

LU CENTENNIAL ISSUE

UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Newspaper of
Lamar University

Vol. 98, No. 1
September 13, 2023



Centennial Fest set for Sunday

Keagan Smith
UP managing editor

Are you ready for a party, Beaumont?

Lamar University will celebrate its 100th anniversary with Centennial Fest, a community-wide event taking place from 4-8 p.m. in the Quad on Lamar's campus, Sept. 17.

"We have a ton of success with the things that we do, but we don't often have an opportunity to celebrate the successes," Golden Wright, Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication, who was on the festival planning committee, said. "This is an opportunity for faculty, staff, students, and the community to come together and celebrate this great university."

There's a little bit of something for everybody at Centennial Fest — and admission is free.

Live music will be provided by Still Cruisin', who play throwback jams. Adults can



UP photos by Keagan Smith

Dustin Barnes, top left, helps Christopher Brewer put the finishing touches to the 100th anniversary sculpture in the Quad, Sept. 8. For more photos, see page 5

relax and enjoy a drink at the beer garden. There will be yard party games, such as giant Jenga and Connect Four.

There will also be a variety of activities for families, and children in particular. The family area will include a bounce house, face painting,

and a dunking booth, as well as sno-cones and cotton candy.

Free hamburgers, hot dogs, soft drinks and water will be provided while supplies last. Two food trucks will also provide more options.

At 5 p.m., Lamar University President Jaime Taylor will de-

liver a birthday proclamation to officially ring in the institution's 100th year.

Additionally, Lamar student-athletes will make an appearance and interact with fans at the Sheila Humphrey Recreational Sports Center.

"I think it's hard to determine where the lines of Lamar end and where Southeast Texas began, or vice versa," Wright said. "I think both of them are involved and rely on each other for success, and they have for the last 100 years."

"Making sure that Beaumont and the Southeast Texas area are part of this celebration is really important. That's the reason why Lamar is successful. And I think one of the reasons why Southeast Texas has become so successful is because of Lamar's presence."

Those interested in volunteering may show up at 8 a.m. to help set up. For more information, visit www.lamar.edu/events.



Lamar University's 100th celebration, Sunday, will have many fun activities for all ages.

Centennial Fest will take place 4 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the university Quad and on Plummer Field.

The event will feature a beer garden, fireworks, and other fun activities the whole family can enjoy, LU's website states.

Local band, "Still Cruisin'" will perform, along with the LU's marching band, The Showcase of Southeast Texas.

President Jaime Taylor will also speak at the event.

Simmons reflects on legacy

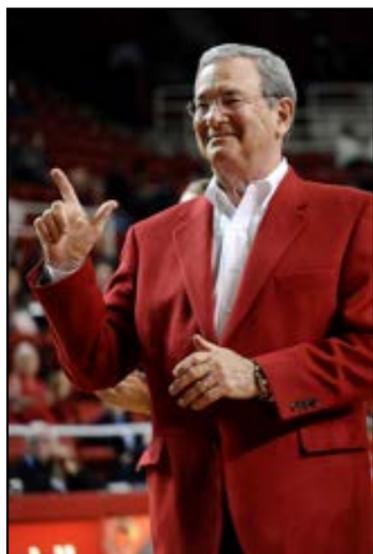
Maddie Sims
UP editor

As Lamar celebrates 100 years, elements of the campus have changed. Many of the athletic programs and buildings currently on campus originated during the tenure of James "Jimmy" Simmons, LU's 14th president.

A Beaumont native, Simmons joined Lamar University in 1970, first as band director, then music department chair, Dean of Fine Arts and Communication, and Vice President for Advancement, before being president from 1993-2013.

Simmons and Lamar go way back, as his mother attended the campus in 1936, and won the state tennis doubles championship. He said he was involved with the university for most of his life, taking lessons from the music professors. He was the assistant band director at Memphis State University when he was asked to come to Lamar in 1970.

"Coming back as a faculty member was really an honor," he said. "They had such a massive standing reputation, (especially) in



James "Jimmy" Simmons

the music field."

Simmons said being president was challenging, but also rewarding. However, he said he didn't do it alone.

"I might say I was president, but my wife (Susan) was also really the president," he said. "I just followed her directions the whole time."

When Simmons's presidency began, LU's enrollment was 7,200. When he retired, it was 16,000, he said. In 1993 there were few students who lived on campus, he said.

"We built all of the new dormitories, the dining hall, the Sheila Humphrey (Recreational Sports Center), and basically (brought in) more than double the enrollment," he said. "We also brought back football, women's soccer, women's baseball, and softball."

