Submissions policy:
Email: skyline@sulross.edu
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The Skyline reserves the right to edit letters and submissions for grammar, spelling, space, clarity, profanity/obscenity or libel. We reserve the right to refuse any submissions the staff deems necessary. The opinions expressed on these pages are not necessarily those of Sul Ross State University or the Skyline staff. No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored by Sul Ross State University on any basis prohibited by applicable law, including but not limited to race, color, nationality, origin, religion, sex, or disability.
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February 3rd, 2017, after almost four months, the search for missing Sul Ross student Zuzu Verk came to an end.

Verk’s remains were found by a passing Border Patrol agent while working on equipment in the Sunny Glen area, just west of Alpine. Less than 24 hours later, Robert Fabian, Verk’s former boyfriend and prime suspect, was arrested on a warrant for “tampering with physical evidence and concealing a human corpse.”

Fabian’s best friend, Chris Estrada, is being held in a Phoenix jail under similar charges and is currently awaiting extradition. Estrada was arrested last month for driving while intoxicated and evading police. Following his release, he moved to Arizona.

According to the Brewster County Sheriff’s Department, more charges are expected. Some members of Fabian’s family have been named as persons of interest.

Using dental records, the remains were confirmed to be that of Zuzu’s Feb. 6. After the confirmation of Zuzu’s death, her fellow Sul Ross students tied purple and green ribbons—her favorite colors—to almost every tree on the Sul Ross campus. Gunner Gardner, former president of the Rotaract Club, also covered the Lobo sculpture on the fountain in purple and green to honor Zuzu.

A memorial celebrating Zuzu’s life was held in the outdoor amphitheater last Thursday, Feb. 9, with over 500 people in attendance, including the Verk family and many law enforcement officers who had worked on the case. Zuzu’s favorite musical selections, especially from the Beatles, were played as students, residents, friends, and the ever-present news media gathered. Those attending received green and purple ribbons to wear and were able to leave messages to her family on large blank posters set up at the amphitheater entrances.

At the conclusion of the memorial, SRSU President Bill Kibler announced that the outdoor amphitheater would be named the “Zuzu Verk Memorial Amphitheater.”

A scholarship is also being created in Zuzu’s name for natural resource management students at Sul Ross. The Verk family requested that, instead of sending flowers, donations should be made to the scholarship fund, and can be sent to: Zuzu Verk Memorial Scholarship Fund in Natural Resource Management, c/o SRSU Office of External Affairs, PO Box C-114, Alpine, TX 79832.
A tribute to Zuzu Verk

By Rainey Miller, Co-Editor

I took statistics with Zuzu, and we’d both laughed and griped about that class; neither one of us really wanted to be there, we’d agreed, but it had to be done! Bigger and better things awaited us in the field of science.

It was in conservation biology last semester that I got to know Zuzu more, as we talked about our mutual passion for being outside. I shared my stories about working in Yellowstone (just in housekeeping, I’d admitted, but it was still something!), and she told me about doing trail maintenance in Davis Mountains State Park.

We both thought that each other’s job was cooler. She was exuberant as she talked, clearly fascinated by nature and people; I wanted to be like her, to develop not only the outdoors experience but the social grace, too, with which she carried herself.

When she came to class, she lit up the room.

On that first day of statistics she stepped in like a beacon of color, smiling hugely, and people unashamedly stared—she looked strong-willed and ready to learn. Ready for anything.

Over the next year, I saw her not only as a model student but a model person, in general, and I wanted to know how she came to be like that, always happy and bright.

Then I talked to her, and I knew—from her voice, her eyes, I could see it—that she just loved life. Exploring. She ate it up and asked for more, she wanted to experience everything, and I couldn’t wait to find out all she had to say ... but, I had to wait until next time, as I was going to be late for work.

I never got the next time.

I’ve been following this case from day one, combing the news, refreshing Facebook, even questioning people around town about Zuzu. I cried hard and searched the hills behind the school and I prayed; though I’m not religious, I prayed to every deity I’d heard of in hopes that this would all blow over in a day or two.

But, it didn’t. I don’t think it ever will.

Zuzu, I just thought I should put it in writing: you inspired me. I guess that might be kind of weird since I never got to know you that well, but you did; you inspired a lot of people just by being yourself. So, be at peace, wherever your spirit wanders, and just know that you’re always on everyone’s minds. We’ll keep your memory alive in stories and in kindness, in ribbons and the color green. You will be missed.

Peace, Rainey
Fellow students and friends remember Zuzu at the Feb. 9 memorial at Sul Ross. Photo by Cheryl Zinsmeyer

Lori Verk, Zuzu’s mother, and Zuzu’s brother Miles were comforted by friends at the memorial. Photo by Magaly De Leon

Fellow students and friends remember Zuzu at the Feb. 9 memorial at Sul Ross. Photo by Cheryl Zinsmeyer
Shedding light on Seasonal Affective Disorder

By Vashti Armendariz, Reporter

For most, winter brings the excitement of a new season and holiday cheer. For those suffering from Seasonal Affective Disorder, however, this may not be the case.

Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD, is a condition in which an individual feels persistent and prolonged bouts of depression in association with a season. Although there are a few cases linked to the summer and spring months, more common occurrences are in the fall and winter.

While SAD is unique in that it occurs in seasonal cycles, it is still considered a category of depression. A person must experience typical symptoms of SAD for two years before an accurate diagnosis can be made.

Symptoms for winter SAD include having low energy, hypersonnia (extreme sleepiness), overeating, weight gain, craving for carbohydrates, and social withdrawal. Poor appetite and weight loss, insomnia, agitation, restlessness, anxiety, and, in more serious cases, episodes of violent behavior are symptoms of summer-related SAD.

While the main causes remain unknown, some studies have linked the disorder with poor serotonin regulation, overproduction of melatonin, and vitamin D deficiencies.

There are a number of treatments for seasonal affective disorder. Because some techniques can be used simultaneously, the treatment plan may vary from person to person.

Medications, such as bupropion and other anti-depressants, may be administered.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, or CBT, may also be used as a form of treatment. For those suffering from seasonal affective disorder, CBT involves the identification and change in thought patterns or behavior that are linked to depression.

Although vitamin D supplements are not used independently, their use helps lessen the effects of seasonal affective disorder.

One of the most common treatments of winter SAD is light therapy. This treatment has been used since the 1980’s, and has proven to be effective at relieving the effects of this disorder. As winter days grow shorter, people are exposed to less sunlight each day. The theory behind the treatment is that light boxes supplement the lack of sunlight an individual needs to sustain a healthy mental state. Light boxes offer soft-white fluorescent light that is approximately 20 times greater than indoor lighting. Patients sit in front of a light box for 20 to 60 minutes a day, depending on the severity of the ailment.

Sul Ross Counseling & Accessibility Services has a therapy light which is free to use without an appointment.

If you observe symptoms of seasonal affective disorder in yourself or a loved one, it’s a good idea to seek a counselor. SAD can be simple to treat and may not require prescription medication.

For more information on treatments, red flags, and how to help a loved one, contact Counseling & Accessibility Services on campus at 432-837-8203. You can also visit their office in Ferguson Hall room 112 to schedule an appointment. The Sul Ross counseling staff is knowledgeable and happy to help.
Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

What is it?

"Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that comes and goes with the seasons typically starting in the late fall and early winter and going away during the spring and summer."¹

Who does it affect?

- SAD affects an est. 10 million Americans.¹
- Those with a family history of depression are more likely to develop SAD.¹
- Women are diagnosed with SAD 4x’s more often than men.¹

What are the symptoms?

- Irritability
- Depression
- Weight Gain
- Social Withdrawal
- Trouble Sleeping
- Difficulty Concentrating
- Loss of interest in activities
- Sad, Anxious Feelings
- Suicidal Thoughts
- Low Energy
- Oversleeping

Where can I get help?

Feel free to stop by or call the Sul Ross Counseling Center to talk to a counselor there. Consultations are paid for in your tuition.

432.837.8203 - Ferguson Hall, Room 112

Scan the QR Code for Online screening for through the Sul Ross Counseling webpage

¹ - National Institute of Mental Health
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Nominations sought for Man, Woman of the Year

It’s time to select senior nominees for the Sul Ross State University’s 2017 Man and Woman of the Year. This is the highest honor a Sul Ross senior can achieve.

Each spring, the university president recognizes the Man and Woman of the Year at the Honors Convocation.

Beginning last year, the nomination process was changed to allow each active student organization to nominate one woman and one man for the designation.

Organizations interested in nominating seniors for these awards should contact Lori Conant, administrative assistant to the provost, for nomination instructions at lconant@sulross.edu, 432-837-8036, or BAB 203.

To be eligible, the student must be a senior with a grade point average of 3.0 or higher and must demonstrate qualities of good citizenship and leadership.

Nomination packets are due to the provost no later than Friday, March 24 to be eligible. The nomination form can be found at www.sulross.edu/page/243/academic-affairs.

This year’s Honors Convocation will be held Monday, April 17.
Yee hah!

Cowboys invade Sul Ross next week

By Vashti Armendariz, Reporter

Don’t be surprised when the Sul Ross campus is invaded by hundreds of cowboys and cowgirls in full regalia next week. It’s their yearly migration to a long-standing event that pays homage to all things cowboy.

