

# The SCC Challenge

Fall 2024





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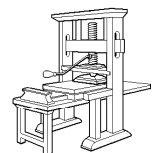
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*On the cover:* Jace Rosentreader ropes a calf at the SCC farm in Beatrice. The Rodeo Team will travel to Iowa State, South Dakota State, Black Hills State and UNL this spring for competition. Photo by Chad Greene

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Staff writers/photographers — Aubriana Baxa, Gavin Becker, Rayanne Bedlan, Devon Beechley, Anna Castro, Megan Fischer, Emma Gammel, Brandon Jurgens, Matthew McCullar, George Panagoulis, Karli Shoemaker, Cillain Smith, Kaitlyn Wood and Robert Zimmerman.

Adviser — Joshua Whitney

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## **Write for The SCC Challenge and get class credit!**

### **Journalism courses for spring:**

#### **JOUR 1810 - Introduction to Mass Media**

This class covers many areas of mass media, including music, movies, social media, books, media law, and ethics, while getting a taste of what it's like to be a journalist for The SCC Challenge.



## Opinion

# Dorm dining tips

By Megan Fischer

As a college student, it can be difficult to find meals that aren't expensive, especially if you're living in the dorms and don't have a stove top to cook with.

Sometimes, I have trouble finding food that's not expensive or will be easy to make while in college.

If you're one of these individuals, here are some helpful tips to help you through your college experience.

One way to ease the stress of being a college student is to create a weekly meal plan.

This can help you feel more organized about what you're planning on eating every day so that you're not prone to eating out.

Another helpful tip is to keep snacks in your dorm or backpack. Having snacks throughout the day can help you feel more energized while in school.

Some good ideas to stock on as an affordable pantry idea are foods like canned foods, ramen, crackers, pasta and granola bars. In addition, canned and frozen food can definitely help you create easy and cheap meals for the day.

There are also bud-

get-friendly grocery stores to shop in such as ALDI, which has a location close to the Lincoln campus, and Dollar General.

Making sure you keep an eye on deals can definitely help you save money on food. Having a grocery list before you go into the grocery store can also help avoid spending more money than you were supposed to.

There are also cheap cooking tips that can help students throughout their college journey, such as microwave mac and cheese or potatoes.

If you're living in the dorm, utilize their campus resources. Ensuring you utilize these resources can also save you money in college.

I talked with the English teacher, Mystery Harwood about how she saved money during her college experience.

Harwood talked about how she would go to the food pantry which helped her save money while in college.

Harwood explained, "SCC is good at making sure their food pantry is always stocked."

The food pantry can be found in the student support room 204 at the Lincoln campus on 8800 O Street.

## Grocery bags filled for Milford students



photo by Theresa Webster

MILFORD - Staff on the Milford campus filled 155 bags of food for students to take home with them for the winter break.

The bags included pasta, sauce, canned tuna or chicken, a box of rice or mashed potatoes, a box of cereal, crackers, a can of fruit or vegetable and a box of shells and cheese. Also included were a recipe booklet and a Food Pantry swag item (hot pad, wooden spoon or citrus peeler).

This is the first time for this activity.

"We wanted to recognize Nation Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Month which is in November [and] provide students with extra support over the break," said Assistant Campus Director and Dean of Students Theresa Webster.

As she explained, "We know that many students experience food insecurity (23.4% of community college students)."

This also served to "engage campus employees in an opportunity to support our student body," she said.

Opinion

# Disconnect to reconnect: phone free focus

By Emma Gammel

On Southeast Community College's campus, a new trend is emerging. Students are increasingly disconnecting from their phones and social media.

Students are hoping to boost their productivity for classes. For many, managing their time spent on devices has become important when preparing for exams, tests, projects and more.

One effective tip students have been using is placing their phones in another room during study sessions.

Jessenia Morales, a freshman this fall at SCC, shared how this strategy has transformed their focus.

"It's easy to get sucked into scrolling," Morales said, "but giving myself that time helps me finish my work faster."

By physically distancing themselves from their devices, Morales can concentrate more fully on their assignments without the constant distraction of notifications.

Another practical approach is setting specific time limits for social media use.

Scrolling through apps can really drain time, often leading to bad study



habits. Implementing app time limits ensures that breaks are intentional and productive.

Scheduling designated phone-free study sessions is another popular technique that helps students maintain their academics.

By establishing a rou-

tine where technology is set aside, students are able to resist the temptation to check their phones. Morales noted that studying in focused environments has helped their studies.

"Having a set routine and not relying on my phone for everything helps

me a lot," Morales explained.

Lastly, SCC students have emphasized the importance of disconnecting to manage stress and improve sleep quality.

Excessive screen time has been linked to anxiety, irregular sleep patterns and burnout. Taking those intentional breaks not only reduces academic stress but can overall improve one's well-being.

In a world where connectivity can feel overwhelming, students at SCC are discovering that sometimes the best way to stay connected to themselves and their studies is by disconnecting from their phones.

This movement is proving to be an important tool for thriving in college and managing stress effectively.

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# Milford hall's new renovations bring a bright future for students

By Devon Beechley

MILFORD - For over 70 years, Nebraska Hall on the SCC Milford campus has housed students and faculty in their pursuit of education.

Today, the renovations being made to the building promises to usher in a new day for students.

The construction includes new common areas for students, computer labs, study lounges, a coffee shop and a new front entrance for the school.

Because the number of students attending Milford has doubled in the last six years, SCC, alumni and donors have invested around \$7.4 million dollars to this project, as well as investments for future buildings.

Nebraska Hall, originally named the Roosevelt building, was constructed



Webcam image from Dec. 5

**Nebraska Hall on the Milford campus is in the midst of a transformative remodeling project.**

in 1921. It served as a hospital for sailors and soldiers returning from battle in the first world war.

It wasn't until 1941 that Sen. Stanley Matzke introduced a bill to the state legislature to convert it into a trade school. It was then converted into dormitories and a cafeteria and remained the symbol of the college.

In 1957, Milford was hit by an F4 tornado that devastated 49 homes and damaged much of the Milford area. Nebraska Hall, however, survived the storm and protected citizens seeking refuge in the school's underground

tunnel.

The construction is meant to enhance the experience and success of the student without losing the integrity of the hall.

According to the director of Advancement for SCC, Richard Blessen, the construction was "as true to that original building as possible."

The next phase of SCC's investment into buildings and infrastructure come from a plan by SCC president Dr. Paul Illich to give the students of SCC a better path for their future and education.

On the Milford campus website, it states the build-

ing will be "one central location to better serve both prospective and current students to try and reduce barriers that students face as they try to achieve their educational goals."

And as SCC prepares for the future, its leaders and students are optimistic and holding onto the core of what college means to them.

"A lot of what we talk about with community colleges are finding people jobs," Blessen said. "A lot of what Milford has been built on is finding students callings."

# Sandhills Global Tech Building to be pathway for the future

By Cillian Smith

LINCOLN - The Sandhill Global Technology Center is weeks away from opening its doors for the first time on SCC's Lincoln campus.

Inside the four-story building is a pathway to many different programs that are offered at SCC.

The building will help accommodate for new students entering technology-related programs more quickly than SCC was able to previously.

"Southeast Nebraska in particular is a such a manufacturing hub," Rick Blessen, Director of Advancement at SCC, said.

"[This means] a lot of things like automation weren't being addressed as well as they could have in our current spaces just because we didn't have room for them," he added.

The building includes some unique features. One of those features is that visitors will see all of the wiring and mechanics in the ceiling throughout the building as a method of "learning on display."

Most of the information technology classes offered in this building can be taken online; however, Blessen said some classes,



Webcam image from Dec. 4

**The Sandhills Global Technology Center, above, will be on display during an open house on Thursday, Jan. 16.**

such as labs, need to be taken in person, as these classes are very intense in hands-on activities.

The new building can be viewed during an open house on Thursday, Jan. 16, from 11 a.m. – noon.

The building was funded in part through a gift from Sandhills Global and using CO-VID19 relief and American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funds through the City of Lincoln, and construction began in March 2023.

## Possible second dorm on the way

By Anna Castro

LINCOLN - Woodhaven Hall, which opened last spring and is already housing more students than planned, may have a companion, as a second resident hall is already in the planning phase.

The proposed build site would be close to the current resident hall.

Vice President of Pro-

gram Development and a Campus Director Bev Cummins cautions that a second dorm is not a certainty and depends on several factors.

"We're exploring, it may or may not happen," Cummins explained.

The key to construction projects, Cummins says, is to get the right team on

**continued on page 7**



# Welding Center to be nation's largest

By Cillian Smith

LINCOLN - Precisely planning out one's life won't always work out, but precisely bending everything into place is a unique skill. It's the thrill of the all-new Welding Technology Center on SCC Lincoln's campus.

SCC Lincoln's Welding program's popularity has affected its ability to accept new students.

According to Rick Blessen, Director of Advancement, the program "historically had been having to turn away students."

When Blessen started working at SCC Lincoln about seven years ago, he says that students could wait two years to get into the Welding program because the program was always full.

"We don't want anybody to have to wait," he says.

The Welding Technol-



Webcam image from Dec. 5

**When the Welding Technology Center, above, opens next fall, it will be the nation's largest welding education space.**

ogy Center is expected to have eight classrooms and multiple laboratory spaces for welding.

The laboratory spaces allow for one instructor to oversee 20 welding booths at one time to reduce the inherent risks that come with welding.