Simmons taught several music courses such as music theory and graduate conducting. Throughout his time at Lamar, Simmons continued to perform live, playing the clarinet and the saxophone, having music degrees in both. He's headlined with artists such as Bob Hope, Frank Sinatra, Ray Charles and The Temptations, and he created programs for five bachelors, seven masters, and three doctoral degrees. When he became assistant band director the marching band had about 150 people, he said, with numbers increasing throughout the years, he said. The current Showcase of

See **SIMMONS**, page 2

Red Day campaign set for Sept. 14-15

Press Release

Lamar University will host the 3rd annual Red Day virtual giving campaign on Sept. 14 and 15. The university is "Rolling Out the Red Carpet for 100 Years" in celebration of this special centennial fundraising event.

Red Day aims to inspire LU Cardinals, alumni and the community to come together to raise essential funds to support current and future students.

"Red Day is a time to showcase the power of philanthropy at LU, and the incredible difference our community makes when we rally behind our students," Lauren Wilson, development coordinator with Lamar University Advancement, said. "With this being the university's centennial anniversary, we're rolling out the

See **SIMMONS**, page 3

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“If you think in terms of a year, plant a seed;
if in terms of ten years, plant trees;
if in terms of 100 years, teach the people.”
— Confucius

NOTICE

The University Press can be read online at www.lamaruniversitypress.com. For updates, follow us on Facebook, or on Instagram and Twitter @uplamar.

When Lamar ‘S’Parked’ to life

Lamar University is a thriving institution with an enrollment of more than 16,000. With its online programs, LU reaches students around the world.

Not too shabby, considering it started life as a tiny junior college holding classes on the third floor of South Park High School. And the taxpayers who picked up the tab didn’t even have much to say about it.

The Board of Trustees of the South Park Independent School District, one of the three school districts in Beaumont, simply voted to open a junior college, and then proceeded to do so.

It was a bold move. There was only one other publicly supported junior college in the state, in Wichita Falls.

Since the college was supported by the South Park taxpayers, residents of the district were charged no tuition, only a matriculation fee of \$5. Non-residents were only charged \$10 a month for tuition and could pay by the end of the month if they chose.

This made for resentment among the students from the

other school systems with some moving into the South Park area when they graduated from high school, or claiming the street address of relatives within the system to avoid paying the college tuition.

A contest was held in 1932 to choose a new name, with a year’s scholarship going to the winner.

Otho Plummer, who had already graduated from college, won the contest with the suggestion of Lamar College, in honor of Mirabeau B. Lamar, second president of the Republic and generally considered the father of public education in Texas. (Plummer later became a member of the Lamar Regents.)

In 1933 a new administration/classroom building was built next to South Park High School, and was soon followed by another new building. Lamar finally had a campus of its own, separate from the high school, although the two still shared a football stadium and other athletic facilities.

The expense was a drain on the South Park system, and besides the trustees wanted to

widen the scope of the college and expand it. The only way they could do that was to make Lamar an area-supported college, completely separate from the South Park school system.

With that idea in mind they bought a 58-acre tank farm on the present university site from the Texas Oil Co. in 1938. In 1940 the French, Beaumont, and South Park school districts voted in a city wide election to jointly form the Lamar Union Junior College District.

New college buildings were constructed on the tank farm site. All the oil storage tanks were drained and leveled, except for one huge earthen tank just south of the present Ty Terrell Track. This tank collected rainwater, debris, and snakes for several years, until the surrounding mire of oil and water became solid enough for demolition to begin.

The land was well worth the inconvenience, though considering what Lamar wound up paying for it.

“After we bought the land, another oil company asked to lease the mineral rights,” Gray

said. “Since Texaco had sold us the land, we offered them the lease first. They said they had already checked out the land, but to go ahead and take the other company’s money.”

The other company paid Lamar \$40,000 for the lease but found nothing.

“Since the land only cost us about \$25,000 after clearing it, we made a profit of \$15,000,” Gray said.

During World War II years, vocational classes were taught 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with about 15,000 people graduating from welding, shipbuilding, and other technological short courses.

After the war, a movement was started to make Lamar a state-supported college.

The movement turned into a real Texas-style political dog-fight. No senior college had been established in Texas in 25 years, and the opponents claimed that if Lamar were permitted to expand, every junior college in Texas would want to do the same. This, they said, would bankrupt the state educational system. But the proponents won

out-eventually.

A bill was passed in 1947 to create Lamar State College of Technology, but the bill died because the state comptroller said there was not enough money to put it into effect.

The bill was passed again in 1949, and Lamar was given \$1 million for building expenses.

By September 1951, Lamar started its first four-year classes becoming the first junior college in Texas to expand to a senior college.

The graduate school was established in 1962, with master’s degrees being offered in several fields. In 1971, Lamar offered its first doctoral degree, in engineering, and on August 23, 1971, Lamar officially became Lamar University. And on Sept. 1 1995, Lamar University merged with the Texas State University System.

