

Baylor Lariat

WE'RE THERE WHEN YOU CAN'T BE

Friday, January 31, 2020

baylorlariat.com



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Brotherly bond

Tennis siblings guide each other at Baylor

175 years of Baylor



Lariat File

THEN... In this Feb. 1, 1940 page of the Baylor Lariat, which celebrated the 95th anniversary of university, the new Pat Neff Hall is shown at night, with photos of President Pat Neff and Cullen Thomas. The hall was dedicated on Baylor's 95th anniversary, many years ago.



Brooke Giacin | Multimedia Journalist

AND NOW Baylor Pat Neff Hall shines brightly 80 years after it's dedication. The 175th anniversary of the founding of the university brings a variety of events to campus, and currently features a banner celebrating the Founders Day of Baylor.

Big anniversary for university set to host events to honor BU's history

SARAH PINKERTON
Staff Writer

To celebrate Baylor's official 2020 Founder's Day alongside the 175th anniversary of the university, a celebration will occur at the Baylor Men's Basketball game at 3 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 1 in the Ferrell Center followed by a year-long array of events.

Karen Kemp, associate vice president for university marketing and brand strategy, stated that the basketball game on Saturday will be a birthday-like celebration and attendees will receive party hats and popcorn boxes in addition to a break in the game to sing "Happy Birthday" to the university.

Buildings such as Pat Neff Hall, Waco Hall and Clifton-Robinson Tower will also feature banners announcing the 175th anniversary, as well as reminders throughout social media platforms.

"Our social channels are going to be using trivia throughout the month of February," Kemp said. "We've captured some stories from a lot of alums that are talking about their experiences at Baylor, so a lot of focus on 175 and sort of celebration of that marker in our history."

In addition, a new exhibit titled "Founding to Future: Bright Lights of Baylor University" at the Mayborn Museum is set to

open on Founders Day. It will highlight the timeline of Baylor's founding and will tell visitors the story of the university's history through artifacts and visuals.

Mayborn Museum director Charlie Walter said the museum worked alongside Roto Studios to make the exhibit happen.

The exhibit will feature artifacts including Judge Baylor's piano and the football from the first homecoming game along with an electronic timeline of Baylor's history and a re-creation of the columns in Independence.

"We also will highlight Baylor innovations, the Christian mission and vision of Baylor, Baylor athletics, and Baylor art," Walter said. "Some of those things that underpin Baylor's current strategic plan, what makes Baylor 'Baylor.'"

The exhibit will be the first

"We've captured some stories from a lot of alums that are talking about their experiences at Baylor, so a lot of focus on 175..."

KAREN KEMP |
ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT
FOR UNIVERSITY MARKETING

permanently available exhibit to the public in the Baylor Gallery section of the museum.

"Through the way the exhibit was designed, it's made that we can continue to tell that story as the years go by," Walter said.

The university celebrates Founders Day annually and also awards the Founder's Medal each year. This award is typically granted to alumni and will be announced Friday.

"The Founders Medal is the highest honor that we can give to an alum," Kemp said. "It doesn't always go to an alum. It goes to an alum, or someone who has been significant in the life of the university through philanthropy or other kinds of service."

Following the Founders Day events on Saturday, Baylor announced it will

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Driving club unites gearheads at Baylor through automobiles

MATTHEW MUIR
Staff Writer

For gearheads and racers alike, Baylor Driving Club is the university's slice of car culture.

Thursday night on top of the East Village parking garage, the club convened for its weekly meeting. Sugar Land senior Lucas Martin, the Baylor Driving Club president, was one of a couple dozen mingling and checking out other's rides. His even-keeled demeanor was hardly a match for the \$8,000 of modifications underneath his 2016

Subaru WRX. While attendees and their cars continued to trickle in, Martin listed the array of activities the club is involved in.

"We meet every Thursday [at 6 p.m.] on top of the East Village parking garage. We have events such as autocross... drag racing, go-karting, we do movie nights, we do game nights, just anything car related," Martin said.

Of the club's activities, Martin said autocross is among his favorites. Autocross is a timed event where competitors race through temporary courses laid out with

cones in a parking lot or skidpad. The driving club participates in a few each semester. The controlled environment and lack of wheel-to-wheel competition, Martin said makes it a safe way to sate the need for speed.

"You're racing against the clock, not directly against other people, but it's a fun and competitive way to safely test the limits of your car," Martin said. "You can [race] your own personal vehicle, we have a lot of people doing that. We have a few

DRIVE >> Page 4

Waco Suspension Bridge open until further notice

MEREDITH PRATT
Staff Writer

Waco Parks and Recreation officials are now estimating that the Waco suspension bridge reconstruction project will be pushed back until April and will take at least 18 months to complete.

The large-scale reconstruction project originally was set to begin in late November or early December 2019, with updates to the bridge's deck and 100-year-old cables set as the central focus of the reconstruction effort.

Tom Balk, senior park planner

for the city of Waco, is one of the key advocates and organizers of the suspension bridge project.

"Things have been put on hold," Balk said. "But the need is still there."

Last year, the city of Waco brought in bridge contractors from around the state to put in bids for the construction.

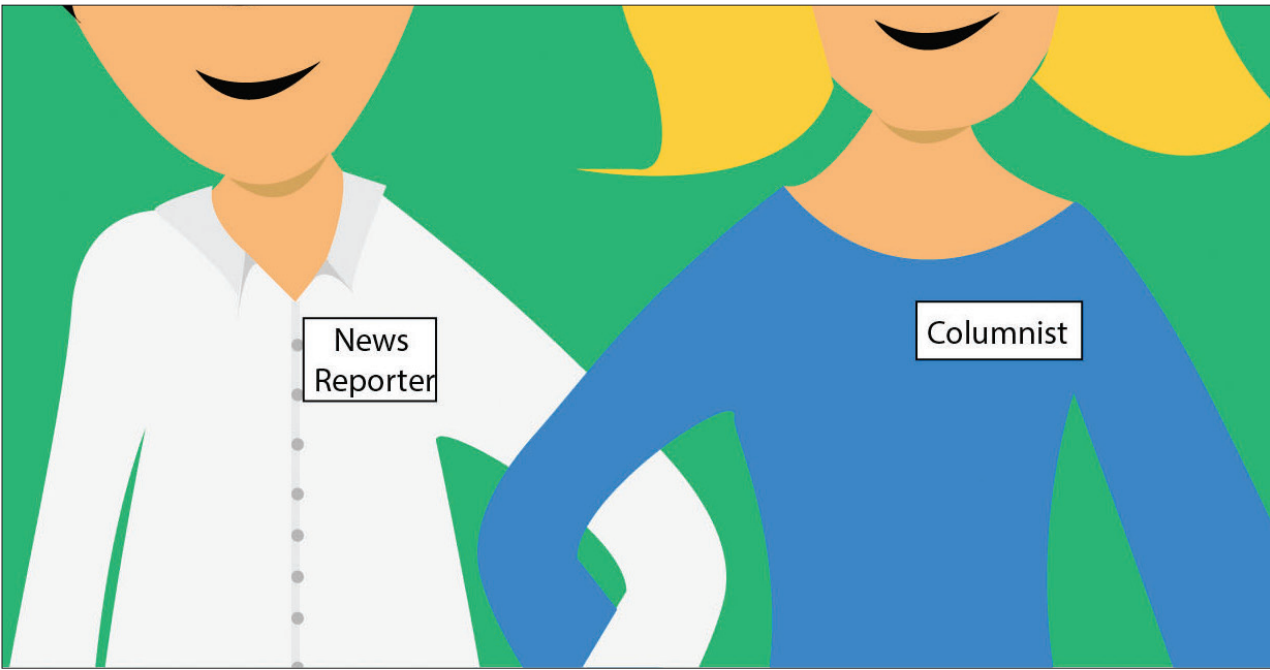
However, Balk said the city was thrown a "curveball" when the estimated price of construction they received from contractors was less than half of the actual cost of renovations.