Blessen says he met with the President of the American Welding Society to discuss details about the welding center, and he initially believed that this building was the largest welding center for a community college.

"We confirmed [on

November 6th, 2024] with the President," he says, "that it is flat out the largest welding education space in the United States."

This is in comparison to Lincoln Electric's, a widely known welding brand, own educational space, as Blessen describes.

Other spaces in the building include a special lab specifically designed for robotic welding and a fabrication shop.

Some of the spaces in the building, such as the commons area, are flexible in what staff can do with them. For example, they can hold demonstrations of large machinery inside the commons area.

## Second dorm, continued

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board a project.

As plans are made about any future construction, she says that input from students and others is needed to better establish goals and needs, and the right architects also need to be selected.

It is hoped the new dorm would have a dining hall, 250 beds and additional parking.

Cummins also stated that the new dorm could include space designed with more private spaces for students.

In addition, building the dorm next to a wooded area would provide a connection to nature.

The college is also working with the city of Lincoln with a grant to construct a trail system through campus.

# Chess club open to beginners and veterans

By Brandon Jurgens

LINCOLN - Be honest, did you even know SCC had a chess club? Even if you did, you probably don't know much about it.

The man behind chess club, the man who from behind the scenes keeps it afloat, is Leo Iacono, a philosophy instructor at SCC Lincoln.

When asked to describe chess club in basic language, Iacono said, "people get together, play chess, organize tournaments and collectively learn more about chess."

The chess club meets on Wednesdays from 6-8. As of now, they meet in room T-106, but Iacono says that he is at the mercy of the school when it comes to the room he can get.

Anyone who wants to join or just check out the club is more than welcome to.

Iacono says that "anybody can come. They don't even have to be an SCC student. Kids come and anybody who wants to play chess. We have a Facebook page and a page at chess.com."

Two of the club members, 13 and 9, play chess competitively. Both kids said, "It is fun to play casual games at the club."

The members of the club who are not students

at SCC all said that the SCC chess club was the first one they heard of and saw online. They have all kept coming back because they enjoy playing chess in person and enjoy the atmosphere of the club.

Iacono says that attendance varies for the club.

"Usually, good attendance can be eight. Usually, half of the people there are SCC students," Iacono remarks.

Iacono has been advising the club since its inception in 2018. Iacono says that he enjoys being the faculty supervisor for the club for a multitude of reasons but a lot of it comes from liking chess.

What are a faculty advisor's responsibilities?

"Get a room, advertise the club and paperwork that people don't want to hear about," Iacono says.

When asked why he wanted to be the faculty advisor for the club, Iacono said "When I attended college at the University of Arizona, I was a chess club member. I wanted to help other people be able to play chess. I also find it cool that a professor can play chess and do the same thing as a student."

Iacono believes having a chess club is important at SCC for students because "it lets people



who enjoy chess to play chess, it provides people an outlet to play in person, [and] lets them socialize with each other and make friendships."

All the members of the chess club agreed that "being able to play in person, over the board is a big factor in getting better at chess."

He said students should join "because you get to play chess, and most importantly, you get to play in a physical setting."

Nicholas Burroughs, a Graphic Designer instructor at the downtown SCC campus, who has been playing chess for about three years, says students should join because "it is a mix of skill levels, and the

games are causal but can also be serious. Plus, Leo is a great host."

Anyone who is new to chess and wants to learn how to play should "stop by and give it a shot," Iacono says.

If Iacono had to say what some benefits of joining the club are he says, "academic success can be benefited from chess. It is a very logical game that causes its players to think things through."

When asked what some goals for the club are, he says, "We want to do better with the educational aspect of learning chess."

He continued, "I want to start back up the School

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# Republicans, Democrats come together in SCC club

By Matthew McCullar

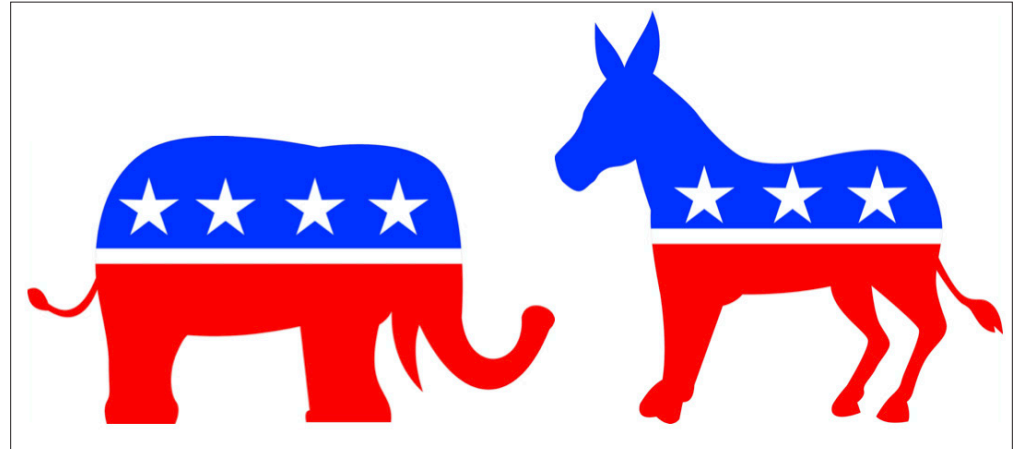
LINCOLN - While politics can be contentious, particularly in an election year, SCC has a club where both major parties come together, the Campus Democrats and Republicans.

The organization is advised by Nikki Isemann, a political science instructor at SCC, and has been at the college for quite some time.

"I Don't even remember what year," she said, "but a while ago."

This fall, as in past years, the group brought representatives from the Lancaster County election commission to train students and teachers to become a deputy registrar.

Organization members



also encouraged student participation in the election.

"This last election year, students who've been in both College Republican and Young Democrats have gone over to the dorms or outside the student union area to registrar students to vote,"

Isemann said.

Members have also worked with candidates of their party affiliation.

Students also participate in community service and helping collect money for veterans and natural disasters, with Isemann stating "We've collected money for the veteran's or-

ganization. We've collected money, for the Haitian hurricane that went through. [...]. We like to do both local service within the college. We like to do both community service in the city. [...] we're basically the civic organization and we're also philanthropic."

The name of the organization might lead one to believe that members might have to be a Democrat or Republican to join, but anyone with a general interest in politics can participate.

As Isemann explains, "One of my core ethics has been that I will, hopefully, bring anybody who's interested in political activity or political engagement at all into these groups, and then depending on where they lean mostly, then they will participate in one or the other."

## Chess, continued

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of Rook which teaches people about chess moves, and we want to keep our tournaments going, which are held on the first Wednesday of every month, but we need to find a new director for those when our current one is gone."

Some of Iacono's favorite moments from advising the chess club include

"having great attendance at a meeting once, and being able to get a lot of pictures to post on our advertising pages, which allows people to see what our chess club is like [and] hosting all the tournaments, we have; those can be fun."

Anyone wondering what it takes to be good at chess and how long, Iacono would tell you, "30 years," he says laughing.

"A lot of people are just able to be good at chess because they have natural talent," he added. "Reading books and watching videos are effective ways to learn as well."

Iacono has a very simple message for what chess club is all about at its core: "It's all about chess. Play, learn, and have fun. Those are the main things we always want to have at our meetings."

# Southeast Community College MESO group embraces cultures from around the world

By Devon Beechley

LINCOLN - The Multi-Ethnic Student Organization (MESO) is a social club wholly unique to SCC that prizes itself for being a safe place for everyone.

Freshman who are just joining SCC are often invited to join in “low key” group events and club elections. The leadership in the group state that MESO is a place where students can make friends, learn about different cultures and have fun.

Cole Kroese, a junior and member of the leadership team described the club in four words: “Chaotic. Exciting. Unique. Fshow!”

According to Julian Gomez, the faculty advisor for MESO, the Multicultural Advisory Board was created in 1992, and the International Student Organization started soon afterwards.

By 2003, the Lincoln, Beatrice and Milford campuses had the Minority Ethnic Student Organization that focused on promoting the cultures of international students; the name was later changed in 2004 to be more inclusive.

According to Gomez, “In my experience, SCC has been very supportive

in their clubs. Whenever I have need for something for an event, faculty and staff have been very helpful.”

Gomez is not alone in his praises for the school’s care for the club.

Mars Adams, a sophomore and member of

is quick, a problem that many clubs at SCC face every year.

Kroese stated that they didn’t want to make the group feel “threatening” or “scary” and wanted it to get mass appeal so that it would go on for years after they graduate.



the leadership, believes that the move from their classrooms to the main recreational area greatly improved the amount of people who joined and felt welcome.

The group that is meeting today faced a lot of challenges in terms of continuity of members and scheduling. Due to the two-year system, the graduation rate for members

Even though there are leadership elections, it is not formal or in need of commitment, as apposed to student senate.

The success rate and networking of clubs like MESO have made Jonita Mensah “not drop out of college.” Mensah, a sophomore and group organizer, believes that being a member of the group has improved her grades and

driven her success.

“When you meet more people,” Mensah states, “there are more people of use to you.”

The theme of connections and friendships were echoed by members of the club.

Eren Renteria, sophomore and member, stated that “being in MESO has definitely set me up for success. It’s not just about fun; its helped me build connections that matter in college.”

And college students are not the only people who are able to connect through this organization.

MESO takes field trips where students will go to schools like Arnold Elementary and discuss the culture and lifestyles of people from other countries.

