringing a slick style that would change basketball forever. Personal details like wearing longer shorts, having one pair of shoes and his overall swagger confirmed



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him as legend.

As we can see, African Americans have had a huge influence on sports in all categories and areas, from college to professional level. There are

great pioneer legends with influential stories that paved the way for today's black athletes such as Jesse Owens (Track), Marlin Briscoe (Football), Debi Thomas (Skat-

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## NCAA standards may conflict with SNU mission

**Grace Williams, Business Manager**

SNU is in its second year of NCAA candidacy. In that time, many changes have taken effect. One change is stricter regulations for student athletes.

In July of 2012, Tammy Ikerd, Assistant Athletics Director for Compliance and Senior Woman Administrator, was hired to

oversee these regulations. She has worked in compliance at Southwest Baptist since 2005.

Ikerd said, "I've felt really welcomed here. SNU has been such a blessing, they have been really supportive of me. My job can be hard because I am basically the 'cop of athletics.' It's a 24/7 job because student-athletes and coaches are al-

ways doing things plus there are so many games and recruiting events. I like to take this 'cop' job to heart to protect and serve the student athletes like cops do for everyone"

Ikerd has worked a lot on doing rules education with the campus to inform faculty, staff, and students about the new regulations and how to comply.

"I always have the 231 page NCAA manual with me, I have a copy downloaded on my phone, a hard copy at home and in my office. I email and tweet tips for compliance at least once a week." Ikerd said.

The biggest change for student-athletes is the transfer policy. Now, student-athletes can only transfer

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# SNU

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# Athletics

# NCAA standards may conflict with SNU mission cont.

one time without losing semesters of eligibility. The G.P.A. and coursework requirements are also stricter for student athlete transfers from junior colleges.

The change that impacts SNU's community the most is the extra benefits rule. This rule is in place to ensure that student athletes are not given any more perks than a typical student.

"The extra benefits rule is hard for a mission driven campus and community like SNU. Professors or staff members can't take student athletes out for coffee, buy them a meal or give them anything. This makes mentoring a challenge because it pretty much has to take place on SNU's campus. I know that taking students out to build relationships is important to professors and staff and is part of the overall mission of the university. We have to be more creative with our mentoring opportunities now," Ikerd said.

She has also worked closely with Bethany First Church of the Nazarene (BFC) to ensure that events and services provided through BFC's college ministry and the like has not conflicted with the NCAA



Photo from [snu.edu](http://snu.edu)

rules.

Ikerd said, "I've heard of some pretty goofy cases of extra benefits violations in NCAA like a student athlete washing her car with the hose from the athletic department so she had to repay the water she used."

SNU students have taken the extra benefits rule to heart. "I heard a story of a group of football players who were out to dinner and a professor saw them. He offered to

pay for the group's dinner but the young men stopped him, saying it would be a rules violation. I am very proud of them," says Ikerd.

In addition, there is the challenge of social media, a new issue throughout society but also in the compliance world. Student-athletes can get in trouble with the NCAA for posting inappropriate content on social media and for endorsing products. Ikerd was awarded a grant from the NCAA

to bring FieldHouse Media to campus in the fall. FieldHouse Media coaches student-athletes on how to brand themselves on social media, and create a positive image.

"Product promotion can be tricky. A student-athlete can say 'I'm headed to Chick-Fil-A' but he or she can't say 'Chick-Fil-A has the greatest lemonade on the planet,'" Ikerd explains.

Student-Athletes have adjusted to the NCAA regulations.

## Athletes of the Week

### Meagan Johnson Women's Track and Field



Megan Johnson took eighth in the 3000-meter run at the MSSU Lion Invite, running a 10:39.41, and set the school record for the women's 3k.

## Black balled: the impact of black athletes cont.

ing), Bobo Brazil (Boxing), Althea Gibson (Tennis), Ernie Davis (Football), Bill Russell (Basketball) and so many others. Two of the most influential Black Athletes who have had a major impact on sports are Jack “Jackie” Robinson and Muhammad Ali.

“There’s not an American in this country free until every one of us is free,” proclaimed Jackie Robinson. Robinson was the first African American athlete to play in Major League Baseball, breaking the color line when he started for the Brooklyn Dodgers on April 15, 1947. During his first season with the Dodgers, Robinson earned the “Rookie of the Year” award. However, this success was not an easy process for Robinson. The player suffered immense persecution and bullying from having things thrown at him, pitchers attempting to hit him, enduring racial slurs or referees and opposing teams attempting to get him ejected from games. Robinson was abused verbally by the crowds and opposing teams, but he did not let this affect his level of play. Instead, the injustice only motivated him to strive more, be a role model and be the best person

he could be. Jackie would be one of the first players to be a complete player able to hit, bunt, run and steal bases; averaging a career batting average of an astonishing .311 to match an outrageous 197 career stolen bases. He had such a huge impact on the game that the MLB universally retired his jersey number, 42, banning it from play except on “Jackie Robinson Day.”