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GOT SOMETHING TO SAY?

We want to hear it. Send us your thoughts: Lariat-Letters@baylor.edu

EDITORIAL



Hannah Holliday | Cartoonist

Candidate endorsements don’t compromise news staff integrity

The New York Times has recently come under fire for its endorsement of two presidential candidates, Sens. Amy Klobuchar and Elizabeth Warren. Those who are outraged claim that journalism has become too biased, but they need to realize the difference between staff desks.

The endorsements were not written by reporters. Rather, they were written by an editorial board which is made up of journalists who are paid, not to objectively cover the news, but to have opinions about it. The Times defines its board as follows:

“The New York Times editorial board is made up of opinion journalists who rely on research, debate and individual expertise to reach a shared view of important

issues. The board does not speak for the newsroom or The Times as a whole.”

The New York Times’ reporters did not breach their code of ethics by interviewing and endorsing two specific candidates for president. Such actions would imply bias and discredit their past and future reporting. Opinion writers and editors are employed to inform the public on what they think, not what they know.

The editorial page editor, James Bennet, didn’t even take part in the exercise since his brother, Michael Bennet, is running for president. The Times and its editorial board take care to keep the processes of reporting the news and having opinions about it separate.

The paper has been endorsing candidates for well over a century, and its website

has kept a running list of where those endorsements have landed. Out of the last 40 elections, the Times has only endorsed the losing candidate 13 times.

A newspaper’s job is to inform the public — plain and simple. That also means it has a duty to let its loyal readers know where the editorial board stands on one of the most important decisions a citizen can make. Then, the voter can make their own decision with that advice in mind.

It’s not an order. It’s not a mind control system. It’s the same as if one of your close friends, whose opinion you value, were to let you know which candidate they plan to vote for and why. The people on the editorial board are just generally more informed and plugged-in than your average

joe.

Editorial boards have their own place in journalism. They are to inform readers with a balanced opinion and an open heart — a place that readers can look to when they are conflicted. The Times describes its editorial board as believing “the fearless exchange of information and ideas is the surest means of resisting tyranny and realizing human potential.”

It doesn’t mean people shouldn’t trust The Times’ news section or business section or tech section. They aren’t affected by anything the opinion desk publishes. Just sit back, relax and read the pieces and you’d normally read and believe the things you’d normally believe — but if you need help, an editorial board is a good place to start.

COLUMN

Contradictory reports on Kobe Bryant death jeopardize journalistic credibility

MATTHEW MUIR
Staff Writer

In the immediate aftermath of NBA legend Kobe Bryant’s death Sunday, media outlets nationwide scrambled to report the news as quickly as possible and totally embarrassed themselves in the process.



The facts we now know are that Bryant, his daughter Gianna and seven others were killed when the helicopter they were flying in crashed near Calabasas, Calif., shortly before 10 a.m. PST.

TMZ broke the story at 11:24 a.m. and immediately bungled their report. Early versions of the story ran with a line saying Bryant was survived by his wife and four daughters. Further reports confirmed Gianna perished in the crash.

TMZ was later slammed by LA County Sheriff Alex Villanueva for reporting on the crash before the families of the victims could be informed. TMZ founder Harvey Levin claimed “Kobe’s people” greenlit the

story’s publication.

ABCNews correspondent Matt Gutman royally screwed up when he stated on-air that all four of Bryant’s daughters were believed to have been on the helicopter. Gutman issued an apology during a later broadcast and has since been suspended by ABC News, but the false report spread like wildfire on social media.

Early reports were unclear regarding the number of crash victims, with most outlets reporting at least five. In a show of how these inaccuracies pervaded the national conversation, President Donald Trump tweeted “Bryant and three others” were killed. Jeffrey Guterma chastised the president’s inaccurate tweet, saying “[f]our, not three, others were killed in the crash. Can’t you get anything right?” The first official statement from the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Office confirmed there were nine people in the helicopter.

Mistakes made during the media kerfuffle weren’t limited to the crash itself; BBC News used footage of LeBron James when reporting on Bryant’s passing in what may be the most unbelievably careless of all of Sunday’s errors.

Twitter’s rumor mill churned out the particularly pervasive idea that NBA

veteran Rick Fox was also aboard the downed helicopter, a report which had to be debunked by news sources. In an appearance this week on TNT’s “Inside the NBA,” Fox spoke of the pain the rumors caused him and his family while already grieving the death of a friend.

Journalism is under much scrutiny in the United States. When accusations of “fake news” are already lobbed at legitimate and factual reporting, real cases of media malpractice only serve as vindication for the skeptics. While a cornerstone of modern journalism is timely reporting, accuracy is even more important; being the first to cover breaking news means nothing if the reporting isn’t factual.

These high-profile screw-ups make journalism as a whole look bad, and more importantly, affect real people. Bryant was a public figure beloved by many, and those fans’ grief was undoubtedly inflamed by the inaccurate and contradictory reports fed to them. Journalists and news outlets that practiced restraint and integrity deserve a pat on the back. Those that didn’t need to reflect on how their mistakes erode the trust the audience puts in them.

Matthew is a junior political science major from Robinson.

LARIAT LETTER

Kobe inspires others’ pursuit of excellence

It still doesn’t feel real. Who would have thought someone who was invincible on the basketball court — the closest thing we have to a real-life superhero — could simply be gone because of the stroke of some truly terrible, evil luck?

What’s funny, in a horribly morose way, is that I fashioned myself as a Kobe hater through all my years of basketball fandom. Being from Houston, and a Rockets fan, naturally, all the years of heartbreak and pain that man caused me simply by being so incredibly good that he could dismantle a team by himself made me feel justified in my harsh criticism. It’s hard not to be bitter when your favorite team is single-handedly outclassed again and again. But there’s no way around it: the entire reason I even watch basketball today is because of Kobe Bryant, the man I loved to hate.

When I was 8 years old, my cousin turned the TV on, and there he was: a figure simply so great that an entire team had a game plan just to stop him, only him. The only problem was, the team that Kobe’s Lakers were facing in that 2008 NBA Finals series, the Boston Celtics, was on fire. As sports fans know, there are moments when a team just clicks, and the Celtics’ “Big 3” clicked. The ball bounced their way, the refs called in their favor, and it seemed they would not be beaten. But there he was, Kobe Bryant, losing by 39 points, staring into the face of sheer futility, refusing to blink. That’s what endeared him to so many people.

The man simply refused to quit. In any action movie, the protagonist moves mountains to accomplish their goal. That’s exactly what Kobe Bryant was to so many people, and what he accomplished so many times. He was a hero, though not without flaws that complicate his legacy.