MESO also recently celebrated “International Education Week” in November, and the events included a series of booths promoting cultures and ethnicities.

It is the goal of MESO to introduce cultures to those who would never have experienced it. The group believes that diversity helps everyone and that MESO is setting the precedent on how to do it.

Adams responds to  
**continued on page 15**



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# Lincoln English Adds Four New Instructors

## Toni Dutton

By Devon Beechley

Humor, levity, family and character are words first semester Southeast Community College professor Toni Dutton associate her career and her travels through life.

Entering her 36th year of teaching English and literature courses, Dutton has taught at five schools on both the college and high school level. Born in Lincoln, her family includes six children and four grandchildren, the youngest born last December.

Dutton family holidays are filled with travel and parties. Though complicated at times, Dutton recalls



Toni Dutton

that the family can always find laughs and activities with her children.

“I don’t know if I’ve ever owned the phrase ‘soccer-dance mom’ before,” Dutton stated, “but

its going to be in print.”

After a treatment of cancer, her family vows strengthened with questions of what really mattered in life. This philosophy follows her to where she is today, with time reinforcing her method for growth.

“You have to have a positive mindset,” Dutton relayed, “keeping each other in check about what’s important.”

This methodical and heartfelt approach is reflected in her career in teaching. Her record according to teacher rating online speak for itself, with overwhelming review of positivity, helpfulness and extensive knowledge in

English subjects. Dutton encourages her students to not only read and reflect, but to challenge what they believe to be true.

“The arts are connected to who we are as human being,” Dutton explains, “it gives a breadth and depth to our education.”

Her favorite novels include American classics, like *The Handmaid’s Tale* and Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*, often paired with poetry and philosophy from scholars to brew other points of view.

Dutton explained, “I’m not going to tell them the way to look at the world, that’s not my job. I want to

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## Mystery Harwood

By Megan Fischer

Mystery Harwood is a new English teacher at Southeast Community College, and Harwood teaches composition and poetry classes.

Harwood’s classes are mainly in person, except for her summer classes, which are all online. She will also have a hybrid class starting next semester.

She teaches Composition 1 and 2 in person and hybrid; her poetry class is online.

To take Harwood classes, a student must take the

placement test, which will show the students which type of English classes they will be assigned to.

If a student needs help with writing their essay, Harwood recommends going to the writing center to help look over the student’s essay.

Harwood advises students to communicate with their teachers and peers. She says this will help students get more out of the class.

“I love the fact that you feel like you’re part of a community [at SCC],” she says. “SCC is so important

to Lincoln and to be a part of this, it makes you feel important.”

If a student wants to know more about Harwood she loves watching “terrible” movies. She also loves watching horror movies and likes to write about ghosts.

Before Harwood started working at SCC, she worked at Union Adventist University in Lincoln.

Harwood attended SCC, UNL and the University of Louisiana.

Harwood describes her college experience as “interesting. It took me a

while. I had two kids when I started, so it was wild at first, but I loved it, especially grad school.”



Mystery Harwood



## Wendy Weitzel

By Karli Shoemaker

Wendy Weitzel is enjoying her first semester as an English instructor on the Lincoln campus.

She grew up in Mount Pleasant, Utah, a town of about 3,000 people which was a small farming community as well.

Weitzel got her undergrad at BYU in Utah and her master's degree at Lesley University in Cambridge, Mass.

She has always loved writing and creativity and went back to get her master's degree in creative writing for children's books. She loves to teach, and her teaching helps her

kids' knowledge as well.

Weitzel has said she loves SCC and the student body, and "teaching here is like a dream come true."

Developmental English classes is what Weitzel teaches the most. Her approach to teaching these classes is she wants students to feel like they care about the topic and feel successful.

The first day of class, she talks about the purpose of writing and how we are all writers and creators.

Learning how to express ourselves is also what she wants her students to learn. Empathy and understanding



Wendy Weitzel

where students come from is what her approach to teaching leads to.

"I want students to be empowered to find their own voice," she said.

Weitzel loves running,

playing tennis, music and hanging out with her children in her free time. She has four children, so she says they take up most of her free time, and she is most passionate about her family.

She says her recent move from the Middle East has given her a perspective on how every culture is different left her more open-minded.

Weitzel says work is an antidote for stress, and she finds setting aside time to get work done limits stress as well as talking to a friend about it.

She likes to work with others and believes in the

**continued on page 29**

## Cara Morgenson

By Emma Gammel

Southeast Community College has recently welcomed Cara Morgenson as its newest developmental English instructor for this 2024 Fall Semester.

With a passion for helping multilingual learners succeed, Morgenson is leading courses designed to provide SCC students with the readiness they need to thrive academically and individually.

Cara Morgenson, the developmental English instructor, took on her new role at SCC this Fall semester.

Adjusting to this po-

sition, Morgenson is not only navigating a brand-new college environment but also meeting a diverse group of students eager to improve their language skills.



Cara Morgenson

Morgenson's passion for teaching English to multilingual learners began early in her career.

She initially focused on working with multilingual learners and multinational students, which is oftentimes abbreviated to ELL or ESL students. This journey took her abroad to teach at the University of Łódź in Poland.

"I really enjoyed being able to collaborate with folks from all over the world—who spoke all sorts of languages," Morgenson shared, reflecting on how this global experience initiated her passion for education.

After her international experience in Poland, Morgenson pivoted back into teaching when an English position opened at The Career Academy (TCA). Then, she returned to her passion for teaching English, this time focusing on developmental English.

Instructing development English provides her with the opportunity to not only work with multilingual students but also support those preparing to take college-level courses who are continuing to develop their literacy and college-readiness skills.

"Developmental courses

**continued on page 14**

# Marketing and communications has new director

By Anna Castro

SCC has a new administrative director for marketing and communications, Seth Meranda.

Meranda is a life-long Lincolnite who discovered marketing and communications during his time as a student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

“Marketing was a little more creative and less black and white than accounting,” says Meranda. “I was drawn to building, developing and creating marketing campaigns and websites.”

After he graduated college, he worked at admissions office at UNL, where he built the office’s first website, developed email recruitment campaigns and implemented various recruitment-focused digital marketing technologies.

Building upon his experience in digital marketing, Meranda added consulting and has worked with hundreds of colleges and universities on recruitment and marketing strategies.

Meranda believes his greatest strength that helped him in his career is his versatility.

“I look at marketing and communications through a perspective of planning and strategic process,”



Seth Meranda

Meranda says. “Well planned and developed marketing strategy can elevate a brand.”

As the marketing communications director, Meranda leads a team working to promote the college through advertising and building branded experiences for audiences to discover Southeast.

The most difficult part of the job, he says, is keeping up with the changes in the market, evolving audience perceptions, and the modern student needs.

Meranda’s advice for students is to stay open-minded and creative.

“Be curious, take the time to understand the

why and how, and you’ll learn a lot of what you need to know,” he advised.

Meranda and his wife, Melissa, own a sandwich shop called White or Wheat Sandwich Shoppe at the northwest corner of 70th and Van Dorn in Lincoln.

When he is not busy with his jobs, he enjoys spending time with his wife and their four kids, woodworking, landscaping, DIY projects and watching Husker football games.

## Morgenson, continued

continued from page 13

are designed as support for students to help build those college-level reading and writing skills.”

Through her developmental English classes, Morgenson can build a bridge between language learning and academic readiness, helping her students transition smoothly into their higher education.

As a developmental English instructor, Morgenson’s role involves extensive lesson planning, working with students one-on-one, and creating a supportive, comfortable classroom environment.

“There is this persona

I adapt in the classroom,” Morgenson explained. “You have to bring in that enthusiasm, that excitement.”

She finds this approach helps her students feel more comfortable and engaged, allowing for a more open and engaging learning atmosphere.

In addition to her dedication to teaching, Morgenson is also focused on her own academic growth.

“I’m currently working on my PhD in educational studies,” she shared, “thinking about how we can do education differently to meet the needs of students.”

This personal pursuit aligns with her profession-

al goals, as she continuously seeks innovative ways to enhance the learning experience for her students.

Outside of the classroom, Morgenson enjoys spending her free time exploring the outdoors and immersing herself in nature.

“I love the outdoors, seeing different places—it’s really exciting to see the natural world,” she shared.

This passion for adventure and exploration complements her academic pursuits, as it provides her with a balance between work and relaxation, allowing her to return to her students with fresh energy and inspiration.



# Holliday is new Beatrice farm manager

By Megan Fischer

Austin Holliday, the new farm manager for the Beatrice SCC campus, was born in Ames, Iowa.

Before he worked at SCC, he previously was the Cow/Calf Unit Manager for the University of Nebraska at the Eastern Nebraska Research Extension and Education Center for five years.

On his path to becoming a Farm Manager, he started his college career at SCC in Beatrice in the Ag program. After that, he went to UNL and received his bachelor's in grazing livestock systems in 2018.

His best description of what a farmer manager is “not being an expert on anything, but competent in a lot of areas. Every day is different; you’ll meet a lot of people, see something new every day, it’s always unexpected.”

Holliday believes that agriculture is important because it is the future of our lifestyle.

He explains, “It’s an ever-changing industry, and

it’s an industry that needs a lot of attention right now. I enjoy being part of innovative thinking and new ways of doing things.”

His favorite thing about agriculture is that it’s an ever-changing career.

