

LU invites community to Homecoming

Maddie Sims
UP editor

Homecoming festivities begin Oct. 7, and there are many events for students, alumni and members of the community to participate in leading up to the big game against Stephen F. Austin on Oct. 12.

“Homecoming is a collective effort across campus,” John Rollins, associate director for community relations and public affairs said. “With our new ‘See for Yourself’ campaign finally launched, this is

a chance for us to invite the community out to come see and support our football team, as well as our band, our cheerleaders, dance team, all of the groups that are involved that make this come to life.”

Rollins said Cardinal football is on an upward trajectory which has energized the campus.

“They’re doing really well right now with the recent national ranking,” he said. “There’s a newfound excitement behind the football team, and that makes it great for

all involved.

“But beyond the game, Homecoming is an entire week worth of festivities, all leading up to community tailgate, which everyone can come out and be a part of.”

Here is a schedule of the week’s Homecoming events.

October 7

A pumpkin painting contest will be held at the Setzer Student Center from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m.

See **HOMECOMING**, page 6



UP photo by Maddie Sims

John Rollins, LU associate director of community relations & public affairs, puts out Homecoming signage by the Reaud Building, Sept. 27.

TURNING THE PAGE



An architect's rendering of the renovated Gray Library

Courtesy photo

Gray Library overhaul will provide LU campus state-of-the-art facility

Luis Lemmen
UP contibutor

Lamar University’s Gray Library is undergoing a large-scale renovation that will take at least two years and is expected to cost \$83.5 million.

“We are doing a complete renovation of the building,” Katherine Miller, assistant vice president of planning and construction, said. “It is basically being gutted from wall to wall and the interior.”

The building opened in 1976 and in 2019, the university hired an architect to do a facility condition assessment.

“They looked at every system in the building,” Miller said. “The mechanical system, the electrical system, the fire alarm, and the data wiring is either all original to the building or still at least 25- or 30-years old. The building is outdated not just in terms of functions, but also appearance.”

See **RENOVATIONS**, page 3



An architect's rendering of an interior floor Gray Library following renovations.

Courtesy photo



UP photo by Luis Lemmen

Gray Library manager Kirk Smith talks with student workers hired to move books ahead of renovation.

Student services to continue during remodel

Luis Lemmen
UP contributor

Lamar University’s Gray Library is undergoing an \$83.5 million renovation which means services will be limited.

Major renovation work will begin with a groundbreaking ceremony, Oct. 15. The renovation project is scheduled to last until the end of 2026, and

See **LIBRARY**, page 4



FREDDIE TITUS

Titus is man with a plan

Kami Greene
UP contributor

When Freddie Titus was an afro-haired undergraduate at Lamar University, he remembers dressing in a cream suit and attending a funk concert on campus.

Now, 40-odd years later, his suit is more low-key, but he wants students to have the same opportunities for fun he had.

Titus stepped into a new role as the Vice President of Strategic Services and Student Affairs this semester with a plan to rejuvenate LU’s social environment.

Titus said people describe him as being “ground up,” because he has started at the bottom and worked his way up.

“I was a student here at

See **TITUS**, page 7

Health Center to offer flu shots, Oct. 9-10

Aaron Saenz
UP staff writer

Lamar University’s Student Health Center will host its annual flu clinic, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Oct. 9-10, in the Sheila Umphrey Recreational Sports Center. Vaccines are \$28 for students and \$30 for faculty.

Nancy Dover, assistant director of medical services, helps administer the vaccines during clinics.

See **FLU SHOTS**, page 2

RENOVATIONS from page 1

In the mid 1970s, a lot of architects were inspired by the Brutalist movement. The library is an example of that.

“The old library did not look very inviting,” Miller said. “From the outside you would just see a brick wall.”

The plaza in front of the main entrance on the east side will be completely redone, Miller said.

“We want to rehabilitate the area around the library to make it more attractive and functional,” she said. “Also, we’re moving Starbucks from where it is now to the south side of the building. There will be a little patio, which makes it a fairly inviting space where you can sit outside.”

Miller said that the exterior appearance and interior design of the library will change significantly. She said that instead of a closed brick facade, windows will be installed on all sides so that daylight will reach all floors. Inside, the old look with the carpeted floors and dark, long corridors full of books is being replaced by open, light-flooded rooms, she said.

“We don’t want it to look like 1895 or 1950 (or) 1975,” she said. “We want it to be contemporary 21st-century design. We will create warm, inviting interior spaces that people enjoy being in.