I could have sworn I hated him, but at the end of the day, there I was, jaw on the floor, watching him move up and down the court with the silky smoothness and killer instinct that can only be truly described by his nickname, the “Black Mamba.” To so many people, Kobe Bryant was an idol. He was the high flying, fadeaway shooting, soul-crushing superhero. To me, he was an unstoppable villain that I simply could not take my eyes off of. Single-handedly, he was must-watch television.



Associated Press

What really stands out to me is how far past basketball his influence extended. The proof is in the people. Millions of people, from all continents, across all kinds of demographics, mourned the loss of this larger-than-life man. Athletes around the globe paid tribute to him by flashing a number 24, musicians dedicated songs, graffiti artists made murals, and fans put up memorials.

Yes, Kobe Bryant has a cult following. This he obtained in large part through being one of basketball’s all-time greats. But no small amount of his greatness is owed to the fact he stood for hard work, determination and grit. Kobe Bryant loved the game of basketball dearly. He loved the challenge of being one of the “best,” and so he worked until he was one. He was always in pursuit of excellence. That was his best trait, in my opinion.

It didn’t matter what he was doing, whether it was basketball, filmmaking, parenting, coaching, or being a friend. He was the best at all of it, leading the Lakers to five NBA Championships, winning an Oscar for “Best Animated Short Film,” leading his daughter’s basketball team to a 115-27 blowout victory that went viral on social media and embracing and mentoring the next generation of basketball stars.

His biggest challenge of all, though, according to a story by Kent Babb in the Washington Post, was fatherhood. Kobe Bryant was many things, but he was not one to shy away from a challenge. Bryant loved his girls more than he loved anything else.

“Just be grateful you’ve been given that gift, because girls are amazing,” he said. When asked what he would do if he and his wife Vanessa were to have another girl, he responded, “I would have five more girls if I could. I’m a girl dad.”

As ESPN’s Elle Duncan said, “I suppose that the only small source of comfort for me is knowing that [Kobe] died doing what he loved the most. Being a dad. Being a girl dad.”

As we continue on with our lives and move past this period of mourning, remember that life is short. Remember to call your loved ones. Remember to embrace your challenges, however large or small, and always, always, pursue excellence relentlessly.

*Tony Muñoz Jr.
Sophomore
Statistics major*

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Contact Us

General Questions:

Lariat@baylor.edu

254-710-1712

Sports and Arts:

LariatArts@baylor.edu

LariatSports@baylor.edu

Advertising inquiries:

Lariat_Ads@baylor.edu

254-710-3407

* Asterisks indicate members of Editorial Board.

Opinion

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Editorials express the opinions of the Lariat Editorial Board. Lariat letters and columns are the opinions of an individual and not the Baylor Lariat.

Lariat Letters

To submit a Lariat Letter, email Lariat-Letters@baylor.edu. Letters should be a maximum of 400 words. The letter is not guaranteed to be published.

Gaming curriculum prepares students for digital careers

ALYSSA FOY
Reporter

In a workforce that increasingly requires technological knowledge, the School of Engineering and Computer Science is preparing Baylor students with extensive digital skills and conducting substantial interdisciplinary research.

For students interested in video game design, the school offers a specialization in video game development in collaboration with the film and digital media department.

Dr. Matthew Fendt, lecturer of computer science, said a unique aspect to Baylor’s gaming sequence of studies is that gaming is offered as a concentration within the department rather than as a major.

Students can focus their studies on game development but also graduate with a computer science degree, an understanding of the industry and flexible programming career opportunities.

Students can take classes such as computer graphics, operating systems and computer ethics, leading to a gaming capstone class senior year. Student-designed video games are published online and available on Steam, a video game distribution site.

Fendt leads the gaming research for students interested in learning outside of the classroom. The research focuses on “how our interaction with [video games] affects our ability to adapt new knowledge, improve learning and elicit an emotional response,” the Baylor gaming department said.

Fendt recently published a research paper in collaboration with Eric Ames, an adjunct lecturer in museum studies, titled “Using Learning Games to Teach Texas Civil War History to Public Middle School Students.”

In this study, researchers set out to study the relationship between different methods of

learning and students’ reception towards the video games’ material.

In an eighth-grade class, one group of students was taught about the Battle of Galveston with a traditional method of textbooks and one group of students was taught by playing a game that was developed in collaboration with the teacher.

“We found that the students that played the game came away much more excited about the material,” Fendt said.

In the study, by examining a connection between education and media, researchers were able to use video game data to draw conclusions about another subject matter. Some of Fendt’s other ongoing collaborative research projects include app development for health information and education.

Katy junior Zac Steudel is a student in the mobile app development class, where game programming and research can intersect in the classroom. Steudel works with a team of other students in the class and produces an application about diabetes education. The app will be part of a research project led by Dr. Shelby Garner, tenured associate professor at the Louise Herrington School of Nursing.

Garner’s research project includes experts in multiple disciplines who are studying the impact of technological resources on diabetes education and prevention in India.

Participants will be tested before and after their use of the mobile application. The team will then analyze the data efficacy of the learning material. A base application currently exists, but Steudel and his team intend to renovate, add more features and increase the functionality of the finalized product.

“Our goal with the group project is to create a whole new app that’s maybe more interactive, maybe has some interesting games,” Steudel said.



Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Rau

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT Members of the Baylor Association for Women Geoscientists meet together to have conversations about being women in STEM.

Women geoscientists seek to rock the field

PRANAY MALEMPATI
Staff Writer

Many careers in America are male-dominated and tough for women to break into. Geoscience, like many other STEM-related fields, is one of those careers.

Irving third-year Ph.D geoscience student Elisabeth Rau wanted to be a part of the change. In spring 2018, she and her friend founded the Baylor Association for Women Geoscientists.

Rau said that because geology is a male-dominated field, this organization aims to provide an environment for women to feel comfortable and confident in becoming successful geoscientists.

“Baylor in general does a really good job of promoting the professional development of females in geosciences,” Rau said. “But [what] is really unique with AWG is that we bring in the added community part of it, the interpersonal connections that you can make with each other.”

Flower Mound graduate student and current organization vice president Julia Visy said the three pillars of the Association of Women Geoscientists are community, mentorship and networking.

“If we foster this community here, we’ll have graduate students here meeting undergraduates,”

Visy said. “It’s just great networking in general.”

Visy said while this is primarily a group meant for helping women break into the field of geoscience, there are men in the group. Rau said the presence of men in the group is beneficial for the women once they get into the workforce.

“It’s a group effort. To have these wonderful female geoscientists excel and go out into the world and be amazing scientists, that is the role of us as women and men,” Rau said. “We want to educate our members and open up dialogue on how we can promote women in the geosciences.”

This organization holds “His/Her Stories” each month, where a student, faculty member or someone from outside Baylor tells his/her own personal story about a specific topic each month. They then open the panel for student questions.

Rau said these events promote conversations that generally would not happen in either the classroom or the workplace.

Visy said they are hoping to hold a special panel this semester.

“We are, this semester, hopefully going to have women that are already in the industry,” Visy said. “Baylor graduates coming back are going to talk about industry

lifestyle, and just women that are specifically in petroleum geosciences.”

Rau said one of their biggest goals for the future is to increase the number of undergraduate students in the organization and their impact on women in geoscience.

“Right now, our member list is probably around 15 to 20 [students],” Rau said. “It is mostly grad students, but we would love to reach out to undergrads. We have an undergraduate representative who’s really taken initiative. Our biggest goal in terms of expanding is reaching out to undergrads.”