Where LU will stand 100 years from now is anyone’s guess, but if history teaches us anything, it’s that the little college that could will still be a leader in Southeast Texas.

Compiled from the UP archives

UNIVERSITY PRESS

The student newspaper of Lamar University ©2023

Contributing Staff

Editor.....Maddie Sims
Managing Editor/Sports.....Keagan Smith
Photo Editor.....Brian Quijada
Staff.....Gracie Anderson,
.....Carlos Vilorio,
.....Ella Gonzalez,
.....Allison Arnold
Office ManagerJa’Leigh Cerf

Advisors Andy Coughlan and Stephan Malick
Member of Texas Intercollegiate Press Association

SIMMONS from page 1

Southeast has more than 220 musicians.

“We had so many kids in the band and it was just wonderful,” he said. “It’s probably one of the best jobs I’ve had. We had wonderful drum majors, students and section leaders.”

When the school dropped football in 1989, it was a terrific blow to the music department, Simmons said.

“We started a concert series

called ‘Lamarissimo!’ As soon as we dropped football, we had a yearly concert at the Julie Rogers Theater, and we sold out the facility for them,” Simmons said. “The first year we had 1,800 seats available, and we sold 2,200 tickets, knowing that everybody wouldn’t come to every concert. We were praying they wouldn’t come because there wasn’t enough seats for them.”

Soon after Simmons retired

from his presidency in 2013, the school renamed University Drive to Jimmy Simmons Boulevard.

“That was a shock, it was really an honor,” he said.

Simmons is still synonymous with Lamar for many Southeast Texans, a local boy whose legacy is intertwined with Lamar’s history.

“I couldn’t have had a better life,” he said.

*journalism • broadcasting • advertising
film • public relations • podcasting • speech*



Department of

COMMUNICATION & MEDIA

YOUR

Moment

IS HERE



COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS & COMMUNICATION
LAMAR UNIVERSITY
Department of Communication & Media

409-880-8153

Library builds for future

Gracie Anderson
UP contributor

Named after Lamar University's first family, the Mary and John Gray Library opened its doors on Sept. 17, 1973, in celebration of the school's 50 years.

Now, as the school celebrates its 100th anniversary, the library still has an important role in campus life.

"A library's primary function is to be the heart of intellectual production," interim director Michael Saar said. "We can provide the tools and capabilities to help determine the reliability or the credibility of information you come across in your daily life."

Before the library was built in its current location, it was in what is now the Galloway Business Building. Julia Plummer was librarian from 1936 to 1967. In an interview for the 60th anniversary edition of the University Press, Plummer talked about how the library came to be.

"One Friday morning in March 1936, I received a tele-



Mary and John Gray Library interim director Michael Saar shows off part of Lamar University's special collections.

phone call from Joe Vincent, principal of Pietzsch Elementary school, asking me to have lunch with him," she said. "He told me that the position of librarian at Lamar Junior College would be vacant at the end of May."

With Plummer's help, the library was able to build its budget over the years to improve the quality of education Lamar students received.

"I saw the budget grow from \$600 to \$424,136,"

Plummer said. "I saw library space increase from one room to the large two story building now housing the College of Business."

"The library became too small to permit remodeling," Plummer said. "The building had to be expanded. We moved to the top floor of the student union for the summer of 1956. The addition of the library brought the total square feet to 30,400."

According to the 60th an-

niversary article, the library included 1 million titles, 13 librarians, 31 staff, and 10,600 visitors a week. Currently, Saar said there are 700,000 titles, 11 faculty, 8 staff, and 12,000 visitors a day.

Despite people increasingly using digital technology for research, Saar says libraries are not going anywhere.

"The real value of the library is the people that are here to support researchers.

meeting their research needs. and I don't think that will change," he said. "I think that will become more important." Among the library's unique pieces of literature is an interesting collection of ancient cookbooks, Saar said.

"I think part of the magic of them is in their physical presence and being able to engage with them as materials," he said.

For information, visit lamar.edu/library.

RED from page 1

red carpet for the most special Red Day yet."

The promotion traditionally runs for 24 hours, but this year Red Day will be active for 1,923 minutes — Sept. 14 at 9 a.m. through Sept. 15 at 5:03 p.m. — in honor of LU's founding year.

"100 years is a huge milestone for LU, and we aim to honor that this year by spotlighting more of our students, campus and programs," Wilson said.

"We're not only expanding our giving window from 24 hours to 1,923 minutes, but we're adding even more competitions, prizes and content from around campus than



ever before."

The university will periodically go live on LU's social media accounts throughout the campaign to provide Red Day updates, welcome special guests and spotlight each college with interviews, fundraising challenges and exciting content from across campus.