“Back when this building was built, an academic library meant something completely different than it does now. A library’s main purpose was to be a repository of information books. But over the past 15 years, that has changed. Nowadays, it is supposed to be a hub for learning and student success. We want it to be a



An architect's rendering of the renovated Gray Library showing the new windowed facade.

Courtesy photo

space where students want to go and spend their time.”

Miller said the needs of students were at the center of the new library’s design. There will be more spaces to sit and work on all floors.

“One of the programming goals was to implement a mixture of group and individual study rooms,” Miller said. “We sprinkle those throughout the new library. Some of them can accommodate up to eight students, some two, and some of them will be individual study rooms.”

The renovation will also help centralize student services, such as undergraduate advising, research, tutoring, and the Writing Center, Miller said.

“Those are all physically in the library right now, but they’re going to be consolidated with some of the advising programs to create a student success hub,” she said. “We will have a brand new computer lab and Writing Center on the first floor.”

The changes in the library’s layout are only possible through the creation of new

space, Miller said.

Library manager Kirk Smith said in order to create more space the number of physical books in the library will be reduced.

“We’ll probably lose at least 20% of our physical books,” he said.

Books that are out of date, available in multiple copies or are rarely borrowed are packed in boxes and sent to the Houston Public Library, Smith said.

“The good news is we will have access to all books

through interlibrary loan, which is a key factor — we can get any book you need,” he said, adding that the majority of the books are available in digital form meaning no book will be lost.

The first phase of the renovation will begin with a groundbreaking ceremony, Oct. 15, and end in late 2025.

Miller said the cost of the renovation is expected to be \$83.5 million, with the State of Texas covering approximately \$44.9 million and the remainder coming from bonds.



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LIBRARY from page 1

all eight floors will be completely renovated and redesigned, Kirk Smith, library manager, said.

Work actually began in the spring when two of the four elevators were replaced.

“We had to do the elevators first, because we had to ensure they’re working throughout construction,” Smith said.

The top six floors of the library are already closed, and the first two floors have limited access.

Smith said the renovations will be carried out first on the higher floors on levels five to eight. For the duration of the renovation work, the books from the higher floors were moved to the lower floors.

“I did not want the books to leave the building,” Smith said.

Smith said there are more than a million physical books on the library shelves. Each of these books has to be moved individually. The library has hired more than 40 part-time student assistants for the work.

“We moved basically one shelf, one cart at a time,” Smith said. “First, we compacted the third floor. Then we got the fourth floor moved down, and then we moved the fifth floor down to the fourth floor, and then that cleared off the fifth floor. We took all that shelving down and that’s stored now on the fourth floor. We had to utilize every bit of space.”

Smith said the goal is to keep the library as functional as possible while the construction is happening.

“Floors three and four turned into storage space, like a warehouse,” he said. “When students need books from those floors, they’ll come to us, and we will get those books



down for them. A lot of times, students want to shop the call number range. I will allow them to go up there with one of our staff members and look for a little bit.”

Smith said students will still be able to borrow books and print. Smith said he is making study space available, including the ground floor area previously used by the Writing Center, which has temporarily moved to the Maes Building.

“We have created additional study space in their former rooms on the first floor, as the other study rooms on the upper floors are closed,” he said.

Starbucks will probably be open throughout the entire construction, Smith said.

“There will be times when we have to close the building because they’re moving



UP photos by Luis Lemmen

As the books are removed from the upper floors of Gray Library, the racks are dismantled to allow for renovations.

plumbing or electrical, for example, (but) it shouldn’t be more than a day at a time,” he said. “Hopefully, we can time that around the holidays.”

Smith said the process is detailed and requires careful planning.

“Think about it, if you moved an entire household, it

would take weeks to pack it,” he said. “I’m moving an entire building. You need a lot of manpower and a good plan for that.”

DISHMAN
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Join us at **The Dishman Art Museum** on **Homecoming Day**, and add an artistic touch to your tailgating experience! The Dishman Art Museum will be open on October 12 from 10 AM to 4 PM. The museum is free and open to the public!

Exhibition Dates: September 20th- November 2nd, 2024
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BY PATRICK PATTERSON



Joseph Wellman demonstrates his blacksmithing skills at Spindletop Gladys-City Boomtown Museum.

UP photos by Carlos Viloria.

Forged Passion

Duo demonstrate art of Blacksmithing at Boomtown museum

Maddie Sims
UP editor

The sound of the hammer against the anvil rings against the walls, leaving behind an echo heard for a few seconds. Tiny sparks fly and dance across the room before dying out. After hours of continuous craft, a knife is born from nothing but molten metal.