Visy said they have events coming up specifically for undergraduates to teach them skills such as how to apply to grad school and how to network.

Rau said it is important to learn about each individual and who they are as a person. She said promoting that sense of community will help women become better at the geoscience profession.

“We are all striving to be geologists and to excel in our fields,” Rau said. “But you can only do that if you have all these other aspects of your life in check. We have a social life, we have a religious life. . . we want to make sure that everyone here has an outlet, community or support system.”

DAILY CRIME LOG

Jan. 27 - 30

This list is mandated by the Clery Act and is a compilation of all criminal incidents, alleged criminal incidents and fires reported to the Baylor Police Department or received by BUPD from an outside source. Crimes on this list are reported, but not all confirmed and may be pending an investigation. For definitions of listed dispositions and Clery Act information, go to www.baylor.edu/dps. Information may be limited because of federal guidelines.

Date reported: 1/27/2020
Location: 1 block of Hackberry Ave.
Offense(s): Forgery
Date Occurred: unknown
Disposition: Handled by Waco Police Department

Date reported: 1/28/2020
Location: Penland Hall
Offense(s): Criminal Mischief
Date Occurred: 1/28/2020
Disposition: Suspended

Date reported: 1/28/2020
Location: 1 block of Bagby Ave.
Offense(s): Possession of drug paraphernalia
Date Occurred: 1/28/2020
Disposition: Cleared by citation

Date reported: 1/29/2020
Location: 2200 block of University Parks Dr.
Offense(s): Evading arrest/detention using motor vehicle
Date Occurred: 1/29/2020
Disposition: Active

Date reported: 1/29/2020
Location: Penland Hall
Offense(s): Criminal Mischief
Date Occurred: 1/29/2020
Disposition: Active

Date reported: 1/28/2020
Location: East Campus Parking Garage
Offense(s): Failure to stop and identify
Date Occurred: 1/26/2020
Disposition: Active

Honor Council Report, Spring 2020

The Baylor University Honor Council is charged with the responsibility of reporting violations of the Honor Code to the campus community each semester. During the **Fall 2019 semester**, there were 151 reported violations of the Honor Code; 25 of these cases proceeded to Honor Council hearings. The other 126 cases were handled by faculty. The final outcomes of 18 cases are still pending.

The types of violations and sanctions for each case may be reviewed on the **Academic Integrity Web site** under the **Honor Council Reports** at: **<https://www.baylor.edu/honorcode/Reports>**

Copies of the **Honor Code** are available from the **Office of Academic Integrity** or may be accessed on-line at **<https://www.baylor.edu/honorcode/>**

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Students mix things up with cookie business

LUCY RUSCITTO
Staff Writer

San Antonio freshman Kaitlyn Cornes and The Woodlands freshman Kristina Ward have created their own business Oso Sweet, a cookie company run from their Brooks Flats dorm.

The freshman thought of the business idea after attending Oso Launch, a program for freshmen who want to set their first business venture in motion.

“We were just thinking about business ideas, and so I thought, ‘What if we did a treat delivery service?’” Cornes said.

In high school, Ward brought her famous cookies to her fellow classmates once a week. The positive feedback she received combined with Cornes’ mutual love for treats helped the pair find what their product should be: cookies, but with a twist.

“We were trying to make our idea something unique because there’s already kind of an influx [of desserts] in Waco,” Cornes said. “So we thought, ‘How can we make our cookie stand out, how can we make our product different from everyone else’s?’ And that’s where the popsicle shape idea came from.”

Ward and Cornes’ built their prototype by putting their product on a stick and cooking them in the shape of popsicles. The Baylor-themed delicacies are inspired by all things green and gold, which can be seen in the names of the business itself and its treats.

The girls have already piloted three flavors: “Bear Tracks,” a chocolate chip cookie with milk chocolate drizzle topped with chocolate chips, the “Green and Gold,” a funfetti sugar cookie with buttercream icing and a green and gold sprinkle finish, and the “Oso Espresso.” A double chocolate chip flavor with a caffeine kick and buttercream drizzle.

In an entrepreneurship course, Ward and Cornes requested to be in the same group for a business creation project, where they began creating what is now known as Oso Sweet.

Ward and Cornes said they brought their cookies to share with the class and were met with nothing but praise.

Dr. Boris Nikolaev, assistant professor of entrepreneurship, taught the course Ward and Cornes used to start their business. Nikolaev said he was happy to see students taking initiative outside the classroom.

“My initial reaction was very, very happy to see students that are so passionate and excited about a project that they want to do during the semester, which is something that you don’t often see with students,” Nikolaev said.

The bakers tested their business last fall semester with orders being sent through

a Google form linked in the Oso Sweet Instagram page. The form asked customers the flavor and quantity of cookies, and a delivery place and time.

Cornes is in charge of the social media and public relations, while Ward is the head baker and packager of the cookies.

Ward said that due to the “cottage food laws,” she is easily able to bake and run Oso Sweet out of their Brooks Flats kitchenette because legally all she needs is a food handlers license and cookie ingredients.

“The baking materials aren’t expensive,” Ward said. “If you buy them wholesale, they are especially inexpensive for the amount of product they make.”

Ward said Oso Sweet will charge about \$14 for a dozen and \$8 for half a dozen. Delivery will be free of charge to students living on campus as an incentive for them to buy again and localize the product.

Cornes and Ward said they plan to widen their market to Baylor parents.

“The Baylor parents Facebook page and the Baylor Parent Network is very involved and want to do things for kids,” Cornes said.

Cornes and Ward said their thoughts were for the cookies to serve as a gift from their parents for students’ academic achievements. The two also plan to take next steps in the business by moving Oso Sweet onto Baylor’s campus.

Ward and Cornes participated in the Baylor Venture program where the pair made it in the top 50 businesses. Oso Sweet was one of a few retail start-ups competing against multiple technology-based companies.

After working with Ward and Cornes in the classroom and during the Baylor Venture program, Nikolaev said he believes Ward and Cornes are more than capable of moving their business onto campus successfully.

“This is a period of time where they may not see the type of growth, revenue or profits that would make them excited to keep going, but this is the most critical time,” Nikolaev said. “They need to stay focused and keep going and persisting with their business, which they’re doing.”

The ultimate goal, Cornes and Ward said, is to start a storefront location and food truck, along with possible catering opportunities at Baylor and Waco-based events.

“Even though on paper it may look like this is just another bakery and kind of cookie business, I think in the long run, Oso Sweet will continue to have creative and fun products,” Nikolaev said. “The thing that I really admired about Oso Sweet was that it wasn’t about the class; it wasn’t about the grade. They were just intrinsically motivated to do this.”

DRIVE from Page 1



Brittney Matthews | Multimedia Journalist

MOTOR DRIVEN The Baylor Driving Club meets every Thursday to talk about cars and go out to dinner to create fellowship among car lovers.

people [racing] the club Mustang.”

Martin and some other members compete with their own vehicles. The club also owns its own racecar, a 1994 Ford Mustang GT with safety and performance upgrades. This serves as a way for members without a suitable vehicle of their own to be a part of the competitive events.

“Our club racecar is not just for show; we do race it at [autocross], we let our members race it - If you pay dues you can race the car,” Martin said. “We teach manual driving clinics, if you don’t know how to drive manual we’ll teach you how to do it, and you have the chance to race this car in actual motorsport.”