"One of the best things about Red Day is that it's a campus-wide event where all of our academic colleges, athletic teams, students, faculty and staff come together to shine a spotlight on what's happening on campus and the amazing things that philanthropy makes possible for our

university," Wilson said. Donors are encouraged to choose where their support is given — a favorite academic college, LU Athletics or endowments such as the LU Forever Fund, which supports the university's greatest needs.

The LU Foundation will sponsor the "Red Day Top 3," where the respective academic colleges will compete to win cash prizes by surpassing their own number of donors from last year by the highest percentage.

Last year, LU raised more than double the amount as the first Red Day, with a total of \$341,482 generously con-

tributed by donors from around the world. This year, the university aims to make that impact even greater, with a goal of reaching 500 total donors and increasing the amount raised.

"We hope that our Cardinals, friends and families will join us in rolling out the red carpet for this special event by tuning in, giving to support our students, and helping us surpass our goals as we embark on another extraordinary century at LU," Wilson said.

For more information, contact Wilson at lschudt@lamar.edu or 409-880-7590, or visit www.lamar.edu/redday.

LEGENDS OF THE Eight KINGDOMS

A Fantasy Roleplaying Game of High Adventure & Heroic Stunts

BY KEVIN MORRELL WITH BLAINE GRAHAM

A New Way to Roleplay

Look us up on:
DriveThruRPG.com
&
TrecOfLifeGames.com
Free Quick Start
info@trecollifegames.com

Art by William McAusland, Carlos Castilho, & The Forge Studios

UNIVERSITY PRESS

Celebrating 100 YEARS of student journalism

lamaruniversitypress.com



COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS & COMMUNICATION LAMAR UNIVERSITY



**The College of
Fine Arts &
Communication
prepares you to
become a leader
in your field.**

**Collaborate
Innovate**

Create

*Check out our
concerts, art exhibitions,
dance and theatrical
performances!*

lamar.edu/fineartscomm

(409) 880-8137

201 Theatre Arts Building



/lamar.cofac
@LamarCOFAC



Sign of the Century

Photo package
by Keagan Smith
UP managing editor

Visitors to the Quad this week will have noticed a shiny sculpture of Lamar University's 100th anniversary logo. The aluminum construction was designed and built by members of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.

The office comprises a mix of engineering and computer science students, as well as alumni who help with projects for research professors, Christopher Brewer, LU alumnus and engineering consultant, said.

"The marketing department came to us because we have a bunch of the equipment like metal cutting, welding, plasma cutting, and we also have a lot of connections with outsourcing," he said. "We also work as a service center to local companies and so, with all of our connections, instead of having it outsourced, it was all student designed and made with guidance from the faculty in the research department."

Brewer said that led it to involving alumni and outside companies to do things like the powder coating.

"So, it's not just current students, but also past students that are all involved," he said.

When project was first proposed it

was in the middle of the engineering students Senior Design projects, Brewer said, which meant the lab was full of projects with no space. Another obstacle was that the sign is made from aluminum and the lab equipment was set up for steel meant looking at the best ways to work with a different type of material.

Brewer said he thinks the project looks good.

"That's up to people who view it — people always find problems in certain things, but I think it looks about as good as we could make it," he said. "Especially (with) one of the people that helped the most with it being a computer science major and then 'civvies,' and most of them not knowing how to work with metal at the beginning of the project, except for like the small projects we do here and there."

It was a valuable learning project, not just a job, Brewer said.

"I hope our student workers came out with more skills with random things, with not only metalworking and fabrication, but also business communication and making contacts," he said.



UNIVERSITY PRESS

The student newspaper of Lamar University

DEMOCRACY DAY 2023

[USDEMOCRACYDAY.ORG](https://usdemocracyday.org)

Join the University Press in celebrating
International Democracy Day
on September 15

Throughout Lamar University's 100-year history, student publications have always been there documenting the stories and events that make us all proud to be Cardinals!

Show your support by following us on Facebook and sharing our stories and visiting us at:
lamaruniversitypress.com

CAMPUS VOICES

Lamar University is celebrating its 100th anniversary. The world has changed a lot since 1923. What do you think the world will look like 100 years from now?



Sidney Kester
Dallas freshman

Probably a major shift in technology in the way that we use technology, and we're probably all going to be like replaced by robots. Hopefully not, but probably.



Ashton Cabrera
Baytown freshman

I don't know, probably the same with fancy stuff.

nately feel like there's going to be like one government. I believe that the prophecies of the Bible is going to come within 100 years, probably even less. I wouldn't even be surprised.



Rai Lopez
El Paso freshman

Hopefully, more technologically advanced and, hopefully, a lot more peaceful than we are right now. That's what I hope it will look like in 100 years.