The art of blacksmithing is not obsolete by any means, according to Matthew Horn and Joseph Wellman.

“My father had an anvil, and I was exposed to it around eight years old,” Horn said. “Then, I watched a movie called ‘Highlander.’ (The main character) finds this old anvil, and he reforges a sword. I watched him make it and I just fell in love. I had an awesome agricultural science and welding teacher and he had an anvil, so I learned a lot of neat blacksmithing work from him by being in the FFA. And then throughout my career as a fabricator, I’ve always used anvils and heavy machinery.”

Wellman’s blacksmithing journey started nine years ago. “I started making PVC bows, using a mold, and hand shaping the ends,” he said. “I got upwards of 25 to 50 pound bows. I was like, ‘OK, let me take a step further.’ I started building on bow string, and I got really good at it, and they started lasting a lot longer.”

Arrows are expensive, Wellman said, so he made his own arrowheads and progressed to making his own arrows after that.

When his house caught fire, it forced Wellman to take a four-year gap. One day, he said, he ran across a kid who was blacksmithing metal into the shape of leaves. He decided to get back into it himself.

“I took off, just kept doing it and getting better,” he said. “I kept branching out to do other things and I was looking for somebody to learn from. I got on Facebook and found the Beaumont Blacksmiths Association. I met (members) Chase,



The fire used to shape the iron burns bright inside the demonstration room.

Rick and Matt and a few others one Sunday a month. And that’s all it took to really get the knowledge I needed to move forward where I wanted to go.”

Both Horn and Wellman said they are dedicated to the craft and try to indulge themselves whenever they can.

“I have two small boys and they love blacksmithing also,” Horn said. “My oldest, who’s 11, he just really took a liking to it, so it doesn’t take much to twist my arm to go out in the shop at home, fire up the forge and let them make something.”

Wellman volunteers at special events around the community.

“I’ve done trade days and renaissance fairs,” he said. “Now, I wish I could do the big one in Tomball.”

Blacksmiths are known for making knives and swords, but Horn said he likes making things that are more useful.

“I love making cowboy cookware, fire pokers, things that everyone can enjoy, rather than just a knife or a sword that’s

usually put on someone’s mantle, or something that is generally not seen by everyone,” Horn said. “You can have that on your kitchen counters. (People) will say, ‘Wow, what a neat piece.’ Then you get to tell people, ‘Oh, I saw this blacksmith, I bought it from him. They put on a really neat demonstration.’”

One of Horn’s favorite items he’s made is a pickle fork.

“It’s something you can use very often, and every time you do, you see the craftsmanship that went into it, how durable it is, and how it’s very resourceful for a number of other things, too, rather than just flipping steaks,” he said. “I really enjoy this braided rope twist I put on it, it takes a lot of patience to get the metal to cut just right.”

Wellman said he likes to make intricate pieces with small details.

“My girlfriend watched me one day when I was making a rose, and she saw me smiling while I was doing it,” he said. “As I’m shaping it, it’s coming

to fruition. I enjoy bringing something from nothing.”

Wellman makes the shapes out of old appliances.

“I would make them out of microwaves, washers and dryers,” he said. And it takes something from that and turns it into a beautiful rose.”

Horn and Wellman conduct demonstrations at Spindletop Gladys-City Boomtown Museum every other Thursday.

“We started here in January when the new director took over for the anniversary of this place,” Horn said. “And we were really fortunate that they needed some help, and we were able to jump in. The new director has opened up a lot of new events here, and that has also

opened up a lot of opportunities for us to work here.”

Even though Horn and Wellman create different objects, the pair work well together, they said..

“We’re really a team, and that’s how the Beaumont Blacksmiths Association was,” Horn said. “It was never about one single individual, it was about a group of us all learning from each other. Some of us like to work in the coal forge, others like to work in a propane forge. And you see the benefits of both the old and the new. It’s really neat to have more than one view on things.”

For more information, visit the Beaumont Blacksmiths Association on Facebook.



Matthew Horn hammers heated metal during a demonstration at Spindletop Gladys-City Boomtown Museum, above. As part of th demonstration, Horn shows off his tools to a small child



SGA from page 1

Participants will paint mini pumpkins and vote for the winner.