More straightforward is drag racing. Club members periodically take to the quarter-mile at Little River Dragway near Temple. Montgomery junior Peter Schier, the club’s treasurer and the owner of a tuned Ford Fiesta, said he enjoys participating in both kinds of events.

“They’re super exciting; most people have never done any competitive driving with their car,” Schier said. “It’s a super fun thing to be able to do, it’s kind of like a roller coaster on flat ground. It’s definitely a lot of fun and I think more people should try to do it.”

Racing, no matter how fun, is inherently dangerous. Martin said safety is paramount to the driving club.

“We do really stress safety in this club because you can’t not do that when there’s heavy machinery like cars involved,” Martin said. “Every time we have a racing event, we make sure everybody knows what they’re doing, especially with the club car. There’s a lot of liability in that so we have waivers and we make sure they can actually drive the car before we let them race it.”

The driving club is open to all, whether or not they own a car, or even have a driver’s license. Unlicensed members shouldn’t expect to hop behind the wheel, but Schier said anyone looking to meet up and talk about cars is welcome.

“You don’t have to have a car to be into cars,” Schier said. “[Anyone who is interested] should come at least visit, see if they like it. If they don’t, then no problem, it’s just not their thing. But I think everyone should at least explore the idea.”

BRIDGE from Page 1

“We have \$5.4 million available for this project... that should have more than done what we needed to accomplish the bids that we received,” Balk said. “We’re as surprised as anyone.”

The cost of construction is now being estimated at over \$12 million, and Balk said he believes there are several reasons for this large disparity.

One main contributor Balk cites is the ‘construction climate’ in Waco which has created “limited availability of local contractors.” The current work being done on I-35 has stretched human and material resources thin.

The city of Waco entertained the idea of pushing back the project until I-35 construction ends, but decided this was not practical, as material costs continue to grow.

The Waco suspension

bridge features a unique feature — a wooden deck suspended by cables. Waco park planners like Balk have worked with construction engineers to plan the addition of new components to the bridge that will prevent future corrosion. These design elements will require specific materials not readily accessible.

“Even for contractors that are familiar with working on bridges, an antique suspension bridge of this nature is not a common project for any company,” Balk said. “All those factors probably conspired to create a much more expensive project than what was anticipated.”

The bridge, built in 1870, has been a part of many Baylor student’s experiences in Waco.

Frisco junior Geneava Moore serves as a

community leader in South Russell and frequently encourages her residents to go out and explore beyond campus. She said that she is thankful the bridge will remain open, particularly for the freshmen who can continue to make memories at the bridge.

“I actually went tortilla tossing for the first time right before break with a friend, and she’d been trying to get me to do it since freshman year,” Moore said.

Until a solution can be made to address the obstacles currently impeding construction, the bridge will remain open to the public. The city of Waco will launch a PR campaign when construction is green-lighted.

“I’m committed to this project,” Balk said. “We’re going to make it happen.”

ANNIVERSARY from Page 1

be holding celebrations throughout the 2020 to recognize the 175 anniversary of the university.


The scheduled events include a birthday-party themed Dr Pepper Hour, an alumni celebration entitled “Honoring the Gold and Bold” and an international day of service during “Steppin’ Out” that encourages alumni to serve in their community. These events will be held throughout February and April.

Kemp also said there will be an event involved with Dia del Oso in April, and more events with freshman orientation and homecoming next fall.

“We’re going to try to integrate content into orientation and line camp this summer so that the new students coming in can feel the impact of joining an organization with the kind of history that we do,” Kemp said.


More events will continue to be announced throughout the year and will continue until the end of December.

“It’s a great time to remind people where we are today and where we’re going,” Kemp said. “Baylor was established before Texas was even a state, so it has a lot of history in Texas that we’re going to showcase.”



With all of the books you have to remember this year...

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ROUNDUP
YEARBOOK
BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

The Baylor Roundup yearbook will host photo sessions once in the Fall and once in the spring.

Follow the Lariat to find out when your session is or go to WWW.BAYLOR.EDU/ROUNDUP to find your date and order your book.

WHAT TO DO IN WACO

FRIDAY

Hank Williams: Lost Highway | 2:30 p.m. | Waco Civic Theatre, 1517 Lake Air Drive | Ranging between \$16 and \$20 | A musical biography of the singer-songwriter Hank Williams

Claudio Monteverdi’s “L’Incoronazione di Poppea” | 7:30 p.m. - 10 p.m. | Jones Theatre, Hooper-Schaefer Fine Arts Center | Tickets priced at \$5 (students) and \$15 (general public) | Presented by the Baylor Opera Theater Guild

Neal McCoy Concert | 7 p.m. | Waco Hippodrome, 724 Austin Ave. | Tickets range between \$35 and \$60

SATURDAY

Downtown Farmers Market | 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. | 510 Washington Ave. across the street from McLennan County Courthouse | Free

Claudio Monteverdi’s “L’Incoronazione di Poppea” | 2 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. | Jones Theatre, Hooper-Schaefer Fine Arts Center | Tickets priced at \$5 (students) and \$15 (general public) | Presented by the Baylor Opera Theater Guild

Kazoku Quartet | 4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. | Roxy Grove Hall, Waco Hall | Free | The Kazoku Quartet is a dynamic classical saxophone ensemble that performs in classical, jazz, folk and pop idioms.

Waco Civic Theatre presents “Always, Patsy Cline” | 2:30 p.m. & 7:30 p.m. | Waco Civic Theatre, 1517 Lake Air Drive | Tickets range from \$16 to \$20

SUNDAY

Claudio Monteverdi’s “L’Incoronazione di Poppea” | 2 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. | Jones Theatre, Hooper-Schaefer Fine Arts Center | Tickets priced at \$5 (students) and \$15 (general public)

Waco Civic Theatre presents “Always, Patsy Cline” | 2:30 p.m. | Waco Civic Theatre, 1517 Lake Air Drive | Tickets range between \$16 to \$20



Carson Lewis | Page One Editor

GEARHEAD John Hartley’s work, “Florence,” stands in the middle of his “Played in America” exhibition in Baylor’s Martin Museum of Art. The artwork, originally a girl’s bicycle, was handmade and welded by Hartley. He described it as a display of his “gearhead” interests.

Bicycles, soldiers, dolls

An art exhibit told in three stories

CARSON LEWIS
Page One Editor

John Hartley’s recent exhibition “Played in America” explores the relationship between people and objects. The exhibit will be open until March 1 in the Martin Museum of Art.

The exhibit’s artist reception was held at the Martin Museum of Art Wednesday night, featuring the artist’s thoughts on his work — a collection of photographically inspired oil paintings.

Hartley’s 40-minute talk fluctuated from a question-and-answer session to his descriptions of the pieces in the exhibit, interspersed with short stories from his life and how they inspired the artwork.

“I’m going to go down some rabbit holes tonight, I’m sure,” Hartley said.

Bicycle to motorcycle

In the center of the exhibit sits “Florence,” a yellow motorbike with its title displayed in colorful font. The artist described how the piece related to his youth. His father owned a motorcycle repair shop where his grandfather was a mechanic.

He recounted the moment when his relationship with his grandfather grew—through their shared love of mechanics—as they would work on motorcycles together.