“I know I got it made while the masses of black people are catchin’ hell, but as long as they ain’t free, I ain’t free. Why should they ask me to put on a uniform and go 10,000 miles from home and drop bombs and bullets on brown people while so-called Negro people in Louisville are treated like dogs?” This a quote from the great Muhammad Ali, who some consider the best boxer to step inside the ring while still others title him the greatest athlete of all time. Ali had a huge impact on boxing, where he was titled as the Heavyweight Champion of the World in 1964 at 22 (the youngest champ in history) and would eventually be Champion on three other occasions. Ali also influenced the black community, becoming a social activist by spreading his Black

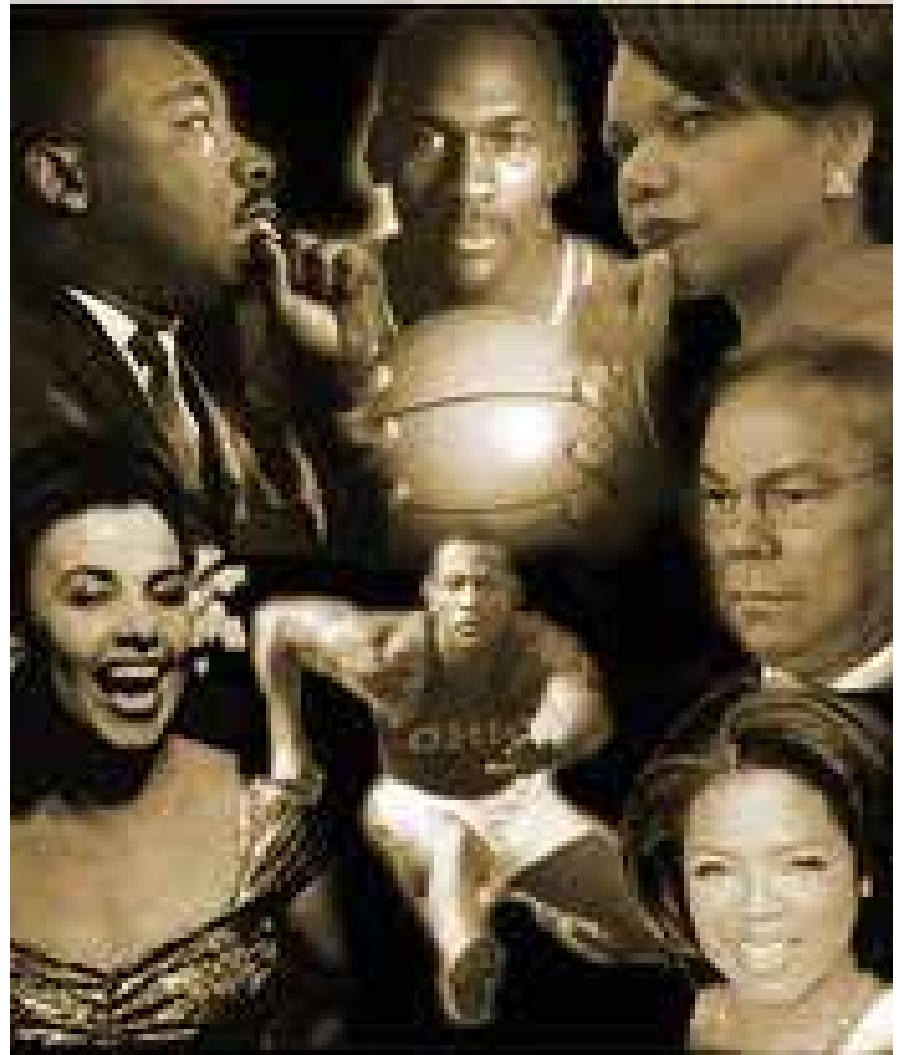
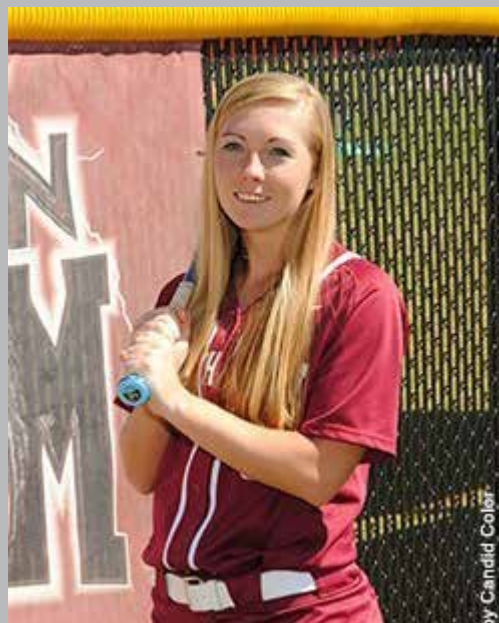