Contestants for the Homecoming Court and Waka Flocka Flame concert opener finalists will have a showcase at the Shelia Umphrey Recreational Sports Center Patio from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

October 8

Students will be able to add personalized touches to LU merch at the Cardinal Craze in the Setzer Student Center from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m.

LU’s volleyball team will play Stephen F. Austin in the McDonald Gym at 6:30. Students with ID will receive free admission and free popcorn.

Voting for the Royal Court and the Office Door Decorating Contest will also begin online and will run through Oct. 10.

The Rec Center will host a Late Night Mum Factory from 8:30 p.m. to 9:45 p.m. where participants can make Homecoming mums and corsages.

October 9

LU’s Greek Life Card-nival and NPHC Hump Day. Locations and times TBA.

October 10

Students can participate in a game show called “Minute to Win It” in the Setzer Student Center from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. Participants can win cash prizes in 60 second competitions.

The Bonfire kicks off with the Spirit Walk from Cardinal Village to Gladys-City Spindletop Boomtown Museum at 6 p.m., including a



UP photo by Maddie Sims

John Rollins, LU associate director of community relations & public affairs, puts out Homecoming signage by the Reaud Building, Sept. 27.

pep rally from Lamar University’s marching band.

After performances from the LU band, cheerleaders, and dance team, there will be DJ Battle and food.

October 11

Students can participate in Goat Yoga at the Dining Hall Lawn from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

LU’s Soccer team will play Texas A&M Corpus Christi at the LU Soccer Complex at 7

p.m. Free for students with ID.

Artist Waka Flocka Flame will perform a free concert in the Neches FCU Arena in the Montagne Center beginning at 8 p.m.

October 12

Gladys-City Spindletop Boomtown Museum will host the Big Red’s Classic & Antique Car Show from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Dishman Art Museum

will hold free art events from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Boomtown Tailgate will start at 11 a.m. and run through 2 p.m. at the Plummer Lawn, Lot E-3.

There will be an Alumni pre-game party in the Neches FCU Arena at the Montagne Center from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Advance registration and payment are required. For details, visit lamar.edu/alumni.

Lamar University’s marching band, The Showcase of Southeast Texas, will perform their pre-game show at 2:40 p.m. at the Provost Umphrey Stadium, with the game against Stephen F. Austin University starting at 3 p.m.

To wrap up Homecoming, the Recreational Sports Center will host its Patio Grand Opening ceremony from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. with food, music and more.

For more, visit lamar.edu/homecoming.



BIG RED'S HOMECOMING TRADE DAY & CAR SHOW

Spindletop Boomtown Museum

October 12, 2024
10:00am-2:00pm

Live music by Jamie Talbert
BBQ
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TITUS from page 1

Lamar way back in the late '70s, and I enjoyed my time here because Student Affairs was very engaging," Titus said. "Actually, I worked in the Setzer Center as an undergraduate student. As a graduate of Lamar, I worked with the Greeks, who are part of Student Affairs.

"Now I'm leading Student Affairs, so I have ground experience with what that looks like, what that feels like, and the importance of meeting the needs of our students."

The Setzer Student Center is a space for students, Titus said. "The student union should be probably the most populated spot on campus because it is the space for students," Titus said. "In that space, what we want to do is to make sure that we are engaging our students and providing programming that our students want."

Titus said he wants to transform the Setzer Center into a loud place. He said it is not a library and it should be a place where students gather, hang out, come to activities, and, definitely, eat. However, programming and engaging students around campus should not be left up to him alone, Titus said, but rather, the students themselves should be providing a majority of the feedback.

"Without students none of us have a job, and so it's about students," he said. "I'm always going to surround myself with students and find out what is it that they want and what is it that they need because that is important to me. I tell people all the time, if you develop a program and no one comes to your program, they voted that whatever you were providing

didn't spark their interest." Students should be at the decision-making table, Titus said, and he plans to survey the campus to find out what the Cardinal community wants to be involved with.

"What is it? What programming are we going to provide?" he said. "Students need to be able to tell us what that should be."