Larkin Forse
Beaumont freshman

100 years from now, I think that the world is going to be a lot more chaotic. 100 years from now, I feel like a lot of our social rules (will) have changed. I think people are going to be very different.



Sophie Tarver
Bridge City freshman

I think that things are going to progress. I wouldn't say quickly, but I think that there's definitely going to be a lot of changes. It's not going to look like it is right now. I don't think anything will stay the same — OK, I'm sure that people will.

pened it's it changed a little bit, but it's still basically the same. I feel like later in the future it might get better, but I don't know.



Jaelyn Blunt
Houston sophomore

I feel like 100 years from now the world will probably cease to exist and humanity will be its own downfall.



Icon Griner
Houston freshman

I think the world will be technologically more advanced but everything else would probably go downhill. It might be an apocalypse of nuclear war zombies, could be superheroes — the future is going to be crazy.



Adetomiwa Ajuwon
Nigeria senior

There's so much going on in the world that 100 years from now I just feel like everything will be taken over by robots. We're not going to have people doing their jobs anymore, because every day is a new technology being developed. But then again, it makes life easier for us, because (we'll) have the AI doing our homework for us.



Bryce Feldhausen
Beaumont freshman

There's going to be flying cars and you won't have to work because all the robots will take over your job for you. We will have inhabited our entire solar system, and life will be great or we'll all be dead. One of the two.



Grafton Conger
Lumberton senior

For the world specifically, it's more going to be definitely (more) engineering based with the new version of cars coming in, getting rid of oil and electronic based. So I think it'll be more sustainable than it is now.



Derrick Hall
Tomball freshman

Personally, I think that there's going to be flying cars and robots are going to take all of our jobs. However, it won't just be any type of robot. It will be them crazy robots.



Elijah Nelson
Beaumont freshman

I think it'll either look a lot better or a lot worse. I don't think it'll be anywhere in between. We'll either have a lot better technology, ways to travel and better resources that don't take as much toil on the Earth, or the exact opposite of that. I really prefer to look at the better side of things, though. I'm hoping that the world will look a lot better 100 years from now, and that we'll all be a lot happier, and the world will generally be a better place.



Emma Cooper
Lumberton sophomore

I think we'll finally have flying cars and, hopefully, some sort of cure for cancer. Honestly, I have no idea.



David Pius
Dallas sophomore

I think we're going to have a lot of advances probably in physics and medicine. I defi-



Demaurie Wiltz
Port Arthur freshman

I think in 100 years, the AI will make extreme advancements, such as our personal robots on our phones like Siri and Alexa. I feel those will have a more humanoid appearance and have actual robotic-like physical looks that we will buy and put in our houses for everyday use.



Javier Wickliff
Liberty freshman

I feel like it's going to be the same. Ever since COVID hap-

Compiled by
Carlos Vilorio
UP contributor

THE OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION AND SERVICES CELEBRATES "A CENTURY OF LEADERS" THROUGH INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MOBILITY AND GLOBAL EXPERIENCES!

LAMAR UNIVERSITY.
A CENTURY OF LEADERS

PRESS CLUB
OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS

Congratulates
Lamar University
on 100 years of excellence

pressclubofsoutheasttexas.org

REVVING UP



Ladies in Leather motorcycle rally comes to Beaumont

The roaring sounds from the engines revving could be heard echoing at the Teddy Morse's Cowboy Harley-Davidson in Beaumont, Sept. 7, as female bikers showed off their sweet rides at the 5th Annual Motorcycle Parade and Rally kickoff.

Organizers initiated a food drive to benefit the Market to HOPE food pantry which provides assistance to households with food insecurity.

Lady bikers from all around the country came down to Southeast Texas with their unique motorcycles. From bright colors to blinding chrome, these ladies came in and showed off their hot rods.

Thornton native Adrian Michelle Bruce has been riding for 13 years and didn't start until she was 46 years old. The bright blue-purple paint mixed with hints of chrome on her bike definitely stood out.

"My thing is all about bling and beauty and bright colors," she said. "I've always loved blue. I wanted it a deep dark blue and purple so it really stands out, and custom made my mirrors, and put some nice chrome rims on there and just make it as outstanding and beautiful to the eye."

Last year the event was held in Hot Springs, Arkansas, and an estimated 1,900 to 2,000 people attended the rally with more than 500 bikers participating in the parade.

Laurie Roberts, who rode from Normangee, Texas, has a Harley Davidson Road King Police Special that she decorated in a glowing teal color mixed with some pink highlights.

"I just like teal, I have another bike that's teal, and a Jeep that's teal," Roberts said. "I asked the painter, I said surprise me. I like teal, do your thing, and he came up with the lace and the pink highlights on it, and I'm in love with it."

On Sept. 9, the ladies cruised to Spindletop Gladys-City Boomtown Museum for the 20-mile parade.