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Pride and Muslim knowledge. He like Ali and Robinson opened the revitalized and changed the sport of door for African American ath- boxing forever with his powerful, letes of today to continue to make creative and big personality. Leaders history in the world of sports.

### Athletes of the Week

Lindy Fluman  
Softball



Fluman hit .500 on the week with three RBIs and six runs scored out of the lead off spot. She also had one double, a home run and 15 total bases.

# OPINIONS

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## What they are teaching

### Anonymous Writer

Sometimes I wonder just how much our teachers care about us. I know it might sound silly, but really, this is an honest question. Do they care?

Now, I have to admit I do believe they care about us . . . personally. So maybe I need to be more specific. Do they really care if we succeed?

I have stressed out about numerous classes because I'm not entirely sure how I'm doing in the course. Knowing your academic standing is serious. Some of us might lose a scholarship over this. Some of us might not be able to

come back to SNU. If we don't know how we are doing in the class, we won't know when or how we can improve.

If teachers were really concerned about the success of their students in their classes, they would post grades. Not only would they post grades, but they would do it quickly. How can we, as students, improve if we have no idea how we did last time, what we did wrong or how we are doing in general? Without feedback, how do we know which direction is the right direction to head?

Only two of my six classes have a Moodle page. Even then, neither

of those Moodle pages have an up-to-date grade book. Actually, neither of them has anything in the grade book so far, and let me tell you, I've had plenty of assignments. I understand teachers have a life and other things they want to do. Sometimes they just don't have time to grade so much homework. But I could say the same about myself. Sometimes I don't have enough time for everything, and frankly, I never sleep. I love sleep. So why is there a double standard? Why are we expected to do everything our teachers give to us on time, and they are not expected to just keep up with it? Seriously, if

you, as a teacher, do not have time to grade all the homework, don't assign so much homework. It's awfully simple.

And it's not just this semester. This is the standard operating method for the classes I've taken at SNU. The grades are always obscurely tentative. The classes in which teachers do post grades steadfastly are the exception, not the rule. These exceptions happen to be some of my favorite classes, by the way.

If teachers want to foster success in us, they would do anything within reasonable limits to promote that success, especially if it is part of their job.

## How to beat the winter blues

### Claressa Cortesio, Staff Writer

Hot chocolate can warm your body. Chicken soup can calm your soul. But what is the solution for a bored and depressed mind? Winter days such as we have been having the past few weeks can bring out the best or the worst in people. Oklahomans are generally skeptical about venturing out into twenty-below weather. When a case of cramped family combines with the winter blues, strange things are bound to happen. We find ourselves stuck doing more laundry than usual. The house starts to smell like cookies every day. Suddenly the old Disney movie obsession pops up. Why? Because when we step outside, we are suddenly reminded of the Arctic, a strange and scary place most humans have never been. Our minds want to hibernate. They wish to fantasize about a world where the weather and the characters inhabiting it are warm and welcoming.

Nevertheless, instead of us-

ing time to plan ahead, get fitter or get more connected, we settle for coziness. Rather than succumbing to the 2014 Winter Blues, why not beat them?

Take the opportunity to try something new this winter. If you have the courage to undertake the icy roads, you should find some entertainment outside your home. Recently, Disney's *Beauty and the Beast the Musical*, was in town for the weekend of February 14th -16th at the Civic Center Music Hall in Oklahoma City. This type of indoor activity provides great outlets for energy and entertainment during cold days.

Another way to beat the winter blues is to avoid using food as an antidepressant. It is easy to gain extra weight during this weather. Laziness likes to set in, it is dark and cloudy outside. We forget how close spring is and decide to get that second helping of cherry pie with ice cream. Cupcakes call our name louder than usual. "This will cheer you up," your stomach says.