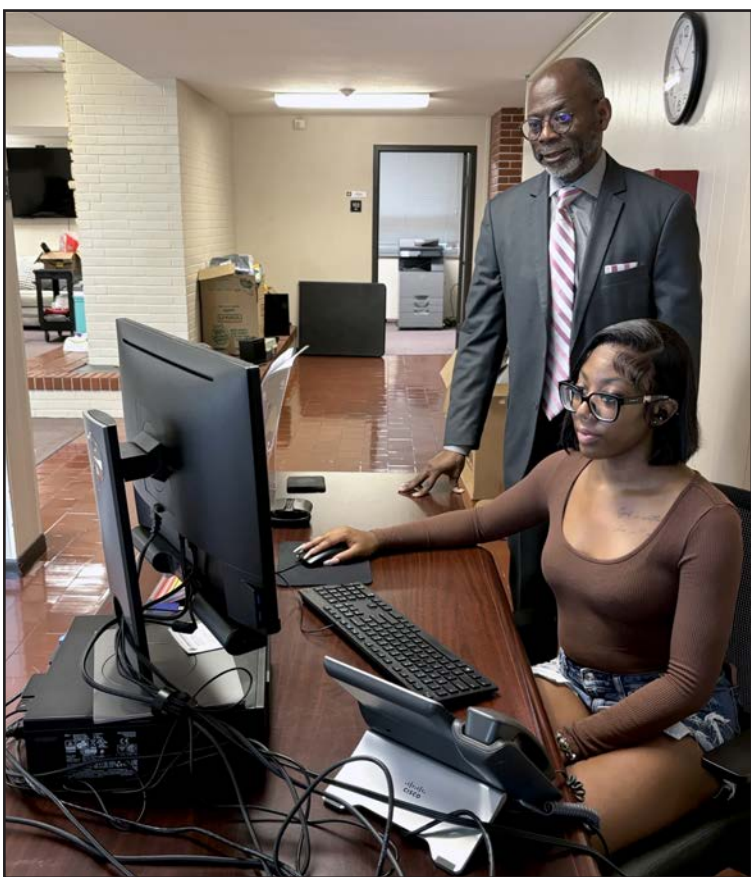
Although Student Affairs is a large division, Titus said it all boils down to programming and the nonacademic services provided for students.

"We want to make sure that we build leaders, so we provide leadership opportunities," he said. "We also want to make sure that our students are well-rounded in terms of community service, (that) they engage in service projects and things that just make people good citizens. That's a part of what we do in Student Affairs."

"And then, of course, provide fun activities because college can be challenging. Students need downtime, so we want to make sure that we're providing opportunities for students in that area as well."

Despite being Titus's first year in his new position, he is already changing up the game. Engagement levels from students are steadily increasing, he said, especially with the upcoming Homecoming concert featuring Waka Flocka Flame.

"Because we got this Homecoming concert coming up, I saw social media people say, 'Well, they didn't have that when I was at Lamar,'" Titus said. "That is a sign that we are moving the needle. And last week at tailgating, we had



UP photo by Kami Greene
Freddie Titus works with student Mikara Lloyd in the Student Engagement office in the Setzer Student Center.

more people at the game than usual, and all of those are indicators that we are on the right track."

Titus said the last concert he remembers being hosted at Lamar was back in the days when he dressed in his cream suit, afro, platform shoes, and a maxi coat to attend a concert featuring Earth, Wind, & Fire and Frankie Beverly.

"I hadn't heard of any concerts here at Lamar, I've been here 41 years," Titus said. "I know we've had some concerts, but I don't think it was concerts where the students picked. Maybe it was an external company. (Waka Flocka) is actually sponsored by Lamar,

so that's a difference. If I remember correctly, I had to pay for that concert way back in the day. This concert is free to all our students. This is just the start."

Titus said he also plans to connect with student organizations and get their feedback, because it is crucial to empower student organizations since they significantly contribute to the extracurricular activities around campus.

"I don't have a name for it yet, but I think two Fridays out of the month, I'm going to be meeting with different students from different organizations for lunch," he said. "I will foot the bill for lunch and just listen

to what students want — and it reaches beyond just fun activities. My vision is to make sure that students walk away from Lamar saying that it was a great experience, both in the classroom and outside the classroom."

Providing students with the best experience on campus is like having a meal at a restaurant, Titus said.

"What would you do if you went to a restaurant and you paid \$20,000 for the meal?" he said. "What would you expect? You would expect the best meal of your life, exactly right."

"On average, students pay more than \$20,000 a year to come to Lamar over their four years, and so my purpose is to make sure that the experience is one of the best experiences that they have here at the university."

There's research that says students who are engaged outside of the academic classroom tend to stay in college, Titus said. They tend to graduate because of those outside-the-classroom connections, and some of those connections last a lifetime.

"One example of that is people in Greek letter organizations," Titus said. "Their friendship goes beyond the days in college, and also with students who are in student organizations, you develop relationships that will last a long time, and that's pretty cool."