“He was amazed [by my work on motorcycles]. He knew we were connected genetically, right? So after that, we started working on motorcycles... Whenever he would tick off my grandmother by buying something like a motorcycle, he’d paint it yellow. My grandma’s favorite color was yellow. So it would be OK after that,” Hartley said.

The dichotomy of toy soldiers

At one point during the event, Hartley asked the audience whether one of his pieces, “Sightline,” was about play or war. The oil painting shows a toy soldier holding his weapon as if he is ready for action. When they answered, Hartley asked to hear their explanations.

One woman in the audience guessed “play” while another guessed “war.”

“Well guess what? You’re both right,” Hartley said.

The artist clarified later, telling art students in the audience to contemplate different interpretations of their work, using “Sightline” as an example.

doll was made, in my mind, by a child,” Hartley said.

The piece is jarring in its display, with the head of the doll facing down. He said this choice of framing was intentional.

“This one... I actually wanted it to be uncomfortable. [Dolls], in general, are kind of weird toys. In fact, my wife



Brittney Matthews | Multimedia Journalist

HARTLEY’S HEART John Hartley talks about his new exhibit “Played in America” and shares stories from his childhood during a reception hosted Wednesday.

“[The viewer’s] thought may be more interesting than your initial thought,” Hartley said.

White doll painted black

One of the oil paintings exhibited titled “My Best Friend” depicts a dark-skinned doll with chipped paint displayed sideways.

Hartley told the audience how he acquired the doll pictured, which his wife found for him while on a business trip.

“The doll was kind of scratched up. If you look at, it there’s some pink on the nose. That’s not something I created. It was actually a white doll-baby that was painted dark to match an African American’s complexion. So the baby-

calls them ‘soul suckers,’” Hartley said. “There is something really uncomfortable with them because some of them are so poorly styled, but as kids we fall in love with them— they’re a likeness of us. We don’t realize that they’re pretty inaccurate representations of us.”

A crowd of approximately 100 people stayed during the reception.

“It was a really nice size crowd. The thing that impressed me most about the event was the questions the students asked,” Elisa Crowder, gallery attendant, said. “Those were mainly art students, but not everybody who asked a question was an art student. I thought they asked really insightful questions, and things that will help them grow as [artists].”



Brittney Matthews | Multimedia Journalist

TOY STORY The Martin Museum of Art will hold John Hartley’s exhibit called “Played in America” until March 1.



Brittney Matthews | Multimedia Journalist

CHIPPED DOLL One of the paintings on display at the Martin Museum of Art depicts a child’s doll that was painted black.

Students portray power struggle on stage

ANDIE CHILSON
Reporter

The Baylor Opera Theater brought history to life on stage through “L’Incoronazione di Poppea” during its opening night on Thursday. Its rendition of the Claudio Monteverdi opera will also be performed 7:30 p.m. Friday as well as 2 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday in the Jones Theatre in the Hooper-Schaefer Fine Arts Center.

The cast is entirely composed of undergraduate and graduate students at Baylor and is conducted by Music Director of the Baylor Opera Theater, Jeffrey Peterson.

The director of the Baylor Opera Theater, Susan Stone Li, is in charge of stage direction for the performance.

“L’Incoronazione di Poppea” was Monteverdi’s last opera. It tells the story of how Poppea, mistress of the Roman emperor, Nero, became the empress of Rome.

“It’s a story about power and how to achieve power, especially for women in Roman history,” Stone Li said.

“[The story] is being told by the Roman gods, so we have this interesting dichotomy of the gods telling the story as a way to show how powerful they are, and the humans participating in this story basically to show how powerful they are,” Stone Li said.

The cast began fine tuning their Italian in



Brooke Giacín | Multimedia Journalist

POWER PLAY The Baylor Opera Theater is currently producing its rendition of the opera “L’Incoronazione di Poppea” in the Jones Theatre in the Hooper-Schaefer Fine Arts Center.

September of last year and staging rehearsals in October. Because opera is a course at Baylor, students rehearse during class time, typically eight hours per week. In the weeks leading up to opening night, students were rehearsing up to 24 hours a week said Stone Li.

“Because [the class] is required of vocal performance students, it usually ends up being

students who are almost exclusively from the School of Music,” Stone Li said.

The opera exhibits a wide range of voices, but the countertenor voice is especially noteworthy in this production said Stone Li.

“To our modern ears, it can have kind of an effeminate context, but the countertenors that we have singing the main roles are everything

but effeminate. So it’s kind of a jump for a modern audience to be able to digest,” Stone Li said.

Rowlett senior and vocal performance major Preston Hart is one of the few low register voices in the opera.

He plays the part of Roman philosopher and adviser to the king, Seneca the Younger.

Hart said his character is torn between his duty to the king and his own moral code.

“I try to really emphasize the fact that [Seneca’s] trying to empower Octavia,” Hart said. “He’s trying to help. It’s just a matter of whether he’s perceived that way.”

Layton, Utah, master’s candidate Charity Cooper portrays the character Ottone, former lover of Poppea.

“I think [Ottone] is relatable because he’s caught in between someone he really loves and cares about and has really betrayed him, but he has to do what the empress tells him to,” Cooper said.

According to Cooper, Stone Li has worked to spread the word about the opera by reaching out to the Waco community, as “[‘L’Incoronazione di Poppea’] is a little bit more obscure, so it might make people a little nervous to take a chance on a show that they’ve never heard of,” Cooper said. “But everyone’s worked really hard, especially the last couple of weeks, to bring it all together.”



Brooke Giacín | Multimedia Journalist

MUSIC TO MY EARS The cast of the Baylor Opera Theater’s production of “L’Incoronazione di Poppea” rehearse on Monday in the Jones Theatre of the Hooper-Schaefer Fine Arts Center.



Brooke Giacín | Multimedia Journalist

ROYALTY The students in “L’Incoronazione di Poppea” have practiced their Italian since September of last year in preparation for this production.

ACROSS

- 1 Sleeve end
- 5 Soap unit
- 8 Con job
- 12 Milky gem
- 13 Foot rub response
- 14 Chorus syllables
- 15 Author Ferber
- 16 24 hours
- 17 Fashion magazine
- 18 Soldier's ID
- 20 Nest setting
- 22 Wed
- 26 Origami need
- 29 Ref
- 30 Conk out
- 31 Country singer Jackson
- 32 Rx writers
- 33 Lion's pride?
- 34 Dijon denial
- 35 Corp. boss
- 36 Does the job

37 Wed

- 40 Injure
- 41 Haystack find
- 45 — cheese dressing
- 47 “You’ve got mail” co.
- 49 Satan’s purchase
- 50 Disposi- tion
- 51 Roth svgs. plan
- 52 Albacore, e.g.
- 53 Diminish
- 54 Morning moisture
- 55 Exam format

DOWN

- 1 Not single-sex
- 2 High hairstyle
- 3 Sharp tooth
- 4 Level
- 5 Police ID
- 6 Bond rating
- 7 Beats
- 8 Stream-lined
- 9 Its
- 10 100%
- 11 Fannie —
- 19 Football filler
- 21 Gym unit