He says, “There is always a way to innovate, and I like trying new things, so that’s why I’m doing this.”

He believes that a career is important since there are so many different enterprises and different jobs that a person can have within the industry. There is a wide range of careers to choose from.

Holliday explained that students could work in agriculture without previous experience in this field. What is most important, he says, is a good work ethic and a willingness to learn.

His ideal student would be punctual, wants to learn new things, have a good work ethic, and working towards their goal for the right reason.

A tip Holliday has for future students is to have



Austin Holliday

an open mind and to be expecting a day that’s always going to be different. There are also going to be days that aren’t as much fun.

He explains, “The good times outweigh the bad. It’s a very rewarding posi-

tion and career to have.”

Before a student is ready to pursue their agriculture degree, Holliday believes that a student needs to have an open mind for when they’re ready to go out since there is still so much information to learn within this career, especially if a student hasn’t had experience growing up on a farm.

Agriculture teachers have in-person, online and hybrid classes at SCC. Most of the classes are in person since it’s a very hands-on field.

Outside of work, Holliday likes to spend his time being outside, spending time with his wife hiking and walking his dog.

## MESO, continued

continued from page 10

people who talk negatively about DEI, “I think people who are against DEI, they think that they don’t need it when actually diversity, equity and inclusion helps everyone.”

“It’s not just for one certain group,” Adams explains. “At MESO, the first thing is everyone is welcome here.”

The focus of inclusion and diversity in this school has brought positive grades and community to the common areas of SCC.

Through the members, some new and veteran, the group states that the commitment is to each other and to growing as college students.

Educating comes second in importance to the leadership, and it is shown in its uniqueness. There are no official chapters of MESO in other schools, and no other clubs at SCC are close to MESO’s popularity.

This makes the students of the Multi-ethnic Student Organization a family.

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COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# Milford campus adds new instructors

## Andrew Putnam

By Cillian Smith

It's a new semester, and with the new semester having rolled around, new instructors have entered the field. Andrew Putnam, an electrical and electromechanics instructor, makes the list of new instructors.

Putnam started working with Southeast Community College (SCC) last spring on the Milford campus.

Putnam also teaches at The Career Academy (TCA), a Lincoln campus extension that empowers students to get a head-start on their college education while they are enrolled in high school.



Andrew Putnam

Putnam, in his younger years before he started teaching at Milford and TCA, learned about Indian culture.

"I sat in my children's [Hindi] classes watching,"

he said. "Then, I assisted in the classroom."

It was after learning through his children that Putnam got his own classroom and began teaching Hindi. Putnam self-taught the language using workbooks and activities through UC at Berkeley.

Putnam was very young when he learned of his interest in electronics.

"When I was a little kid, for Christmas, I got one of those 59-in-1 electronic kits," he said.

This was a turning point for Putnam.

Before coming to SCC as an instructor, Putnam tutored people in math, physics and electronics because he "wanted to help

students."

Now, Putnam teaches Introduction to Electricity, DC/AC Theory and Residential Commercial Wiring at both the Milford and TCA campuses.

Putnam teaches his students in a way where everything builds from one place.

He believes that if students want to succeed, "[They] have to build a solid foundation. If you don't have a solid foundation, you can't move to the next level."

Putnam dedicates time outside of classes to help students in any way that he can.

"I have office hours,

**continued on page 28**

## Cory Parks

By Karli Shoemaker

A new instructor in the Diesel Ag Service Tech department this year is Cory Parks.

He grew up in Crete and went to college at Southeast Community College, Milford Campus for a two-year degree.

Parks is most passionate about anything with agriculture mechanics and the industry.

Parks has said that he enjoys what this program is about and loves being able to teach others in the industry. He plans to do

in class lectures following by applying what students have learned to a lab for more hands-on learning.

He had been in this program when he graduated from Milford, so he knows the material quite well. He also has ten plus years of the actual industry from past employments. Parks plans to be in this position for the long term.

Parks says figuring out how to deal with challenging problems is something he is very good at.

Teaching a lesson and seeing students succeed from a difficult lesson is

something that motivates him on the daily.

His hobbies are watching Husker football as well as the Chiefs. Spending time with family and fishing are both hobbies as well.

A piece of advice from Parks when it comes to handling stress is to do something that you enjoy when you have free time.

Parks says, "My vision of success is different for everybody. It is more how you feel about what you are doing and if you are content with that or not. If you are happy with your



Cory Parks

career, then you have become successful in life."



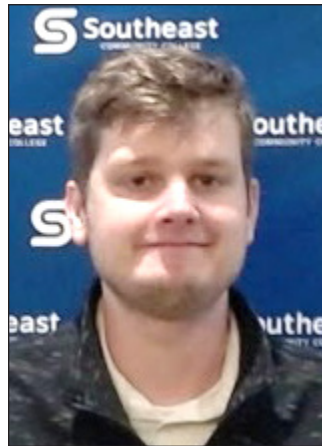
## Tanner Lemrick

By Matthew McCullar

Tanner Lemrick is the newest addition to SCC within the English department at Milford. His start began in August with the fall 2024 semester alongside the new and returning students and teachers alike.

Lemrick grew up and went to high school in Waverly just outside of Lincoln. He attended college at Northwest Missouri State University in Marysville, Mo., and graduated, earning a degree in English.

His responsibilities here at SCC involve teaching as an English instructor, creating lesson plans and help those who need it



**Tanner Lemrick**

outside the classroom.

The classes that he teaches are multiple different levels of English from ENGL-0960, 0985 Beginning and Intermediate Reading and Writing, ENGL-0995 Writing

Workshop, ENGL-1010 Composition 1, and ENGL-1110 Business Communications.

Lemrick's first impressions of the environment at SCC's Milford campus was "chill and laid back; it's an environment from all walks of life that I'm comfortable to be in" with a business-oriented focus.

"My style of teaching is modern, including the culture within my class," he said. "It's laid back, casual and fair. I want to make my classroom a place for students to thrive."

Something he enjoys the most is helping people learn English since it's something used in many aspects of our lives. Helping them become better

communicators helps in every career field.

Outside of his work here at SCC some of his favorite things he likes to do is watch football, especially his favorite team the Iowa Hawkeyes, going on hikes in nature and exploring new things.

He currently lives in Milford but aspires to find a place in Lincoln since he likes the atmosphere of the capital city.

He's excited to be a part of SCC as he says, "It has been a great experience so far, and I enjoy what I get to do here at SCC teaching English and helping students inside and out of the classroom."

## Dustin Ficke

By Rayanne Bedlan

One recently-added staff members took on the role of becoming a welding instructor on the Milford campus, Dustin Ficke, who is stepping into this new role this semester.

Ficke graduated from Southeast Community College in Lincoln with an Associates of Applied Science degree in welding technology in 2004 and started his career in heavy equipment repair in Lincoln.

After working in this manufacturing for seven years, he went on to farm

repair in a small repair/fabrication shop west of Milford.

Not only does Ficke have lots of experience in repairing heavy equipment, but he also has experience in tooling/manufacturing. Ficke worked in a tooling/manufacturing company for eleven years.

As an instructor, "Every day is different depending on the class schedule," he says. "If I am not with the students in class, I am preparing material for the lab or keeping up on grading and so on. There is always something that can be done or equipment



**Dustin Ficke**

to be maintained."

Ficke seeks to help students succeed inside and outside the classroom by providing a positive experience.

He says he shifted to instruction to see students succeed and have an impact in his industry.

Ficke says, "My purpose in pursuing this job was to have a more fruitful outcome in my career besides financial gain or prosperity. That fruit would be to see others succeed in their future profession by helping them learn not just to be better welders, but employees, teammates, and hopefully, highly-skilled industry leaders."

While most of his classes are during the day, he

**continued on page 28**

# CIT adds two new instructors

## Andrew Peterson

By George Panagoulas

Andrew Peterson joins SCC as a new instructor for the Computer Information Technology (CIT) program.

Peterson, who was born and raised in Lincoln, started teaching last spring.

During this first semester, Peterson has been teaching introductory classes for the CIT program. He plans to teach Cybersecurity and Helpdesk classes next semester.

Peterson, who had not originally gone to school for CIT, is currently finishing his four-year program at the University of Arizona, where he hopes to obtain his bachelor's degree in cyber operations.

Peterson is not unfamiliar with teaching as he used to teach private lessons in music. Originally wanting to be a music major, Peterson is a tuba player.

While teaching music, Peterson has taught a range of ages from kindergarten through eighth grade. He had also taken on leadership positions for high school and college students.

While Peterson plans to return to performing music, he is currently all in



Andrew Peterson

with CIT.

Despite not pursuing CIT originally, Peterson said that he has “Always liked computers.”

When asked about his first teaching experiences at SCC, Peterson said “It can be daunting, but it is really fun.”

“It is a challenge,” Peterson added. “You don’t really know a subject until you have taught it.”

Regarding teaching, Peterson said it was a “Future goal to teach at college” and something that was always in the back of his mind.

When asked about what he likes about the CIT program, Peterson pointed to the wide entry level that makes CIT so accessible for individuals of all skills.

“SCC is a very nice program,” Peterson said.

Learning the IT fun-

damentals, students are exposed to all types of experiences.

“It is an always evolving program,” Peterson noted.

This fall semester, Peterson is teaching an Artificial Intelligence (AI) fundamentals course at SCC.

This is a newer course at SCC in which students will learn the basic concepts of AI and how it is used in everyday life.