The Ladies in Leather's rally capped off on Sept. 10, with a CMA music and church service. The event attracted around a 1,000 women from all over the country.



Photo package by
Brian Quijada and Ella Gonzalez

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE & DANCE SEASON 2023-2024



ATHENA

A PLAY BY GRACIE GARDNER
DIRECTED BY ALAN BRINCKS

SEPT. 21-23 – 7:30 PM
SEPT. 24 – 2:00 PM

AN UNEXPECTED, QUIRKY COMEDY



The Incredible FOX SISTERS

A PLAY BY JACLYN BACKHAUS
DIRECTED BY CRAIG JOHNSON

OCT. 26-28 – 7:30 PM
OCT. 29 – 2:00 PM



FALL & RECOVERY

FACULTY DANCE CONCERT

NOV. 10 – 7:30 PM
NOV. 11 – 2:00 PM, 7:30 PM



LANDSCAPE *With* WEAPON

LU THEATRE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

A PLAY BY JOE PENHALL
DIRECTED BY AMELIA FISCHER

FEB. 1-3 – 7:30 PM
FEB. 4 – 2:00 PM

A PSYCHOLOGICAL MURDER MYSTERY



Dangerous CORNER

A PLAY BY J.B. PRIESTLEY
DIRECTED BY SOPHIA WATT

APRIL 11-13 – 7:30 PM
APRIL 14 – 2:00 PM



DANCE *Unleashed*

LU DANCE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

APRIL 26 – 7:30 PM
APRIL 27 – 2:00 PM, 7:30 PM



COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS & COMMUNICATION

LAMAR UNIVERSITY

Department of Theatre & Dance



For tickets, visit lamar.edu/lutdtix
or call (409) 880-2250

Building a future

Lamar athletics honors past achievement while looking ahead

Keagan Smith
UP sports editor

Throughout the 100 years since Lamar University's founding in 1923, sports have played an integral part of the college's story.

Whether it's baseball's dominant run under legendary manager Jim Gilligan, men's basketball making national waves in the late '70s and early '80s, or cross-country and golf ripping off dynastic runs across the 2000s, there's plenty of history in the Cardinal record books.

"There's certainly a long history of traditions and success here," LU athletic director Jeff O'Malley said. "We're looking to build upon the success that we've had, and take it to the next level to give our student athletes the best possible experience here.

"I really haven't stepped back to look at my job as the guardian of tradition, but when you put it that way, we certainly are. It's certainly a proud way to think of it."

Respecting a century of Lamar athletic history is a point of focus, especially this year. Team marketing materials have incorporated the centennial logo into their content, and Lamar's football helmets will sport a commemorative decal alongside the university logo as a nod to the Beaumont community.

O'Malley also recognized the importance of connecting with former Cardinal athletes and making them feel they're still part of the Lamar family.

"We love to welcome them back with open arms and show them around," O'Malley said. "They built the foundation of what Lamar athletics is now. If we can show them what their participation and success did at the time, and they see what we're doing now, (it makes) them feel proud about what they've done, I think that certainly goes a long way."

The athletics program can't live exclusively in the past, though. Being present in the moment and preparing for the future are both crucial. Thus, O'Malley and Lamar University President Jaime Taylor are working together to chase on-field success while improving the experience of student-athletes and fans alike.

Lamar's transition back to the Southland Conference a year and a half ago was an encouraging sign for the future.

Since then, women's soccer and track & field have claimed conference championships. Cardinal baseball, cross-country, and women's basketball are consistent challengers. Football and men's hoops have reason to be optimistic with the direction the programs are headed.

Off the playing field, significant improvements have been made to LU athletics facilities. Provost Umphrey Stadium received an impressive new video board and sound system. Upgraded lighting and a new basketball court were installed at the Montagne Center, with video board and sound system updates yet



UP photo by Brian Quijada

The Lamar University football team takes the field pre-game before facing the Idaho University Vandals, Aug. 31, at Provost Umphrey Stadium in Beaumont.

to come.

"Those things help to present a first class atmosphere for our student-athletes and for our fans," O'Malley said. "If you're trying to be first class, you need to present yourself in a first-class manner. That's certainly something that we want to do."

Of course, the landscape of college athletics is constantly changing — and folks, it moves fast.

Television and streaming rights have created a world where other universities throw out longstanding tradition and regional conference ties in the pursuit of the almighty dollar. Texas and

Oklahoma are on their way to the Southeastern Conference and the Atlantic Coastal Conference is welcoming Pacific-coast schools. Realignment has decimated the PAC-12, which should more appropriately be named the PAC-4.

Meanwhile, name, image and likeness laws allow players to profit off their talents. While this much-needed change was a long time coming, it creates a perhaps unfair advantage for the schools with the wealthiest donors.