From his days as an undergraduate student in his cream colored suit, to the leader of Student Affairs, Titus continues to strive for a better future for our Cardinal Community. Freddie Titus is truly the man with the plan.



BIG RED'S HOMECOMING TRADE DAY & CAR SHOW

Spindletop Boomtown Museum

**October 12, 2024
10:00am-2:00pm**

**Live music by Jamie Talbert
BBQ
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MON 10/7	Pumpkin Painting Contest 12:30 - 2 pm • SSC Atrium Royal Court Showcase & Concert Finalists 7 - 9 pm • Rec Center Patio
TUE 10/8	Vote for the Royal Court All Day • Online at lamar.edu/LUhub Cardinal Craze 12:30 - 2 pm • SSC Atrium LU Volleyball vs. SFA 6:30 pm • McDonald Gym Late Nite Mum Factory 8:30 - 9:45 pm • Rec Center Patio
WED 10/9	Vote for the Royal Court All Day • Online at lamar.edu/LUhub Greek Life Card-nival & NPHC Hump Day
THU 10/10	Minute to Win It 12:30 - 2 pm • SSC Atrium Bonfire & Pep Rally 6:30 - 9 pm • Spindletop Boomtown Museum
FRI 10/11	Goat Yoga 11:30 am - 1:30 pm • Dining Hall Lawn LU Soccer vs. TAMU-Corpus Christi 7 pm • LU Soccer Complex Homecoming Concert ft. Waka Flocka Flame 8 pm • Neches FCU Arena, Montagne Center
SAT 10/12	Boomtown Tailgate 11 am - 2 pm • Plummer Lawn LU Football vs. SFA 3 pm • Provost-Umphrey Stadium Grand Opening: The Patio at the Rec 7 - 10 pm • Recreational Sports Center

**CARDS, THIS IS
YOUR WEEK!**

**FULL DETAILS
LAMAR.EDU/
HOMECOMING**

Caraline Otte
UP contributor

Aaron was in college for a year and the couple got engaged. They married when he



UP photo by Caraline Otte

In addition to Oz Cafe, the Longs take a traveling coffee cart to events in the community. They plan on bringing it to CrossFit Beaumont's

“One of the ones that we’re going to do is with the guy who makes our meat pies,”



Oz Café is open 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. For more, visit theozcafe.com.

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LU Hispanic Society to host Loteria event



Presleigh Peveto
UP contributor

Hispanic Heritage Month recognizes the contributions and influence of Hispanic and Latino Americans to the United States. It is celebrated annually from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15.

To commemorate the month, Lamar University’s Hispanic Society is teaming with the Latino Medical Student Association to host Loteria Night at 6 p.m., Oct. 8, on the Dining Hall lawn.

“At Loteria Night, LMSA is in charge of games and is ready to educate students with medical terms in a fun way,” Vicky Longoria, Hispanic Society vice president, said. “We also want to play a few rounds of Simon Says with a twist, and there should be great prizes to give out.”

Loteria is a traditional Hispanic board game that is like bingo but with Spanish words, Longoria said.

“Instead of numbered balls,

it is played with a deck of cards with pictures on it, it is supposed to help beginners get familiar with basic Spanish words,” she said.

President Diana Resendez said the Hispanic Society’s mission is to embrace and educate students at Lamar to learn about the Hispanic and Latino culture.

“We hope students will give

our organization a try and come join in on the fun,” she said. “We want to celebrate our ancestry and just offer a friendly community for people to socialize and have fun. Come as you are and enjoy our vibrant culture with us.”

For more information, visit Lamar Hispanic Society on LU Hub or on Instagram @Lamar_HispanicSociety.



Members of Lamar University’s Hispanic Society showed off traditional costumes, far left, and played piñata during a recent event.

Last day for mail-in ballot option is Oct. 25

Maddie Sims
UP editor

The time to vote for the 2024 election is coming up with the last day to register being Oct. 7. However, it may be difficult for some people to travel to the polls due to a disability, age or distance, so mail-in voting serves as an alternative option for those who qualify.

To qualify for a mail-in ballot, voters should be 65 years of age or older on Election Day, sick or disabled, expecting to give birth within three weeks before or after Election Day, absent from the county of registration during the Early Voting period and on Election Day, civilly committed under Chapter 841 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, or confined in jail, but otherwise

eligible, according to votetexas.gov.

Jefferson County Elections County Clerk Roxanne Acosta-Hellberg said she is not allowed to hand out mail-in ballots at her office in the County Courthouse.