AI has become more intertwined in our daily lives, Peterson gave me his thoughts saying, “AI is a tool, and it has its appropriate uses.”

Peterson added that AI can be “dangerous when used improperly”

In his free time, Peterson likes to challenge himself by competing and playing in information security competitions known as CTF (Capture the Flag). These challenges involved legally hacking into servers to find hidden data.

A self-admitted gamer, Peterson likes to play video games as well.

Currently playing through the Tomb Raider games, he plans to eventually play through the Japanese horror game series, Resident Evil.

## Job listing board offers opportunities

By Gavin Becker

LINCOLN - The job listing board is a resource at SCC for students to guide them in the right direction when looking for a job.

It is in the T section by the business office and is split up between part-time and full-time jobs. It then shows employments and listings.

Of these, students can find a field of interest, which helps students narrow in on a specific job to apply for.

This is a direct way to connect a job with what students are learning in school.

Sam Sanago, a business major student at SCC, said, “It has helped me find and explore new business opportunities and internships.”

The business category helped him find an optimal job to apply for at Sandhills Global.

Sanago added, “I would not have seen some opportunities if I did not see them on the board.”



## Graham Nelson

**By Brandon Jurgens**

A new school year means new teachers. One of those new teachers is Graham Nelson.

Nelsen, a CIT (computer information technology) program instructor in The Career Academy, is in his first year as a professor at Southeast Community College.

He says he “genuinely loves it,” when asked about how he likes SCC so far.

However, don’t call him a CIT program instructor; he considers himself more of a “networks pathway instructor.”

Nelsen is a graduate of SCC and the University of Nebraska. He had developed his technology skills here at SCC and was going to UNL for elementary education; however, when he saw an available job at SCC, he took it.

Before going to SCC for school, Nelsen was in the Navy for six years.

While in the Navy, he was a division trainer training younger recruits how to use the technology on naval ships to spot planes. The official term for his position in the Navy was combat radar technician.

For the past two years, Nelsen has been an adjunct professor here at SCC, but in August, he



**Graham Nelson**

officially started his first full-time teaching job.

At SCC, Nelsen teaches multiple classes; as he explains, “I teach from the most basic of what is a computer network, to how to configure a network from scratch. There are also some cyber security classes in there as well.”

Nelsen says that “after my time in the Navy as a radar technician for a combat system, I learned that I love technology. I love the way it works, the physics behind it, and the math behind it.”

Nelsen continued, “I think it is a fascinating subject to learn about, especially something in IT that is more useful to society. I decided that I wanted to get good at that subject, so I could show everyone else the magic of it.”

Nelsen says that the CIT field is so interesting because “as a human spe-

cies we took rocks, found a way to make it conduct electricity. [Then we] used rules of physics to make it do a branch of mathematics, called logic. Then we use that logic stacked with other logic from rocks essentially to run Minecraft.”

He added, “The fact that we were able to pull off something like that is nothing short of magical. I want as many people as possible to be in on this and see what is happening.”

Nelsen sees a great deal of value in teaching. He feels it is important to help teach others.

His feeling is that “technology is taking over the world today and just keeps evolving. Most people are users of technology but not producers, and if I can help people learn how to make things for technology, then I want to.”

He continued, “The world needs good teachers as well. If someone has a knack for teaching or a certain subject, then they need to be teaching.”

Nelsen, grew up in Lincoln, attended Northeast high school and played in the band.

When asked who inspired him to be a teacher he said, “my teachers at Northeast. Some were just great. Even the older ones still had a great energy.”

Nelsen explains, “The

ones that really influenced me just had a real love for their jobs, and that stuck with me.”

Nelsen lives in Lincoln with his wife, who is from Finland. He said he met her when he worked at Pizza Hut while attending SCC and are both “nerd gamers” who connected.

When asked what he does outside of teaching, Nelsen says that his favorite things are to “play video games and draw.”

When asked if he had any advice for college students, he said “don’t get overwhelmed and try to learn how the college game works. Once you learn how the game works, you will be okay, and college will get easier.”

Nelsen says his favorite thing about SCC is “their serious dedication to the value of details in teaching. The college isn’t just teaching the basics of fields but going into great detail about career paths and jobs.”

Nelsen is excited about his first year and is more than ready to be a college professor. However, for future teachers, and even himself since he is still new, he has a bit of advice.

He believes, “If you have an interest in a topic and are considering being a teacher, do it.”

# Three new instructors added to Lincoln campus

## Jared Ueker

By Aubriana Baxa

Professor Jared Uecker began his career as a Hospitality Management Instructor at Southeast Community College (SCC) in January 2024.

“I teach all the Front of House and Hospitality focused classes as a part of SCC’s culinary and hospitality program,” Uecker said. “I love working with people, beverages and food.”

Prior to his employment at SCC, Uecker worked



Jared Uecker

over 15 years in various roles in the food service

industry. He graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a degree in Hospitality, Restaurant, and Tourism Management.

“Before this, I was a server, bartender, beverage manager, front of house manager, butcher and small business owner,” Uecker said. “But the opportunity for this role became available, and I was ready to see what the next chapter of my career looked like outside of working within the indus-

try.”

Uecker was unused to the seated aspect of a teaching job, having been accustomed to the movement and activity of owning a small retail butchering business.

“It took a lot of hard work and dedication,” Uecker said. “While it is closed now, I am proud that it existed and the work I was able to accomplish.”

Uecker likes being able to share his experience

**continued on page 28**

## Nick Clayburn

By Gavin Becker

SCC has hired Math professor Nick Clayburn to join the staff for the 2024-2025 school year.

This completes a goal to teach collegiately. He started out as a secondary math teacher at Lincoln High before teaching at Wesleyan and UNL.

When asked who or what inspired his journey, Clayburn said, “I was definitely super fortunate with a lot of the teachers I had in my academic career.”

He continued saying, “I will say my parents were educators; and my older brother was an educator as well. To say that didn’t sort of weave a bias in me would be a lie.”

The aspect of SCC he loves is how people are here for many different reasons; he finds it refreshing to interact with people from many different walks of life.

Clayburn is teaching Math Fundamentals and Beginning Algebra, and he says he loves all the classes he has taught but points out Geometry is his favorite.

Previous teachers he enjoyed have inspired him to make personal connections with students.

He offers advice for students who struggle and do not like math.

He reminds us, “No one is born good at math. Just like anything: math takes practice.”

People often undermine the amount of practice that goes into being successful in math, he explained.

Clayburn offers further advice for people trying to make the most out of their SCC experience: “My advice for anyone who is

trying to make the most out of their SCC experience is to take advantage of all of the amazing tutoring opportunities there are at SCC.”

During free time, he really enjoys music and works part time at a tattoo shop, where he makes connections with math.

Clayburn sees problem solving as a way we use math daily.

Clayburn explains, “And even in tattooing and in art in general, the thought process of using space: ... I mean you literally cannot go through your life even a day without seeing math somehow applicable to your life.”



Nick Clayburn



## Carrie Schumacher

By Aubriana Baxa

Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT) Instructor Carrie Schumacher began her career at Southeast Community College (SCC) in August 2024, at the start of the current semester.

“Medical Laboratory Technology teaches all the testing done in hospitals or clinics,” Schumacher said. “We get blood specimens and run tests on it.”

Prior to this, Schumacher had no formal instructional experience, but did work as a trainer in a hospital.

“The medical laboratory

technology program and profession include areas of microbiology, chemistry, hematology, immunohematology and phlebotomy,” she explained. “I am a microbiology instructor, where I teach students about normal and pathogenic microorganisms found in the clinical setting.”

Schumacher teaches Microbiology One and Two, Phlebotomy and will likely teach Lab Methods in the future.

“A typical day for me is trying to plan activities that we are going to do in a lab, making sure we have the supplies, prep,



Carrie Schumacher

and conducting the labs with students,” Schumacher said. “I love seeing students get excited about learning what I am teaching.”

For most of Schumacher’s life, she has lived in the Lincoln area. She previously worked nine years in a hospital clinical microbiology setting and came to SCC looking for growth and change.

“I got my associates degree in Medical Laboratory Technology at SCC before pursuing my bachelor’s degree in Medical Laboratory Science at the University of Nebraska Medicine (UNMC),” Schumacher said. “I saw the position opened up and I already knew some of the staff and what a great MLT program the school had.”

She said she wants students and colleagues to know that she loves to have a good time with learning.

“Sometimes it’s frustrating when something doesn’t go right or reac-

tions don’t work out as we had hoped,” Schumacher said, “but it’s a learning opportunity.”

Schumacher dedicates a lot of time to planning the labs she leads in her classes, and typically expects a certain outcome.

“Even when things don’t go as you want, you can still learn from it,” Schumacher said. “Maybe you will know how to change in the future.”

When she isn’t working, Schumacher likes to spend time with her boyfriend and cuddle her gray short-hair cat, Ducky. She also enjoys gardening and the arts.

“I just planted a few fall plants, and I love my house plants,” Schumacher said. “I lean towards rock music, and I watch comedy movies because I love to laugh.”

Schumacher’s proudest accomplishment is returning to school later in life, a non-traditional student path.

“I would advise students to believe in themselves,” Schumacher said. “We are so hard on ourselves and self-critical.”