The NCAA's rapid transformation leaves the future of college athletics in somewhat murky waters. Frankly, it's impossible to predict what other changes may occur in the

coming years.

"I don't know what the future is going to look like," O'Malley said. "I think there's a lot of people that feel the same way, especially with NIL and conference realignment. The one thing that I'm certain of is that it's going to continue to evolve.

"But from our standpoint of where Lamar is in the Southland, I think we're in a really good spot with our league under the leadership of Commissioner (Chris) Grant. We have a lot of like-minded institutions in our league. We seem to be on the same page a lot and I think that bodes really well for the cohesiveness of the Southland Conference."

Lamar sports through the ages

Compiled from UP archives

Like most beginnings of collegiate athletic programs 100 years ago, the programs of South Park Junior College made its debut without much fanfare other than the interest created in Beaumont.

Lamar's athletic success began with a football victory as SPJC beat South Park High School's Greenies 25-0 on

Sept. 29, 1923, at the old Magnolia Ball Park, which stood at Magnolia Avenue and Hazel Street.

Albeit against a high school team, SPJC's first victory seems a spectacular feat when player size is considered. The heaviest athlete on the '23 team weighed a scant 155 pounds, and he played the quarterback position.

The junior college had

fielded a football team from 1923 to 1926, playing two or three games a year against area high schools and the freshmen teams of four-year colleges. But after a couple of seasons of low attendance, football was dropped after the '26 season.

In 1932, football was reinstated at Lamar, and young John Gray, who was in South Park's first class and would later serve as the university's president, was hired as head coach and athletic director. Gray changed the team's name from the original "Brahmas" to the "Cardinals," and the team colors from maroon and gray to red and blue. (Later, during the '60s, the colors were changed to red and white.)

Football reigned at Lamar in the early 1930s with John Gray's 1932 team posting an 8-1 record and the 1933 and 1934 clubs advancing to the junior college state finals.

Despite the success, athletic monies were hard to come by. The students recorded their fundraising attempts to garner money for letter sweaters, as donated by Gray and jerseys. They had at least four fundraisers in the school year. Like the scores of the early games, these fundraisers were sometimes successful and other times not.

Despite winning multiple Southland titles in the late 1970s and early 80s, football was dropped following the 1989 season. The program returned in 2010. LU advanced to the FCS playoffs in 2018.

Lamar's rise from the dust of South Park Junior College's Magnolia Park facility to a level of competing against the nation's major universities on the NCAA's Division I level tells quite a success story. Historically, the Cardinals



The Lamar University football poses for a team photo in 1933. UP file photo

have been strong in basketball, even making appearances in the NCAA's "Elite Eight" during the 1979-80 season behind the coaching of Billy Tubbs and the strong play of Alvin Brooks, Clarence Kea, and Mike Oliver, a first round NBA pick. The 1990-91 women's basketball team made it's own "Elite Eight" run. Since then, the Lady Cards have won four conference championships.

Successes had on the baseball diamond are extensive. Al Vincent proved instrumental in reviving the baseball program in 1971, and his protégé, Jim Gilligan, made winning a spring tradition at Lamar. The Cardinals have claimed 10 Southland regular season championships since then, also appearing in the NCAA tournament 13 times.

Other sports have also seen glory days. Cardinal golf holds

24 Southland titles and won the conference seven out of 10 years between 2001 and 2009. Women's golf also leads the Southland Conference with seven team championships.

Track & field and cross-country have also been a point of Cardinal pride. Lamar's men have won a Southland-leading 16 combined indoor/outdoor track & field championships. Women's track & field won their first-ever SLC title in 2023.

Lately, women's soccer has become one of Lamar's most accomplished teams. The program was instated in 2007. The Cardinals won the SLC regular season and tournament championships in 2017, 2019 and 2022.

LU has maintained a tradition of excellence through the ages, a tradition that looks set to continue.



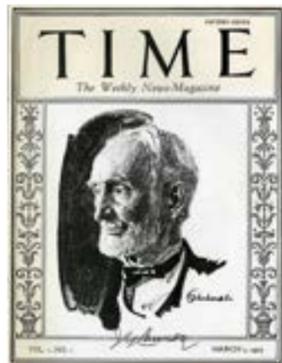
The Lady Cardinals celebrate the Southland Conference tournament win, Nov. 6, 2022, in Natchitoches, Louisiana. UP file photo



Lamar's Mike Oliver tries to find an opening through the Southwestern Louisiana defense during a game in the 1979 season. UP file photo

1923 LANDMARKS

Of course, 1923 is most known globally for the birth of what is now Lamar University. But here are a few other notable events from that year.