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# Eight reasons why you need to go to Puerto Rico



Photo by Celeste Forrest

## Celeste Forrest, Staff Writer

Are you tired of winter, dry legs, chapped lips, chilling winds and pitiful snow that does not give you snow days? If you answered yes to one of those questions, all of those questions or none at all, you sound like a person in need of a vacation!

A vacation, you say? Exactly where, you ask?

Well, look no further than the luscious jungles and sparkling, aquamarine waves of the “Island of Enchantment”—also known as Puerto Rico! If you’re not con-

vinced that a tropical island paradise is for you, here are the top eight reasons why you need to pack your bags and take the next flight down to the Caribbean as soon as (realistically) possible.

### 1. The Geographical Location is Perfect!

Puerto Rico is a tiny rectangular island on the far east side of the Caribbean with plenty of rainforests, beaches and mountains to explore. Puerto Rico’s next-door-neighbor on the west side is the Dominican Republic, and far across the Atlan-

tic Ocean on the east side is Africa! Because it is so far out in the Caribbean, the waters on each side of the island are very different. On the north, the ocean is very wild and perfect for surfing, while the waters to the south are warm and calming.

### 2. Go for the Weather!

The weather averages around 80 degrees year around. However, with the temperate, misty mountain winds mixed with the mild breezes of the ocean, it never gets too hot, nor too cold. If you love

the sweet smell of fresh mountain rain, feel free to travel to the lush mountains, where you can sit back and relax to the sound of the rain falling on palm leaves.

### 3. One word: FOOD!

One thing you will never get enough of is Puerto Rican cuisine. Many Puerto Ricans can trace their roots back to Spain, Africa and the Tainos (the natives of the island), and the food is a fine reflection of the island’s rich culture and diversity. In typical Puerto Rican food, you will find many seafood dishes flavored with garlic, cilantro and a bit of a special seasoning called sofrito (a special sauce of tomatoes, onions, garlic, peppers and other herbs). Also you will find lechon asado (marinated pork, often roasted over a fire), platanitos (sliced, fried plantain chips) and pasteles (similar to the Mexican tamale, but made with plantains and stuffed with minced meat or potatoes).

### 4. Picture Perfect Beaches!

The beaches in Puerto Rico will

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## Love is not in the air

### Ronna Fisher, Editor-in-Chief

\*Warning: this article may be full of generalizations and personal anecdotes. If you are here for research, statistics or logic, look elsewhere.\*

Valentine’s day was last weekend. Heartpal, the weekend before. Spring is just around the corner, and for many, including me, graduation is as well. The past year or so I have found myself the subject of concern. By my college pastor, my parents, friends, even my younger sisters. Everyone wants to help me find “a husband.” It seems that the “ring by spring” mentality has spread beyond the borders of SNU’s campus.

I have been trapped in multiple conversations about “my type” or “what’s wrong with (insert name of male friend here).” My young-

er sisters have even told me that they are worried that I won’t get married if I don’t meet someone while in college. When told that I don’t think I have a “type” or know what it is, my dad, concerned, said, “You’re nineteen. You need to be thinking about your type. Finding a guy is like shopping for cars; you have to know what you’re looking for.” What? To which I replied angrily and dramatically, “Well, Dad, the car salesmen aren’t lining the streets trying to sell me their cars!”

I know they are only looking out for me out of genuine concern for my well-being. (My dad also really wants grandkids). And, I appreciate that. I really do.

However, I hate the idea that my little sisters think that I will be unhappy if I’m not married and settled down after graduation. I hate

knowing that, at least in the Bible-belt south, there is this assumption that if you’re single, you’re unhappy, and you’re probably on the prowl for a man.

I recently talked with my eleventh grade students about gender roles in the late 1800s and in today’s society. I asked them if women today are still expected to marry. We talked about stereotypes for older, single women. I knew what would come up, and I was prepared with funny memes and pictures. What do you think of when you think of an older, unmarried woman? Drumroll please . . .

The answer is: Crazy cat lady!

I get it, and I agree—the idea of the crazy cat lady is hilarious. It’s a common joke and image. But why is this stereotype for single women (granted, for single, older

women) still so prominent? Is it because, even though the idea of being a young, independent, successful, and single young adult is idealized, we are still expected to get married?

I know—trust me, I know—about all of the articles, books and statistics that show that finding a mate is harder the older you get. I even once read an article about how, statistically, it is harder to find young, single, Christian males ready to settle down than young, single, Christian females, and the longer you wait, the harder it gets. Another article I read testified that getting married at a young age actually leads to stronger marriages. I’m sure studies exist showing that married people tend to be happier than singles. Trust me, I’ve read it all.