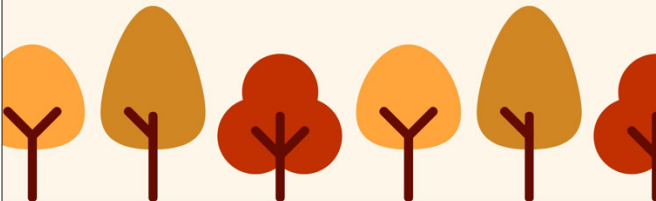
Schumacher’s experience has taught her to try new things and step outside her comfort zone because life is precious, and she wants to live it as full as she can.

“If you have that belief in yourself,” Schumacher said. “You can push yourself forward and accomplish great things.”

## DONATION REQUEST

SCC’s Food Panty is in need of the following:

- **Grab & Go Items:** chips, granola bars, fruit snacks, applesauce cups, fruit cups, pop-tarts, breakfast bars
- **Heat & Eat Items:** easy mac cups, cup noodles, canned ravioli, ready to eat canned soups
- **Toiletry Items:** tampons, pads, toilet paper, shampoo, conditioner, body soap, laundry detergent, dish soap
- **Please Check** expiration dates on items and consider cans that have pull tabs.



**DROP OFF DONATIONS IN  
STUDENT SUPPORT CENTER 204**

# Bobcat basketball tries new recruiting tactic

By George Panagoulas

Southeast Community College's (SCC) Men's Basketball team began their 37th season this semester.

The Bobcats look to have another strong season as last season ended on a high note in which the team was able to capture the Region IX Hoops championship.

Joel Wooton takes on his twentieth season as the Bobcats head coach.

Although Wooton is no stranger to coaching, this year will be the first time that he will also take on the head coaching responsibilities for both the men's and the women's basketball teams.

Wooton was interviewed in the Den earlier this season, which was posted on the SCC Bobcats' YouTube page.

In the interview, Wooton was asked about how the balance of coaching both squads, and he explained, "It has been a challenge," but he believes that once they have played more games, it will become easier as they will be prepared.

The men's team will feature twelve freshmen out of twenty players this year.

As usual, Coach Wooton looked locally and outside of Nebraska to recruit

"I think we probably did a better job of filling in holes than we have in the past," he said.

Wooton went on to explain, "Before, I think we just brought players in, and we would make the system fit to them."

"This year, I think we did a better job at filling in the holes," he said. "We need this, so we went out and got that, so I think we did a better job."

That confidence in this year's recruiting class has Wooton saying that he believes "We have more depth than we've had in the past two or three years."

Wooton wants to continue using an up-tempo offense while utilizing the depth on the bench.

"You just play as hard as you can while you're on the floor, and then we have somebody that's going to step in and there's not going to be a lot of difference between who is on the floor and who steps in for them. Makes a big difference," he said.

The men's basketball team will defend their home court at the SCC Lincoln Campus Gym located on 8800 O Street.

The team aims to face sixteen opponents at home this year.

For those interested in supporting the team, SCC



photo by Chad Greene

**Point guard PJ Newbill, a freshman from Omaha, makes a play during the Bobcats' home-opener against Southwestern CC on Saturday, Nov. 2. The Bobcats lost 78-85.**

students and employees are admitted free of charge with a valid school ID.

Those without a valid

school ID can purchase a ticket to be purchased on site and will cost \$6 for adults and \$5 for children



# Transitioning home: Bobcat volleyball

By Emma Gammel

The Southeast Community College volleyball program was previously based on the Beatrice campus. However, in November 2023, it was announced that the volleyball team would move and relocate to the Lincoln campus.

The recent relocation of the SCC Bobcats volleyball team from the Beatrice campus to the Lincoln campus marks a significant shift for both players and coaching staff.

Carolyn Campbell, the head coach of the Bobcats, brings a lot of experience to the program.

“I was coaching for three years at Nebraska Wesleyan,” Campbell said. “Before that, I spent a year at Lincoln East High School.”

Her vast background includes six years coaching at various middle schools in Omaha. At Omaha Bryan High School, she helped lead the team to a state tournament for the first time.

Campbell’s experience is important to the SCC team, especially with the transition to the Lincoln campus, and aims to build a strong foundation for future success.

“It can be exciting to be in an environment where the support for athletics is

vast and where the competition can push us to new heights,” said Campbell.

Driven by Lincoln’s larger pool of potential athletes from surrounding high schools, this would ultimately elevate the program. By offering more opportunities for student-athletes to become involved, this move marks a significant shift for both players and coaching staff.

“Moving to Lincoln has brought us closer to larger high schools, which will help us build a stronger, more competitive team in the coming years,” Campbell added.

The team currently holds a 6-24 record for the 2024 season, which is not what they had hoped for.

Although this reflects the challenges of transitioning to a new environ-

ment and despite the current record, the program remains optimistic.

As the SCC Bobcats embrace the new opportunities out of the Lincoln campus, they look forward to building on their foundation.

The move to Lincoln signifies not just a change in location but the beginning of a new chapter filled with potential.

## National runner-up



photo by Chad Greene

**Karen Kiratu, left, has etched her name in the SCC Cross Country record books as one of the most decorated in school history. Kiratu was nationally ranked all season. She finished second at the NJCAA Cross Country National Meet in Richmond, Va. Kiratu placed second with a time of 18:17.4 to Norah Brady of Heartland CC. Brady won it with a time of 17:36.6. The SCC Men’s Cross Country team finished strong, placing 20th in the field.**



# *Illuminations* seeks new entries

By Brandon Jurgens

What is *Illuminations*? That is probably a question you are asking yourself right now. So, let's dive into what *Illuminations* is.

Cheney Luttich, a English instructor on the Lincoln campus, is in her first year overseeing *Illuminations*; however, she did submit her own works before becoming a full-time instructor in 2020.

Luttich describes *Illuminations* as “an annual publication for people’s work to be shown. Any work that they have, for art, poetry and short stories from anybody at SCC.”

Luttich says that *Illuminations* is a showcase for students and staff within the college.

When *Illuminations* releases its current volume, it will be the 26th volume.

Submitting work for *Illuminations* is simple: visit the SCC website and click on the “Student Life” tab. At the bottom, it says “Literary Magazine *Illuminations*.”

That is where to go to submit work for review.

Luttich doesn’t really think of it as a club.

She explains, “once it is published, we have a launch party but that is really the only time we meet. Other than that, it is all done through E-Mail and

independent work.”

Luttich says there are several reasons to submit work to *Illuminations*.

“Just doing the writing can help a student a lot,” she added. “It also takes a form of bravery to submit the work for someone else to review that isn’t for an assignment. There is also awards for people to gain if they have the best work submitted.”

*Illuminations* “captures creativity,” she said.

Luttich says, “doesn’t hurt to try. You can have a work of yours featured in print. You can put it on your resume, you can feel heard, and it also gives you something to participate in while in college.”

On what drew her to want to run *Illuminations*, Luttich remarked, “I have had students in it, and I have been published in it before.”

“When the person who ran it before me stepped down, I wanted to ensure that it would stay available for SCC to have,” she added. “I also want to fuse it into the college more, through teaching and other methods.”

Luttich says she has enjoyed running it so far, but that there has been a bit of a learning curve.

“It takes longer to edit and put them in the publication that I thought it would,” she said. “There is



definitely a learning curve, but I do enjoy reading people’s work.”

Luttich’s oversight includes several tasks: “I monitor submissions, make sure they are all appropriate. I put the team together to score the works and make final decisions on what gets in and putting it all together. Also, I have a big hand in choosing the cover art for the volume.”

Luttich says the number of submissions varies.

Luttich explains, “sometimes, I might have four submissions in a week and then not have any for two weeks. Every volume also changes depending on how thick it is. It all just depends on how many submissions we get.”

Some goals for *Illuminations* are as Luttich says, “I want it to be used to teach more and to include more Upward stories

from the prison education program.”

Luttich continues, “A big one is also showcasing the study abroad experiences much more which is why we extended the submission deadline date to hopefully get more stories from that.”

Before the publication is released, Luttich gathers a group of teachers to score the work, and the work is scored on a level from one through ten.

If they give the work below a three, it probably won’t make it in for that year, but it can be reviewed and submitted next year. Five through seven means it depends on how many higher number submissions they get, but eight through ten is in for sure.

After the scores Luttich edits them into the publication and gets help making the cover and they release it.



**Southeast**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## Review

# Chromakopia a creative highlight

By George Panagoulas

“You are the light.  
It’s not on you, it’s in  
you”

Tyler, the Creator, has added another excellent album to his imaginative discography.

*Chromakopia* is the latest album released by Tyler, the Creator. Released on Oct. 28, *Chromakopia* was brought to us just twelve days after the Grammy Award-winning artist announced his new project.

*Chromakopia* is the eighth studio album released by Tyler, the Creator. Despite being released on a Monday, the album remarkably debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 chart.

While earning 299,500 equivalent album units, *Chromakopia* earned the biggest debut for a rap album in 2024.

While no stranger to critical acclaim or sale records, Tyler, the Creator surpassed the first week sales of any previous album of his career. This album not only marks a new era of his success, but his artistry as well.

While early albums from Tyler were received with mixed reviews, his past three albums have built a critically positive run. Beginning with *Flower Boy*, Tyler gained new respect in the music



world as many saw the rapper seemingly mature overnight.

That success carried into *Igor* and *Call Me If You Get Lost* in which Tyler adopted new personas. Tyler proved that he could cleverly weave these characters into the music and the videos that accompany them.