“Voters have to request them,” she said. “We have an application just for tracking purposes, which is online at jeffersonelections.com.”

To vote by mail, a person must provide either their state driver’s license, Texas Personal Identification Number or Election Identification Certificate Number issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety. One of these must be on the ballot by mail (ABBM) and the mail ballot carrier envelope.

To apply for a mail-in ballot, voters can download an application online, grab a form

from the Secretary of State’s office or the Early Voting Clerk.

Voters who will be absent from their county must apply in person for a ballot by mail before the early “voting in person” period begins (usually the 17th day before the election).

The last day to vote via mail-in ballot is Oct. 25. For information, visit jeffersonelections.com or votetexas.gov.

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See ya later, Gatorfest



A small boy looks at an alligator, above, that was hunted during Gatorfest in Anahuac, Sept. 14.

UP photo by Aaron Saenz

Anahuac hosts annual celebration of hunting season

Aaron Saenz
UP staff writer

As fall approaches, hunting season is on many people’s minds. Whether they are breaking out their duck decoys or cleaning out their deer blinds, hunters are making their fall plans.

However, for one group of hunters, the season has come and gone.

Anahuac held its annual Gatorfest, Sept. 13-15. The festival featured carnival rides, food and merchandise booths, a petting zoo, live music and air-boat rides. It also featured prizes for hunting alligators.

Alligator hunting season only lasts one week in Texas, so people come from all over to take part in the three-day competition. There is a payout every hour for the person who brings in the biggest alligator.

At the alligator stage, people showed off their best trophies. Some hunters brought in as many as seven corpses, but the true eye-catchers were the prize winners.

“The biggest one this morn-

ing was 11-feet 3-inches,” a worker told the assembled crowd, pointing to an alligator hanging by its neck from a rope. “This one right here is 11-feet 5-inches.”

Adults and children posed with dead alligators on ice, although most of the little kids didn’t grasp what was happening to the carnivores.

“Daddy, why isn’t he moving?” one child asked, before turning to the gator. “You’re not moving, so I’m going to leave. Bye Mr. Gator.”

The booths featured local vendors and traditional carnival food. The petting zoo contained exotic animals including a camel and kanga-

roo. Some booths allowed visitors to hold newborn alligators.

The air-boat rides were popular with the wait for the rides exceeding two hours. The boat took passengers around the Anahuac Channel, going over water and grass alike. The highlight of the ride was when the driver put the air boat into a full spin and used the power of the fan to wet people watching in the stands. One kid was even knocked over by the force of the wind.

Gatorfest is held every year during alligator hunting season. It is not just fun for all ages, but also educates people about wildlife conservation.



Anahuac’s annual Gatorfest includes prizes for the biggest alligator bagged, the one pictured right is 11-feet 5-inches, as well as air boat rides.

UP photo by Aaron Saenz



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Cards sweep Privateers in SLC action

Press Release

In their first Southland Conference sweep since 2020, Lamar University volleyball came out victorious against New Orleans on the road, Sept. 28, 3-0 (25-17, 25-20, 25-23). This marks the first win for the Cardinals in the Big Easy since 2016.

Lamar (9-5, 1-1 SLC) finished the match hitting 40-15-107 (.234) with seven aces and eight blocks. Lyric Jordan led the team in kills with 12 while Maja Malinowska finished with eight kills and a team-high 11 digs. Ashlyn Gamble also chipped in a career-high six blocks.

UNO (2-11, 0-1 SLC) ended the afternoon with a hitting percentage of 8.2 percent (27-19-98). They recorded five aces and five blocks but were let down by seven reception errors and 19 attacking errors.

The Lady Cardinals got off to a hot start in the first set as they never trailed in the opening frame. Lamar began with a 7-2 run and scored four of the final five points to take the early match lead.

The second set was more of a back-and-forth affair with the Privateers building a late three-point advantage. The Cardinals stormed back, however, and finished the set on a 10-2 run.

Another strong start put Big Red in the driver seat in the third set. The Privateers held off five consecutive match points, but ultimately, Lamar was able to pull out the victory.

Lamar returns to McDonald Gym, Oct. 3, for their Southland Conference home opener against Texas A&M-Commerce at 6:30 p.m. The match will be streamed on ESPN+.



UP photo by Brian Quijada
LU libero Monique Gonzalez digs the ball against Prairie View A&M, Sept. 17, at the McDonald Gym.