## How to beat the winter blues cont.

And indeed, it is true. For hundreds of years food has been known to be a great morale-booster for survival. But this is not WWI, the ice age or the zombie apocalypse. Food is plentiful and there is no need to stock up for winter. If you learn to depend on food for comfort during the winter months, it will be hard to

quit when summer comes.

Furthermore, get active. Experts say walking is cheap therapy. Pick an indoor activity with a start and ending point so you can set a goal. Search for a gym in your area that offers diverse classes such as Zumba, Yoga or cardio kickboxing. You could also join a fitness club. The

number of personal trainers for both men and women has steadily increased and makes being active even easier.

Additionally, pet therapy is sometimes the best bet for people who do not like getting out in winter weather. If you own a dog or a cat that you have a strong bond

with already, this will become an easy task. Look up pet tricks and or games online. There are a surprising number of articles on creative pet sports. Overall, the real key to beating the 2014 winter blues is to find activities that will be fun and provide a mental challenge while avoiding the temptations of hibernation.

## Love is not in the air



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Last semester for TWIRP and this semester for Heartpal, I heard countless girls bemoan that they couldn't or wouldn't attend unless they had a guy to ask (TWIRP) or were asked by a guy (Heartpal). To be quite honest, it infuriated me. And, yes, I know that TWIRP stands for "the woman is required to pay." I also heard, "And, that's what makes TWIRP and Heartpal fun—having a date." But, seriously?

**"No, it is not my turn next."**

You're going to choose not to attend an event because of a lack of a male partner? Is this 1896?

Let me just say it: I am single, I am not looking and I am completely fine and happy. Before you quote, "The lady doth protest too much, methinks" to me, let me also say that

this article comes, not from denial, but from years of frustration at society.

No, it is not my turn next, as relatives so love to suggest. No, I do not think that I would be happier if I were in their shoes. No, I don't need you to set me up with someone. Yes, I still make girlish jokes like, "He hates winter, just like me! We're meant to be!" or "Eli McCann is my future husband." What can I say? I have my flaws.

So, I conclude my single rant with this: Please, do not be offended if, unless I am a bridesmaid, I don't jump up and run at the chance to catch the bouquet at your wedding. I'm single. And, I'm okay. I promise.

## Eight reasons why you need to go to Puerto Rico cont.

take your breath away. Imagine lying under a palm tree as the sun kissed air tussles your hair. The cerulean blue waves lap against the surface of sparkling white sand decorated with colorful shells and polished stones while you're sipping freshly squeezed mango juice with a little pink umbrella. Now that's paradise!

### 5. The Culture is Beautiful!

Puerto Rico is rich with culture. There is not one "pure" Puerto Rican in Puerto Rico, because everyone is a mix of European, African and Native American ancestry. Because of this, Puerto Rico is a

multicultural world, and you will find a little bit of everything in their traditional dance, music, food and art. If you are a lover of cultures, Puerto Rico is the place to be.

### 6. Be Captivated by Nature!

Puerto Rico is extremely photogenic, and that can be proven by the vibrant, colorful flowers that grow in the mountains, the cascading waterfalls, the tropical rainforests and, of course, the beaches! One spectacular must-see place is El Yunque, Puerto Rico's largest rainforest reserve and home to some of the rarest and most exotic wildlife of the Caribbean. If you're looking for a

magical night, visit The Bioluminescent Bay, known for a special kind of plankton that triggers a chemical reaction in the water. The chemical reaction creates an emerald and ultramarine glow in the ocean!

### 7. Walk in their Footsteps!

One of the abounding mysteries of Puerto Rico revolves around the people who first lived there—the Tainos. In Puerto Rico, you can walk in the footsteps of the natives that once dominated the island.

Visit The Cemi Museum and immerse yourself in the world and

daily life of the Taino Indians.

### 8. You will feel at home!

The people of Puerto Rico are very generous and friendly and will embrace you not only as a visitor but as a friend. Puerto Ricans are very open and will freely talk with you about anything.

There is a reason why Puerto Rico is called the "Island of Enchantment:" its scenic ocean views, diverse history and flavorful culture are sure to leave you spellbound. Whether or not you are a native, a returning visitor or complete stranger, Puerto Rico will sure make you feel at home.

## In Review: The Lego Movie

**Byron Crouch, Staff Writer**

### Snippet:

A generic, non-special Lego construction worker named Emit is thrust into the different worlds of the Lego Universe three days before an ultimate weapon of destruction is released by the evil President Business.