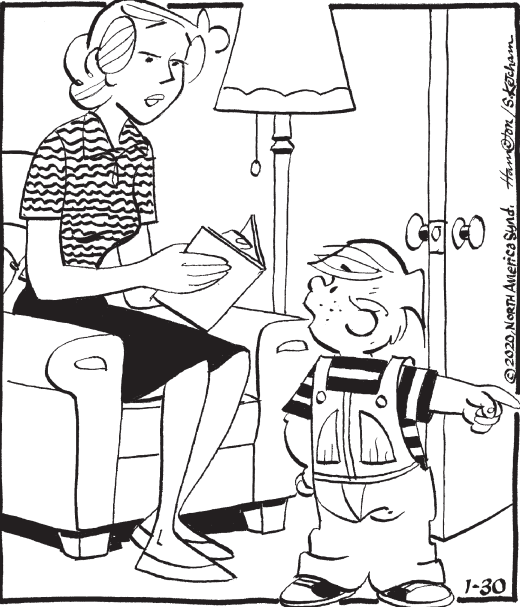
- 23 Henry VIII's house
- 24 Sty cry
- 25 Casual tops
- 26 Hunger reminder
- 27 Lotion additive
- 28 Temple to all the gods
- 32 Disney's Ariel, for one
- 33 Gallo winery setting
- 35 Train unit
- 36 Teeny
- 38 “All in the Family” spinoff
- 39 Acquired relative
- 42 Gloomy
- 43 Moth variety
- 44 Israeli airline
- 45 Upscale auto
- 46 Mauna —
- 48 Raw mineral

Today's
Crossword Puzzle

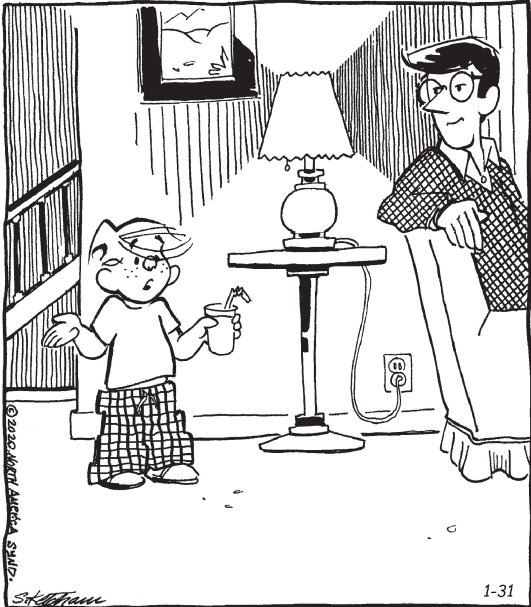
Crossword
solutions found at
baylorlariat.com

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15					16				17			
18				19			20	21				
			22			23				24	25	
26	27	28				29				30		
31					32				33			
34				35					36			
37				38				39				
			40					41		42	43	44
45	46					47	48			49		
50						51				52		
53						54				55		

Dennis the Menace



“WE TRIED EVERYTHING TO GET THE GRAPE JUICE OUT OF THE CARPET...EXCEPT FOR YOU.”



“IF YOU GUYS CAN'T KEEP IT DOWN, I'M JUST GONNA HAFTA WATCH THE REST OF JIMMY FALLON WITH YOU.”

The Family Circus

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

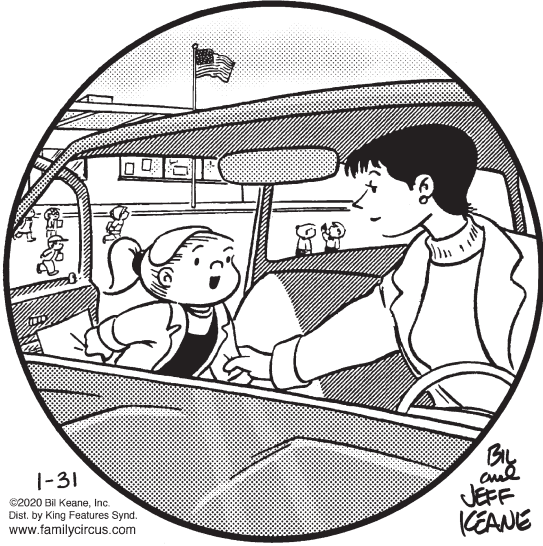
By Bil Keane



“Yes! More snowball supplies!”

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane



“Mrs. Clarke told us a story about Attila the Hunk.”

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BEARS >> Don't miss our coverage of Baylor MBB vs TCU online at

BaylorLariat.com



DJ Ramirez | Sports Editor

OH BRUDER Constantin Frantzen (left) and his younger brother Christopher Frantzen are part of a talented Baylor roster that hopes to make a run to the national championship this spring.

Brotherly love on, off the tennis court

PRANAY MALEMPATI
Sports Writer

Often, athletes are very close to their teammates because of the amount of time they spend together. College athletes live together, eat together and practice together. Sometimes teammates can have such a close relationship that they feel like brothers. But when teammates are brothers, that can lead to a special kind of experience.

Senior Constantin Frantzen, Coni [pronounced Connie] for short, and freshman Christopher Frantzen are brothers from Augsburg, Germany, playing together on Baylor's men's tennis team. Coni said he wanted his brother to join him at Baylor and convinced Chris that coming to this university would be the best choice to help him go professional.

Chris said that if he was going to leave his home country, he was only considering joining his older brother at Baylor.

"Other colleges also texted me, but I didn't really respond to them," Chris Frantzen said. "I was either going to stay in Germany and play tennis there, or I would come to my brother and go to Baylor."

Both brothers said while they have always been competitive on the tennis court, they have a great relationship off the court.

Coni said that when Chris first arrived, he helped his younger brother transition to living in a new country and get accustomed to the college environment at Baylor.

"At the beginning, [Chris] came in really late," Coni said. "He didn't really have anybody to show him around, so that was all on me. . . I enjoyed helping him."

Chris said while his older brother is helping him a lot, he has been helping Coni a bit too.

"He had a German class last semester," Chris said. "His German is not that good anymore. So I helped him a little bit."

Men's tennis head coach Brian Boland has been awed by the connection Coni and Chris have. He said it has been amazing to see how well they work together and how much better they make each other, both on and off the court.

Boland recalls one event in particular that showed him how special their relationship was.

"I remember coming out one night last fall," Boland said, "and it was probably 10 at night. . . Constantin was working on Chris


with his volleys. . . To see Coni working with him and giving him advice, and Chris completely accepting it and asking questions, I mean I've never seen something like that before. [. . .] It's really special."

Coni said he is especially glad that he gets to experience this season with his brother. He said he thinks Baylor men's tennis will do some great things this spring.

"This year, we have something really special going on. A lot of talented players, also with Jenson Brooksby coming in and all the other freshmen. . . this year, I think we have a really good shot to win the entire thing," Coni said. "And it's really cool for me that my brother is also on the team, so that we can go through that journey together."

The Frantzen brothers, along with the rest of the Bears, will travel to Fayetteville, Ark., this weekend to face the Razorbacks at 1 p.m. Saturday in the Billingsley Tennis Center. Baylor's next home match is scheduled for 5 p.m. Thursday, February 6 at the Hawkins Indoor Tennis Center.

"Wear white Thursday against Wake Forest," Boland said. "We need you here."




Constantin "Coni" Frantzen

Ranked No. 95 in ITA Fall 2019 singles rankings

Ranked No. 20 in ITA Fall 2019 doubles rankings with junior Sven Lah

Finished 6-6 in singles play and 11-4 in doubles during the fall season

His 11 wins in the fall were a team best



Christopher Frantzen

German doubles champion prior to Baylor

U18 German National Cup participant

Finished first fall season as a Bear with a 7-6 singles record and 4-3 doubles record

Ended fall 2019 season on a three-match win streak

Which team will be Super Bowl LIV Champions?