This new approach helped Tyler focus his creativity, which made for more cohesive albums. He has used these characters to explore different themes and develop ideas to pair with his new sound.

*Chromakopia* takes a slightly new direction though. Alluded to in a music video he released a year ago for the song “Sorry Not Sorry,” in the video,

it’s in you. Don’t you ever in your m\*\*\*\*\* life dim your light for nobody.”

There lies the thesis that Tyler creates *Chromakopia* around.

Whether that light represents his creativity, personality or passion, Tyler is not going to let it die. It is the light that guides him through life and throughout the album.

Tyler also speaks about the difficulties he has faced as he tries to find himself.

He tackles personal issues such as fatherhood, long-term relationships, parasocial relationships, unplanned pregnancies, aging and much more.

What makes Tyler so special is that he is able to talk about these personal issues while also creating a lush soundscape to accompany the lyrics.

“Darling, I” sounds like a sweet R&B tune that you could have heard decades ago. It is a sunny and catchy song where Tyler speaks about his problems maintaining long term relationships and staying monogamous.

“Hey Jane” is an introspective track where Tyler raps about an unplanned pregnancy from both his and the girl’s point of view. Tracks like these really show the brilliance in his writing.

The insight is very

Tyler is seen killing his own personas, clearing the slate for a more personal and intimate album.

Tyler is seen on the album art wearing a mysterious new mask; this “character” of himself is more of a reflection of the man than any persona before.

This more intimate experience is made evident in the first seconds of the album.

Beginning on the first track of the album “St. Chroma,” which is a triumphant introduction that empowers the listener to chase their dreams, and in the song, Tyler’s mother, Bonita Smith, is heard speaking to him.

She tells him, “You are the light. It’s not on you,

continued on page 27

Review

# Hank Jr. show delivers the hits

By Aubriana Baxa

At the age of 75, Hank Williams Jr. put on an astounding performance at the Pinnacle Bank Arena on Nov. 22, 2024.

The concert began at 7 p.m. and was opened by Elvie Shane and Paul Cauthen.

Included in their sets was Shane’s popular song, “My Boy,” and features from Cauthen’s new album, *Black on Black*. During these performances, however, many viewers could be found disinterested and on their phones.

Just before 9 p.m., when Williams took the stage, the crowd showed much anticipation and enthusiasm. Folks were on their feet for the majority of the concert, clapping and singing along with enthusiasm.

Though he did manage to include almost every one of his most popular songs from his lengthy music career, it was a little sad that some of his songs were missed. One attendee in Section 116 could be heard expressing their dismay at William’s failure to perform his song, “If Heaven Ain’t a Lot Like Dixie.”

There was also a small amount of disappointment amongst the crowd at the combined and shortened

performance of songs, such as “Dinosaur” and “There’s a Tear in My Beer.”

The favored part of the concert was the final song. Williams concluded his show by performing what was by-far his most well-known song among the group attending, “Family Tradition.”

Almost every person within the Lincoln crowd was on their feet and sang this song the loudest.

Unfortunately, the concert was much shorter than anticipated, concluding around 10:30. Several concert-goers expressed their disappointment at



image courtesy of hankjr.com

the lengthy outro with a lack of an anticipated encore. With little information about the concert available on the internet, many viewers expected more of Williams and less of the concert occupied by

openers. Despite this, any sadness experienced by attendees appeared largely as a result of their pleasure in attending the concert and desire to extend the experience.

Review

# Rav & Kill Bill visit Lincoln

By Matthew McCullar

On Wednesday, Oct. 30, the rap artists, Rav & Kill Bill came to our hometown of Lincoln at Duffy’s Tavern on O and 14th streets.

The artists were doing a tour for their latest album that they dropped earlier this year called *Keep the Change*.

Rav & Kill Bill are a rap duo that blends introspective lyricism, lo-fi beats, and a raw, emotionally resonant style. Their sound often combines elements of underground hip-hop,

jazzy samples and dreamy instrumentals. Lyrically, they delve into personal struggles, mental health, existential musings and moments of dark humor, giving a mix of vulnerability and relatability to their music.

I fell in love with their work and creativity instantly with their album *New Moon* about six years ago, so when I saw the opportunity to see them live at a local venue, I jumped at the chance, got my VIP ticket and waited.

When the day finally

came, I arrived at the venue around 6:40 p.m., waiting in line with seven other excited fans with more trickling in behind to scan our tickets.

Once inside, I was initially greeted by the large “Fishbowl” sign that’s in reference to one of the specialty drinks served at Duffy’s Tavern, a comically large fishbowl to drink out of.

That is quite the first impression from this small yet cozy bar. The layout of the venue is split by a sub-

continued on page 27



## Chromakopia, continued

continued from page 25

interesting as a lot of the same themes of uncertainty about the future reappear.

*Chromakopia* isn't just moody tracks though.

A song like "Sticky" is a braggadocios track that has a series of quick but memorable features from Glorilla, Sexyy Red and Lil Wayne. The production here is reminiscent of an older era of hip hop.

Thematically, the album hits its peak on track 9, "Take Your Mask Off," featuring Daniel Caesar.

The song has several verses in which Tyler pleads to several people pretending to be something they are not.

"And I hope you find yourself. And I hope you take your mask off."

This includes a kid who wants to seem tough, a priest who is battling with his own sexuality, a moth-

er who feels trapped, and finally, Tyler himself.

What makes this so brilliant is that Tyler is represented in all these people as well. You can interpret that every verse is Tyler speaking to himself.

Overall, *Chromakopia* is a wonderful addition to Tyler, the Creator's discography.

There is depth in the lyrics that requires multiple listens, and Tyler doesn't disappoint with

the production either.

Many songs feature interesting samples, weird instrumentation, pretty pianos and stunning synths. At times *Chromakopia* sounds like it comes from a horror version of a Dr. Suess story.

I highly recommend giving this album a try. It is one of the most rewarding listening experiences of the year.

## Rav & Kill Bill, continued

continued from page 26

stantially large brick wall with a walkway between two rooms with one being the bar side and the other the stage.

It was a casual and chill atmosphere leading into the VIP questionnaire with Rav & Kill Bill. When they came out on stage for the questionnaire, since it was Halloween, we were treated to their hilarious outfits with Kill Bill dressed as Freddy Kruger and Rav as a demonic priest.

It was a very fun dialog between them and the VIP's. Getting to hear them speak candidly about their music and some of their creative process in a face-to-face manner was quite the experience that I'll hold on to for a very long time.

Once the questions concluded, they headed backstage to prepare for the concert, which gave us some time to peruse their

merch and memorabilia.

After some time, the show finally started with the openers Square and NoImportant. They did a phenomenal job of getting the crowd of about 30 to 40 or so people ready for the main act.

Finally, after six years of hearing Rav & Kill Bill through headphones and speakers, I got to witness how truly great they are live.

I was beyond impressed with their performance; I have never heard an artist sound exactly as they do in their recorded music. They played every song from their latest album alongside plenty of older hits that got the whole crowd and I jumping and singing every lyric.

After their incredible performance, the show was over around 1 a.m. They did a meet and greet with everyone who decided to stay, and I got to personal-

ly meet my favorite artists. They took pictures with my girlfriend and I, with the addition of graciously signing our *Ramona* CD's which will be something I'll cherish for the rest of

my life.

This was an unforgettable experience getting to see, hear and feel their music live; it will forever be one of my favorite memories.

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## Putnam, continued

continued from page 16

even one night before an exam,” he said. “One student let me know in advance, so I met him at 6:30 that night.”

Putnam says, “There really isn’t anything that people can’t learn in today’s age – given all the on-line resources available. In the past, you really needed to dig it out of the books or have a teacher teach it to you.”

Putnam recommends students obtain resources when they need help, even if they aren’t in school, as the power to learn is in the students.

## Ficke, continued

continued from page 21

does teach a special Welding Applications class on Monday and Wednesday evenings.

One of the main objectives for Ficke’s class is to equip students to be able to weld when needed and weld what is needed. Some of the projects he is working on with his students are oxy acetylene braze welding and stick and MIG welding.

In his personal life, he says he strives to be “a good husband and father. It is also important to me that I work at being the type of human that the

## Dutton, continued

continued from page 12

question the way they look at the world and maybe interrupt that a little.”

Dutton’s mindset revolves around questions. This tactic of curiosity has led her to the methodical style in her classroom.

After her first year of teaching, she returned to school to, “get the answers,” Dutton explained, “and I realized fairly quickly there are no answers, only more questions. And that frustrated me...but I soon became comfortable there.”

It is clear that curiosity is an important part of her life and is essential for her students.

A secret in her successful career lies in the cornerstone of her teaching style, knowing her students. During the digital shifts during the 2020 pandemic, teaching became lonely to many professors and educators, and Dutton was no exception.

Her belief falls in line that connecting with students is the most important way to encourage their learning.

“After I taught an online class, I could walk past these people in the world and never know who they are,” Dutton said. “To me, that personal connection is almost everything.”

Her character falls in

line with her history of growth and pride in family and the arts. From the words and opinions of her students, Dutton is not only an accomplished teacher, but a wonderful character as well. She believes that the world and its people are connected through art and expression, and prides herself in being an ambassador to that ideology.

In hard times, Dutton receives clarity in hard times and lays out her future in thought.

“The meta ... I think that matters,” Dutton states. “I live in a world of questions and questioning, and I’m very comfortable there.”

## Ueker, continued

continued from page 20

with his students. He wants to impart the joy of interacting with others in this people-driven business.