### Overview:

Emit is an ordinary Lego character, so ordinary that there is nothing special about him. And he is okay with that. He always follows instructions and never disobeys the rules. One day, he is suddenly attached to a relic that has the potential to save the universe from an ultimate evil weapon. Throughout the movie, Emit is fought over by good and bad guys, all the while trying to discover his own extraordinary abilities.

### The Good:

For starters, the movie is almost made entirely of Legos. Having grown up playing with Legos and spending a majority of my young allowance on them, this was especially appealing to me. Also, there are tons of inside jokes within the

movie that veteran Lego owners will enjoy. While there is tons of violence (people being dismembered, blown apart, etc.) it is all in Lego, so lots of awesomeness without the gore. Another great thing in the movie is the amount of different characters used, despite the fact that some worlds of the Lego universe are not mentioned. Keep a lookout for famous characters such as Gandalf, Dumbledore, Batman and Han Solo.

### The Bad:

The only foul language was the usage of “heck.” And that’s about it.

### Music:

Massive warning here: if you get songs stuck in your head easily, you are at serious risk. This movie’s theme song is one of the catchiest and cheesiest and will probably overtake “Do You Wanna Build a Snowman” in a matter of weeks on the annoying meter. But don’t let this deter you; the movie is still totally worth seeing.

### The Ugly:

None. Unless you count the catchiness of the main song.

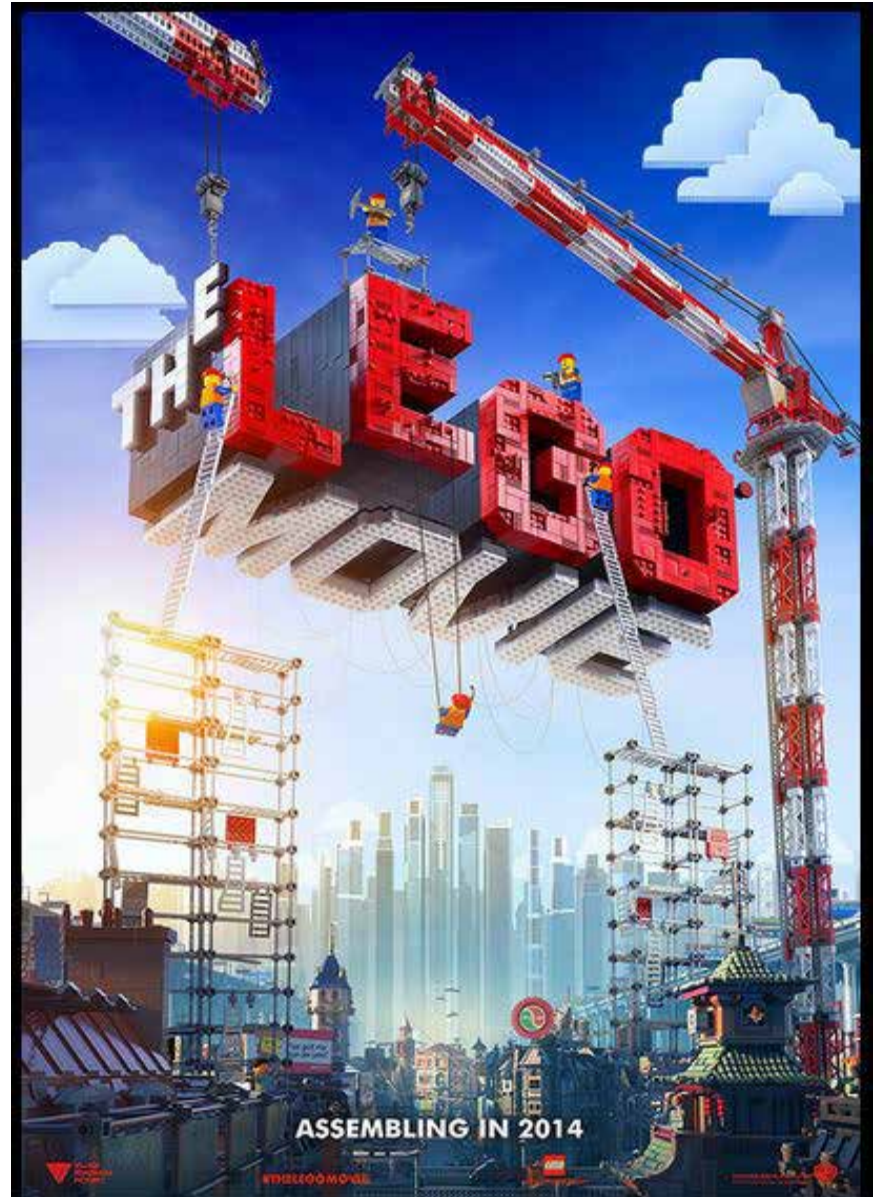


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## Local is lovely



Photo from twitter.com (buy your keep it local card at www.keepitlocalok.com)