DRAKE TOLL
LTVN Managing Editor
Kansas City
35-34



NATE SMITH
Broadcast Reporter
Kansas City
31-28



BRADEN SIMMONS
Reporter
Kansas City
28-24



PRANAY MALEMPATI
Sports Writer
Kansas City
34-24



MATTHEW SODERBERG
Sports Writer
San Francisco
31-27



DJ RAMIREZ
Sports Editor
Kansas City
31-24

Baylor baseball’s analytical edge: Using data to improve the game

BRADEN SIMMONS
Reporter

The game of baseball is changing and Baylor’s baseball program has shifted its focus toward developing a way to provide information to gain an extra step in competition.

Director of baseball operations Justin Grassi and student manager Ryan Hebbon are passionate about the data side of the sport. They work behind the scenes to help analyze information that would benefit both the coaches and players.

Data analysis is used by almost every baseball team today and implements tools such as data visualization for a team to see the game from a whole new perspective. Hebbon, a graduate student in statistics, uses his passion for the game to look for different projects to help the players in any capacity.

“We are super fortunate to have student managers like Ryan in this new group we brought in to focus on data and analytics,” Grassi said. “[They] put out a product valued by the coaching staff and can be translated to the players.”

Modern equipment is key to gaining an edge on the field. Grassi said, Baylor uses multiple machines to help track data in pitching, hitting and more to analyze the way the team plays. The team is careful about implementing new software to ensure it is beneficial before using it. The goal is to use this software to translate to the on-field performance.

Hebbon said he has been a part of the team for four years and has seen growth in the analytics side as well as how the team views data. Ultimately, the team’s success relies on the players’ grit and determination to improve themselves, but he is glad the data is there for the players to access.

“My sophomore year, we had really no way to track data,” Hebbon said. “Now we have multiple instruments designed to track pitching and hitting that weren’t even in existence back then. Not only are the coaches interested in the increase in analytics, but some of the players are interested and will ask what their launch angle or exit velocity is in the cages.”

The metrics applied to the collegiate level are mainly implemented towards player development. Using coding software, such as ‘R’ and the “nerd stuff,” teams recruit highly talented players and continue looking for ways to make them better.

“We develop summary statistics through graphs or tables that will show trends of a player to display to them,” Hebbon said. “It is key for a player to see their weaknesses but also emphasize their strengths.”

Hebbon tracks the launch angles of players when the ball is hit off the bat, exit velocity or how hard the ball is hit and the spin rate of a pitcher as it leaves his arm toward the plate. With this information, the team generates an endless stream of data that allows for changes in the players’ development.

With so much data generated by the team, Hebbon said the difficult part about implementing a project is finding the information that will be most valuable. With a data set of 30 to 40 columns, it’s important to narrow down the variables that can be used to benefit the players.

“Coach [Steve] Rodriguez has done a great job in improving this program, and so we want to focus on improving the already talented players brought in,” Hebbon said. “If we keep the coaching strategy as the constant variable and improve the players, that will ultimately increase wins.”

Hebbon said he collaborates with multiple baseball student managers at other Division I programs. Among those are Iowa and Penn State University, where they generate different strategies to help their own teams. Everyone that works with a Division I program is trying to impact the game in order to find an edge against the competition.

“We don’t have enough developers in our organization to make the next baseball statistic that will change the game,” Hebbon said. “But we can look at certain statistics and numbers that are beneficial to scouting and recruiting a player.”

Hebbon intends on combining his love of statistics with his love of sports by creating a sports analytics club in the fall of 2020. In the meantime, he’ll be tracking players’ progress on the field as Baylor baseball prepares for its upcoming season.

The Bears host Nebraska in their season opener at 6:30 p.m. Feb. 14 at Baylor Ballpark.



Graphic by DJ Ramirez | Sports Editor

Weekend Schedule

Friday

WBB @ Texas
6 p.m. in Austin
Broadcast on FS1

Saturday

Men’s tennis
@ Arkansas
1 p.m. in Arkansas

MBB vs TCU
3 p.m.
at the Ferrell Center
Broadcast on ESPN2

Women’s tennis
@ Ole Miss
4 p.m. in Oxford, Miss.

Acrobatics @ UMHB
5 p.m. in Belton

Sunday

Women’s tennis
@ Mississippi State
Noon
in Oxford, Miss.



Lariat File Photo
LONG REIGN THE BEARS Baylor acrobatics and tumbling celebrates its fifth national title after winning the 2019 NCATA National Championship on April 27, 2019.

A&T: Tumbling into new year, looking for sixth ring

MATTHEW SODERBERG
Sports Writer

No. 1 Baylor acrobatics and tumbling will begin their 2020 season at 5 p.m. Saturday in Belton against a new program, Mary Hardin-Baylor.

The Bears return just 11 juniors and seniors (out of 43 total athletes) to their defending national champion squad from last season. According to head coach Felecia Mulkey, there have been grumblings of a rebuilding year for her team, but she said she is confident that they have the firepower to stay on top.

“With a young group, the hunger is there,” Mulkey said. “You get a lot of just really driven freshmen and sophomores and you roll with it. And so practice is a lot of fun. Learning new skills, seeing new athletes and different skills and they celebrate every little thing.”

She also said that with new athletes, there will be a learning curve to the beginning of the season.

“You’re going to see us build over the course of the year because you can’t expect a group of majority freshmen and sophomores to come out — I don’t want them to come out and compete and peak like they’re going to do at the national championships,” Mulkey said. “So we have a plan of how we’re going to continue to grow.”

Senior top Faith Spivey returns on the heels of winning the third-straight national championship for this class, and the fifth straight for the program. Spivey said the

“championship culture” at Baylor comes from the togetherness of the team.

“I’d say we’re just a family,” Spivey said. “Like, we’re always there for each other. We all love each other, but also, when it comes to practice, we’ll have fun outside, but we will walk in and we’re ... ready to practice, ready to compete. It’s all about flipping the switch.”

The Bears will face the Crusaders who are entering their first year of competition. Mary Hardin-Baylor new acrobatics and tumbling program is led by new coach Courtney Pate, a former Baylor student and acrobatics and tumbling athlete. Pate aided Baylor during its first two championships seasons in the sport. Mulkey said she is proud of the Crusader coach for what she’s been able to do in such a short time.

“She’s a Baylor Bear and one of my former athletes,” Mulkey said. “[Pate] is doing a fantastic job, so I’m excited to see her and what they’re going to do over the next couple years. And she’s nervous that it’s a sellout.”

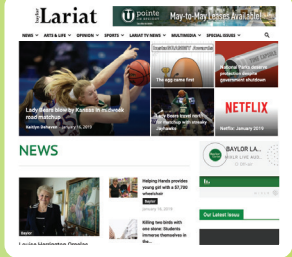
On top of the new schools in Texas (East Texas Baptist University added a program as well), people in the sport are optimistic that the NCAA will name acrobatics and tumbling an “emerging sport” for the NCAA Division I level. Spivey said it’s an exhilarating time for the sport.

“This is something that we’ve been waiting for a while,” Spivey said. “And so now we’re waiting for the Division I in April, but even now more and more schools are adding, so it’s really exciting to have more opportunities.”

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