Central Arkansas snap LU’s 3-game win streak

Press Release

Central Arkansas jumped out to a 10-point first quarter lead and never surrendered the advantage in a matchup of two nationally ranked teams, Sept. 28, at Estes Stadium in Conway, Ark. Central Arkansas topped 19th-ranked Cardinals, 34-14, dropping Big Red to 3-2 on the season as the Cardinals shift their focus to the start of Southland Conference play.

Lamar’s offense struggled to find its rhythm, finishing

the night with 220 total yards of offense. The Bears recorded 439, including 281 on the ground.

The Cardinals played some opportunistic football throughout the game recording a blocked punt — their third block of the season — to go along with an interception and a fumble recovery.

Senior quarterback Robert Coleman returned behind center after injury and completed 11-of-20 passes for 112 yards on the night, but was

picked off once. He connected with six receivers. Classmate Sevonne Rhea hauled in a game-high five catches for 55 yards.

Senior Khalan Griffin led the Cardinals’ ground attack with 18 carries for 72 yards and a touchdown. The Cardinals rushed for 108 yards as a team.

UCA jumped out to a 10-0 first quarter lead despite both teams putting up similar stats. The Bears outgained Lamar by just 10 yards in the opening 15 minutes, but Central

Arkansas blocked an LU field goal attempt on the opening drive and followed that up with consecutive scoring drives.

Junior Kristian Pugh led the Cardinals defensive effort with 10 tackles, including seven solo stops, and one for a loss. Junior DeJuan Lewis added seven stops and also picked off a pass.

Lamar got on the scoreboard midway through the second quarter when Griffin carried the ball in from one-yard out to pull Big Red

within three, 10-7, before Central Arkansas responded by scoring 10 points to close out the half.

UCA finished the half with 243 yards of offense with the majority of that coming in the second quarter. LU was held to 112 in the opening 30 minutes of action.

Lamar will have a week off before they return to action , Oct. 12, to host Stephen F. Austin in LU’s Homecoming game. The game will kick off at 3 p.m. at Provost Umphrey Stadium.



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Ramirez’ brace seals first SLC soccer win

Brian Quijada,
UP sports editor

After starting Southland Conference play 0-2, the Lamar women’s soccer team won their first SLC match against Nicholls State, 4-0, Sept. 29, at the LU Soccer Complex.

LU forward Isela Ramirez scored the first goal just four minutes into the match, assisted by Rafiatu Alhassan and Ella Carmody.

The Lady Cardinals applied pressure and dominated the ball during the first half keeping the Lady Colonels scoreless. With 25 seconds left in the half, LU defender Anneliese Switzer scored the second goal, assisted by Kamryn Harvey and Riley Wilson, ending the half 2-0. LU controlled the first half, outshooting Nicholls State 7-3.

“Our depth showed out really, really well,” Lamar head coach Nathan Kogut said. “The energy and enthusiasm today was fantastic and we got some finishes. We knew we’d have some chances. The other night (against UT-RGV) we couldn’t put any away, and we probably should have scored three or four more. The key was we needed to see the ball going in the back of the net. We needed to be able to be us again.”

Less than two minutes into the second half, Ramirez scored her second goal off a free kick from defender Caragan Childs. Ramirez had two goals on two attempts, recording her first brace since 2021.

LU kept control of the



LU forward Ronke Abudu scores the final goal against Nicholls State University, Sept. 29, at the LU Soccer Complex. Lamar midfielder Mia Ferrell dribbles the ball against Nicolls State defender, Sept. 29, at the LU Soccer Complex.

ball throughout the second half, shooting 11 more times and only allowing Nicholls State 10 shots the entire game. After five substitutions in the last minutes of the game, Lamar scored their final goal when freshman forward Ronke Abudu shot the ball from the left corner to seal the win.

“It’s easy to get complacent,” Kogut said. “We changed the lineup up a little bit coming out of half-time, and we scored pretty early there. Then we just wanted to keep people fresh. The big piece was we needed to be us. And we

needed to make them play at our level and not drop down to theirs.”

The Lady Cardinals finished with 18 shots, 14 of which were on target. Goalkeepers Maddie Rich and Taylor Howard combined for five saves for Lamar.

The Lady Cardinals are now 3-5-3 overall and 1-2 in Southland conference play. LU are set to play Southeastern Louisiana at 7 p.m., Oct. 4, in Hammond, La.

They return home Oct. 11, where they will face off against Texas A&M-Corpus Christi at 7 p.m. in the LU Soccer Complex.



UP photos by Carlos Vilorio



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