**Katelyn Lamb, Content Editor**

“Local is lovely.” Perhaps you have seen the motto on cute bumper stickers or trendy t-shirts. This mantra reminds people to support their local economies through patronage of small, independent businesses. While the catchphrase is a casual way to encourage change, more formal efforts are being made to advocate “localism.” Organizations like Keep It Local OK highlight Oklahoma businesses by collect-

ing shops, restaurants and other services into a collaborative group. This organization is helping spread the word, and the rewards, on local shopping.

Begun in 2010 by Bryce Bandy and Chris Branson, the inspiration for OKC’s local-loving operation actually came from foreign parts. Well, Austin, Texas, that is. While on a road-trip in the Lone Star State, Bandy and Branson noticed a lot of local promotion around

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# Buffy vs. Breaking Bad: a faculty survey

**James Tunnell, Staff Writer**

Buffy vs. Breaking Bad: A Faculty Survey

By: James Tunnell, Staff Writer

In ye olden days, a person most likely would be extremely limited in their options for entertainment media. Sure, books have been around forever, but the 20th century brought about new ways to get through the day with the advent of the movie industry, television and, most recently, the ability to access any type of music a person could dream. In a culture that is defined by consumption, even the most elite among us are susceptible to the beckoning of entertainment media. Every person has their preference as to which TV show is their favorite, which music album they love the most or what is the all time greatest romance novel (right?). A survey was put out to a few prominent SNU faculty members asking them which movies, music, TV shows, etc. they like best and here are the results. Remember now, there's no shame in getting addicted to Buffy the Vampire Slayer on Netflix or putting off a paper because Pokemon Y is burning a hole through your desk.

The first survey went out to the fearless leader of SNU, President Loren Gresham. Admittedly, he

said that he doesn't listen to a ton of music or watch much TV other than sports (the Thunder, presumably) and network news. As far as movies go, his favorite types were historically based, such as Steven Spielberg's 2012 biopic, Lincoln. Dr. Gresham did make this concession in regards to television, "If I do watch TV other than the news, it would be attempts at real life persons living in unusual circumstances. Examples would be 'Survivorman' or the Alaska backwoods families who tough it out in difficult circumstances. Nature programs are another type that I enjoy." Other than that, Dr. Gresham's preferred form of entertainment media is a good book, though he did not say which ones (The Hunger Games, perhaps?).

The next faculty member surveyed was Dr. Lee Turner, Chair of the Department of Mathematics. When asked about his musical preferences, Dr. Turner said that his radio dial is tuned to the classical music station, KCSC, all day, which he said makes for great background noise. Dr. Turner admittedly has a penchant for television crime dramas, listing Hawaii 5-0, Elementary, Castle (an affinity he shares with Dr. Lewis, Chair of the School of Music) and Psych as a few of his favorites. He said he rarely gets out to actually see mov-



*Photo Ariel E. Barry used under the Creative Commons License*

ies in the theatres, and that he is content to wait for them to come out on Netflix or Amazon.

One final survey went out to Dr. Peggy Poteet, Chairperson, Division of Cultural and Communication Studies. Dr. Poteet says that she enjoyed the first season of The Office, but her go to for laughs nowadays is The Big Bang Theory, about which she had this to say, "Admittedly, the newer episodes overplay the ironic sexuality of the socially-challenged characters, but the role Sheldon plays amazes me."

Her other television interests mainly consist of across-the-pond programming like Doc Martin or Masterpiece Theatre. A particular favorite of hers is Downton Abbey. Her favorite Downton character is Violet Crawley, the

sardonic Dowager Countess of Grantham, played by Dame Maggie Smith. Her list of musical interests includes the Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir, Bach-Beethoven-Chopin types, hymns by Charles Wesley, the later Beatles and Bob Dylan. She has also been known to enjoy Jingle Cats during the Christmas season, though not for prolonged periods of time.

Entertainment is something that all humans enjoy; it's inherent in our DNA. One of the things that makes this world so interesting is that there are so many different types of entertainment to enjoy, and the shared interests we have serve to bring us closer together. And remember this the next time you sneer at your roommate's Netflix queue: one man's Buffy is another man's Breaking Bad.