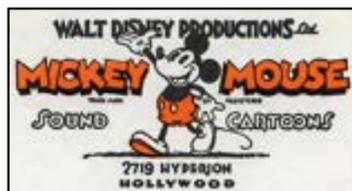


Time magazine publishes its first issue

The first Yankee Stadium opens in the Bronx



Game show host Bob Barker is born on Dec. 12 (Barker died Aug. 26 at age 99)



Brothers Roy and Walt found the Walt Disney company

Woodrow Wilson broadcasts the first presidential radio address



Tutankhamun's burial chamber is discovered by Howard Carter



The first operation on a brain tumor with a local antiseptic is performed

Warner Bros film studio is established



The Hollywood sign was put up in Los Angeles and read "Hollywoodland"

LUTV NEWS
CAMPUS | COMMUNITY | CULTURE

Find us on

@lutvnews @_LUTVNews LUTV News & Media Online

91.3 KVLU
YOUR PUBLIC RADIO STATION
Proudly broadcasting from Lamar University

Stay Connected

Band celebrates LU history



Showcase of Southeast Texas plays popular hits

Maddie Sims
UP editor

The Lamar University marching band is a staple of campus life, from football to pep rallies, and every school celebration event.

The band was originally known as “The Grandest Band in the Land,” but in 1989, when LU’s football program was stopped, the marching band went with it. However, when football returned in the fall of 2010, the band marched back,

now rebranded as “The Showcase of Southeast Texas.”

In 2014, Eric Shannon was hired as the director of athletic bands.

“I think Lamar already had a fantastic foundation for the band, with the history that we have with Dr. Barry Johnson and Dr. (Jimmy) Simmons,” Shannon said. “And then before all of them, the man that really kicked it all off was Charles Pete Wiley. We have been able to build a lot upon that, having the band back.”

When Shannon arrived at Lamar, the band had only returned for a few years, which meant everything was still brand new, he said.

“There wasn’t a pregame show that we were set on,” Shannon said. “There were not a lot of traditional elements either, like the spell out cadence like we came up with, ‘Showcase Fanfare,’ which a student wrote, and ‘NRG.’ All of it got made up over the first four or five years. Since then, we’ve just continued to tweak it

every year.

“We’ve had the same band staff together for several senior classes, so that consistency helps us not necessarily build on top of history, but build on top of ourselves. From what (we’ve) learned going through this journey over and over and over again, is to try to make things more comfortable or more efficient.”

This year, the Showcase’s halftime show is called “Centennial Celebration,” with music and narration telling Lamar’s history. Music includes “Into the Woods,” “Let’s Get It Started/It Don’t Mean A Thing,” “Cadillac of the Skies,” “Fortunate Son/Disco Inferno/Thriller,” and “Till the World Ends.” Each of piece has a specific era in mind, and how Lamar played its role throughout the past century.

“Picking this show was really hard, but I knew that this was an opportunity that I didn’t want to miss,” Shannon said. “I think, in a lot of people’s psychology, if something’s 100 years old, there’s even more gravitas, and it’s a bigger deal. So, I put pressure on myself to find something that could really celebrate our centennial, but do it in a way that was enjoyable for the current band students, for the majority of the target audience, or people going to the band competitions, where we will perform exhibitions.

“We want it to be like a college band, meaning that we played recognizable music. But a lot of music that would be really recognizable to people now wouldn’t really be from the 1920s, ’30s or ’40s. You’d have to start in the ’50s or after.”

Shannon said the process took about six weeks, as he listened to a lot of different music, wanting to use pieces from different arrangers.

“I wanted to start with my favorite arranger right now, Scott Boerma,” he said. “He’s done a lot of great arranging for drum corps and for college bands. We’ve played a lot of his pieces over the years and I really wanted it to be how he does them, but there was going to be so much complexity in fusing the different sources of music, that he couldn’t take on the project. But, he had a student, Andy Putnam, that he trusts with arrangement, and he let him modify his own preexisting ones. ‘Into The Woods’ was one of his originals, which we played a different part of that movement in 2017.”

The band will tease their pieces during Centennial Fest, 4 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Sept. 17, in the Quad. But for the full effect, one should check out the routine during Cardinal football home games.

For more information, visit lamar.edu/marchingband.



UP photos by Brian Quijada

Members of Lamar University’s marching band, the Showcase of Southeast Texas, wearing their summer uniforms because of the blistering heat, perform at half time of LU’s opening football game, Aug. 31, at Provost Umphrey Stadium.

WE WANT YOU!

Turn your class essays into published work.
A great way to build a professional portfolio

if you are interested in writing,
photography, graphic design,
advertising, or social media...

The UP is the place for you!

UNIVERSITY PRESS

YOUR student newspaper

www.lamaruniversitypress.com

LAMAR UNIVERSITY®

CELEBRATING A CENTURY OF LEADERS



APPLY NOW
lamar.edu