“The degree is very important and very valuable to your future,” Uecker said. “It is also very essential to build up great relationships that will carry into your future in ways of friendships and potentially working together in your careers.”

Uecker enjoys spending time with the people he is close to. He is married with two children, an almost 5-year-old boy and a 3-year-old girl, and two

cats.

“They are wild and crazy and the best,” Uecker said. “I am very proud of my dedication to my faith, my family and my personal health.”

Seven years ago, Uecker lost his young sister who was very special to him. He encourages his students to remember to enjoy the time they spend here and the relationships they form.

“I want my students to know that I am an open book, free to any questions and concerns,” Uecker said. “My biggest joy is just interacting with others and getting to know them.”



## Weitzel, continued

continued from page 13

power of the written word and teaching it. She also believes teaching English opens a channel of communication.

Weitzel is motivated every day because she cares about the success of her students.

She says, “When you have been given a lot, you should also give back to others.”

She finds joy in sharing the things she has learned with the others who are striving to learn.

Weitzel defines success as effort. If a person is trying, then it does not matter how many times failure happens, she says; all that matters is whether a person is learning from their mistakes.

## Nebesniak, continued

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The Killigans were founded in 2004 with Nebesniak, his two younger brothers and a childhood friend to create a style of music which would be more appealing to the alternative and downtown music scenes found in most big cities.

Two more members were added and their music style consisted of traditional folk, Americana, Celtic and eastern European mixed with punk and rock.

They recorded their first album in 2005, and nearly 20 years later have six full length albums in their catalog and fans all over the world thanks to music streaming online.

“It has always been hard to classify us because we don’t claim to be Irish but rather influenced by Irish music,” he explains.

“We prefer to be classified as folk-punk because we play folk music with traditional instruments mixed with rock guitar and drums in a punk style,” he said. “My family has a strong working-class background so we write songs about those struggles as well.”

Nebesniak graduated from Southeast Community College in 1991 with a Motorcycle Technology Diploma. He joined the SCC faculty in Powersports Technology in 2012 as an instructor in motorcycle technology.

Music brings happiness

and is therapeutic for Nebesniak, and he sees a correlation with working on or riding a motorcycle.

“I love the motorcycle culture and the music culture,” said Nebesniak. “They both require a specific passion and are both awesome to me. Whether it is rock and roll or country music, dirt bikes or ATVs, they all go together.”

“It helps me release the pressure of everyday life,” he said. “I am truly blessed to work at such a great place with amazing students and coworkers. I hope to make the world a better place for generations to come.”

# Fun and Games Solutions

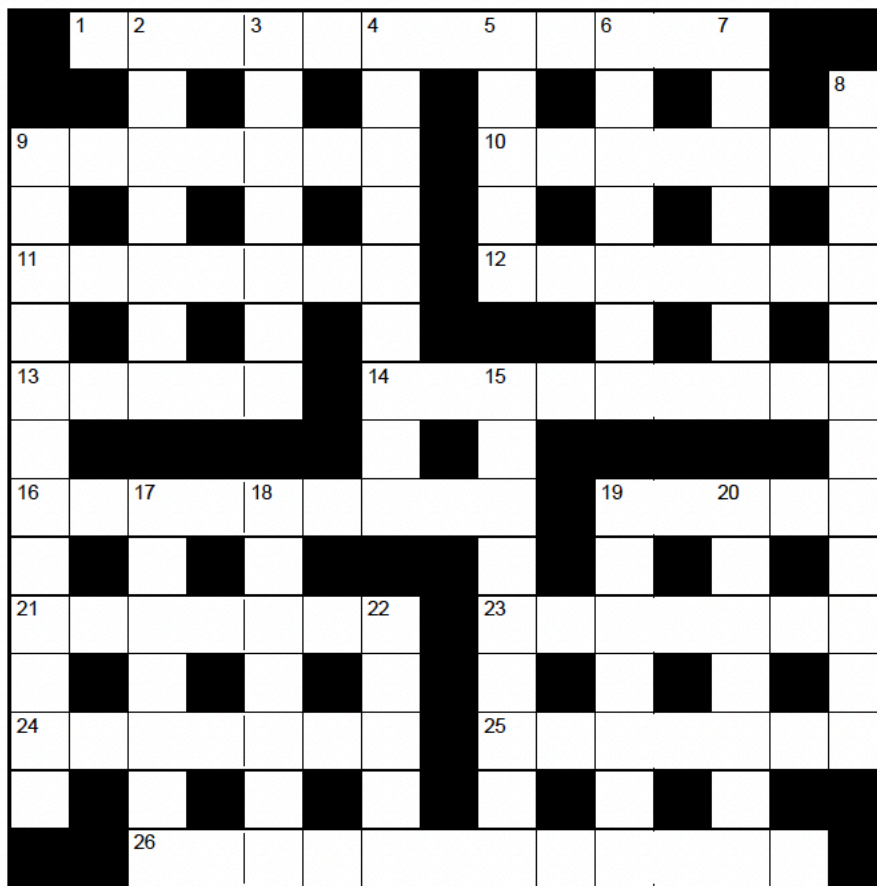
### Tricky

9	7	6	8	3	4	1	5	2
8	1	4	7	5	2	6	3	9
2	5	3	1	9	6	4	7	8
5	6	1	9	7	3	8	2	4
3	2	9	4	8	5	7	1	6
7	4	8	2	6	1	5	9	3
1	9	2	5	4	8	3	6	7
6	8	7	3	1	9	2	4	5
4	3	5	6	2	7	9	8	1

### Fiendish

5	3	2	7	4	1	9	6	8
8	6	1	3	2	9	7	4	5
7	9	4	6	5	8	3	2	1
1	2	8	9	6	4	5	3	7
6	7	9	5	3	2	1	8	4
3	4	5	8	1	7	2	9	6
2	8	3	4	7	5	6	1	9
4	5	6	1	9	3	8	7	2
9	1	7	2	8	6	4	5	3

# Fun and Games



## ACROSS

- 1 Shoshun needs place to shoot in New Orleans (6,6)
- 9 Have means to live, needing loans first (7)
- 10 Composer from this country given a hearing (7)
- 11 Terrace of museum sheltering the Queen (7)
- 12 Empress from Amritsar in Asia (7)
- 13 Performing only new material (5)
- 14 Where people are late for party in good measure (9)
- 16 Past agreement affected trade at start of year (9)
- 19 One party then another beginning to search for extinct birds (5)
- 21 I chat endlessly with Scotsman from Naples perhaps (7)
- 23 Mother's wise to get this treatment (7)
- 24 Shout about working in US city (7)
- 25 Sentry shows concern (7)
- 26 Article by attractive woman makes a considerable sum (1,6,5)

## DOWN

- 2 Politician is mostly reliable, if eccentric (7)
- 3 Go in van, moving around French city (7)
- 4 European wandered around street when alienated (9)
- 5 He's top of the order (5)
- 6 Pull a face as Bill is covered in dirt (7)
- 7 Tries an exotic wine (7)
- 8 Old Peruvian ancestry is brilliant (12)
- 9 Triple score with three sixes – it's a record (7-5)
- 15 Jack mistreated my Sally dreadfully (9)
- 17 Row over university student with a blade (7)
- 18 One turfs out English champion (7)
- 19 Get rid of Diana's attitude (7)
- 20 Be boring about old soldier (7)
- 22 Music group turning joint upside down (5)

**Tricky**

	3			2		9		1
	8					2		
1			5					
					1			3
	2		4	8	5		1	
5			9					
					6			8
		4					3	
9		6		3			5	

**Fiendish**

		7	2					3
	5			9				
	8		4		5			
3					7			6
	7			3			8	
1			9					7
			6		8		2	
				2			4	
5					1	9		

sudoku puzzles courtesy of [sudokuoftheday.com](http://sudokuoftheday.com)

For solution, see bottom of page 29



# Nebesniak and the Killigans part of Husker game day

By Jennifer Snyder

If you have been to a Husker football or volleyball game, you have more than likely connected with Trevor Nebesniak, Powersports Technology program chair.

He plays guitar and sings back-up for the Killigans and their rendition of fan favorite “The Cornhusker” is played at both sporting events to pump up the crowd.

“We talked about writing a fight song for our favorite football team and knew it would be difficult,” Nebesniak said.

“My youngest brother Patrick played first trum-

pet in the marching band and told us about this cool old song and thought we should do something with that,” he explained. “My other brother Chris came up with the catchy mandolin line and melody with our main vocalist Brad Hoffman. We decided to go into the studio in 2014 and recorded it.”

Fast forward to Sept. 1, 2018, for Scott Frost’s first football game as head coach of the Huskers against the Akron Zips. There was a buzz in the air and it’s time for kickoff.

Mother Nature had other plans and the game was in an inclement weather delay for 2 hours, 40 min-

utes because of lightning and heavy rain in the area, and the fans that stayed at Memorial Stadium needed to be entertained.

Enter the Killigans recording of “The Cornhusker,” and a new tradition was formed.

“I usually hold back happy tears when I hear it being played,” he said. “When I look over at my children smiling and gleaming with pride that their father and uncles created this song that almost everyone in the stadium sings along with is hard to describe.”

“Sadly, our father passed away in 2011 and never experienced this



Photo of courtesy of Rocking Lens.


but we know he is out there smiling and singing along,” Nebesniak added.

continued on page 29

 **illuminations**

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