## Hometown tour: Denton, Texas

**Byron Crouch, Staff Writer**

Hometowns are full of fond memories, great relationships and, of course, homes. However, many hometowns have a lot to offer even beyond old high schools and family reunions. These towns are full of fun and interesting places and make great travel destinations if you just know where to go and what to see; my hometown of Denton, Texas is no exception. Denton is located on I-35, where the high-

way splits into I-35 E and I-35 W. It is home to Texas Women's University and University of North Texas. Denton is also home to several wonderful events such as the Denton Arts & Jazz Festival, the Holiday Lighting Festival and some unique businesses.

**Denton Arts & Jazz Festival, April 25 - 27 2014**

This festival is free and one of the best things that Denton is known for. This year's lineup of performers includes the Quebe Sis-

ters Band, Al Jarreau and Asleep at the Wheel. During the festival, seven stages are constantly filled with musicians and bands. There are also over 50 wandering musicians. Other activities include face painting, several different food courts and fine arts and crafts.

**Holiday Lighting Festival, First Weekend of December**

During this festival visitors can try the different wassails and vote for the best in the town. This event also includes several dif-

ferent orchestras and performing groups. People can also get pictures with Santa.

**Other Awesome Places to Check Out:**

**Denton Square Donuts**

This is one of the newest additions to the Denton Square. It features a plethora of donut choices which include triangle pie donuts, square donuts, vegan fruit pies and fresh cinnamon rolls. Also, all of their items are baked rather than

*Continued on page 13*

# Hometown tour: Denton, Texas

fried.

## Roosters

This back street diner is home to one of the spiciest things found in Denton: the Hell Burger. This single slider is topped with Ghost Pepper sauce, and requires customers to be over 18 years and sign a waiver to order one. Of course if one isn't enough, you can always try the Hell Burger Challenge.

## Mr. Frosty's

This 50's diner is home to the best root beer in Denton. Along with serving their shakes and root beer floats frosty, they have excellent onion rings and hamburgers. However, they aren't open on weekends or Mondays, so plan your visit accordingly.

## Mini Mall 1 and 2

These stores are located right on the square. They contain everything from antique jewelry to surplus army supplies. They also have an extensive collection of weaponry (mostly knives and swords) and record albums. If you ever have an hour or two and you would like to go exploring, just stop by these two stores.

## Recycled Books

The building that now hosts Recycled Books used to be an opera house. The result is a maze like feel to the store, as if the books never end. This location is fun to look through even if you aren't planning on buying anything, with jokes hidden throughout the store just waiting to be discovered.



Photo by Michael Leza used under the Creative Commons License

## Local is lovely cont.

the city. Curious, the duo returned home to research the phenomenon of local living and discovered the variety of initiatives around the country promoting the sustainable growth of city and state economies. Bandy and Branson explain that the experience of shopping local "brings a sense of pride to the people who live in our communities and also attracts visitors who want to check out what's new." The duo claims that Okies have a "case of local fever," purchasing over 15,000 Keep It Local OK cards in 2013.

The way it works: Keep It Local OK rewards customers for shopping at independent businesses by offering discounts, coupons and other benefits for their patron-

age. The organization's rewards help create loyal consumers and a more tangible sense of community. Keep It Local cards are a customer's ticket to rewards. Purchased annually, these cards can be used an unlimited number of times in a calendar year. The cards cost \$10 and can be purchased online ([www.KeepItLocalOK.com](http://www.KeepItLocalOK.com)) or at several metro shops. Keep It Local participat-

ing shops are found in OKC, Edmond, Yukon, Norman, Tulsa and a few other cities. With benefits such as 10% off purchases or free drinks at restaurants, the

Keep It Local card quickly pays for itself. In addition to saving money, this card also helps introduce people to new home-grown businesses. Also, Keep It Local OK makes utilizing their cards easy with a free iPhone app which lists local shops and their offered rewards.

***"this practice has some spine to support its swagger."***

Shopping local may initially seem like nothing but the latest trend in consumer culture. However, this practice has some spine to support its swagger. According to the Keep It Local OK website, for every \$100 spent in a chain store, \$57 of that money leaves the local economy. This large percent-

age pays for non-local supplies, imports and outsourced business services. That same \$100 spent at an independent business, though, channels \$73 back into the community's economy.

In fact, the Institute for Local Self-Reliance estimates that of every \$100 spent at a Target store, a mere \$16 remains in the neighborhood economy. Although chain stores often offer a lot in the way of convenience, they may cost dearly in the area of local economic development and sustainability. Thanks to the work of Keep It Local OK, consumers can easily support their communities through their spending and truly understand why local is, in fact, lovely.

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