For 31 years, Sul Ross has been host to the annual Texas Cowboy Poetry Gathering. This year’s event, held Feb. 24-26, is a commemoration of the cowboy lifestyle. Live poetry readings, night performances, and the ever-famous chuck wagon breakfast draw in a variety of people from all Western walks of life.

Friday and Saturday start off at 7:30 am with a traditional outdoor cowboy breakfast. Come enjoy a freshly brewed cup o’ joe ’round a campfire! Breakfast is cooked fresh by cowboys using an authentic chuck wagon, and includes a plate of eggs and Dutch-oven baked biscuits with gravy. Admission is $5 per person.

Panel discussions are an important part of the Cowboy Poetry Gathering. Several panel sessions are scheduled each day, with sometimes as many as nine panels running in tandem. The panel sessions are free.

The poetry competition is another hallmark of the Texas Cowboy Poetry Gathering. Each year, contestants from grades K-12 submit poems. Submissions are reviewed by a committee, and first, second and third place plaques are awarded to winners in each level.

Students are encouraged to read their poems in the “Young Uns” session. The live-reading session is free and takes place next Saturday, Feb. 25, at 11 am in BAB 302.

Live performances—including cowboy poems, songs and throat-slashing yodels—pay tribute to everything cowboy and the back-breaking, but fulfilling, ranching lifestyle.

Join country singer-songwriter Trinity Seely and yodeler Kristyn Harris for their performance on Friday, Feb. 24. The following day, legendary singer and poet Red Steagall and singer-songwriter Dan Roberts take the stage. Both performances are held in Marshall Auditorium at 1 pm, and admission is $10 per person.

Also in Marshall Auditorium, live performances of singing, yodeling and poetry readings are held nightly at 7:30 pm. Admission to each two-hour session is $15 per person.

The Cowboy Poetry Gathering provides students the opportunity to enjoy a unique Texas event that celebrates hard work, early mornings, boot spurs and, of course, cowboy poetry.

For more information, visit the Texas Cowboy Poetry Gathering page at texascowboypoetry.com.

*During the Cowboy Poetry Gathering, the day starts with a chuckwagon breakfast. The chuckwagon shown here is like the one cowboys used on the range in years past, although chuckwagons are still being used today in some areas. Chuckwagons traditionally contain a wide selection of outdoor cooking tools, pots, pans, and pantry items. 2016 photo by Vashti Armendariz*
Do you have what it takes to be a McNair Scholar?

By Rainey Miller, Co-Editor

Dominique Vargas, director of the McNair Scholars Program, is looking for three to five students to join the 2017 McNair Summer Research Institute.

This program provides room and board, tuition and fees for three semester hours, and a $2,000 stipend for students who complete all the requirements.

Vargas explains that in addition to conducting research, McNair students “attend events to help expand their knowledge base upon applying to grad school programs.”

For example, Feb. 16 eight students traveled to a McNair Conference at the University of North Texas in Denton. Fabiola Muñiz, Dominic Carrillo, Stephanie Elmore, Adrian Moldenado, Jasmin Quinonez, Yelixza Avila, and Joey Chavez are presenting their research; Jesus Guerrero is also be in attendance, but won’t be presenting.

While at UNT, the students will attend panel discussions and a graduate-school fair.

Later this month, they will take a practice GRE—that’s the Graduate Record Examination, a test which is required for getting in to most grad schools—and, in March, they’ll participate in a research workshop. In May, some of the McNair students will go to “graduate school boot camp,” which entails two days of total immersion in resume writing, filling out applications, GRE prep, and personal statement development. They’ll even get a walk-through of how to identify grad programs, find funding, and connect with faculty members.

To apply for the McNair Scholars Program, you must be an independent, self-motivated student with at least 60 credit hours and a 3.0 GPA. Priority is given to first-generation, low-income and minority students. Contact Vargas at dvargas@sulross.edu or 432-837-8019 for info.
The makings of a show: ‘Cabaret’ edition

By Malyssa Reed, Reporter

Theatre is an art form that everyone can enjoy, but there is a tremendous amount of work that goes on behind the scenes.

The upcoming Sul Ross theatre production is Cabaret, a musical set in Germany during the rise of Adolf Hitler, and the artists behind the musical have been hard at work.

The show is comprised of four teams: The orchestra, also known as “the pit”; the set crew; the costumers; and the actors.

Cabaret’s orchestra is conducted by Dr. Jeffery Meyer, Sul Ross’ director of bands. Meyer also conducts the wind ensemble, and conducted the orchestra for the show Spamalot, last summer’s Theatre of the Big Bend musical production.

The orchestra meets twice a week to rehearse.

While the music is fun and jazzy, Meyer says, “The challenge is that the players are at different levels and the parts are definitely challenging for different people.”

Some of the orchestra members are new to playing in a musical pit orchestra, which will hopefully be a good experience for them and get them interested in participating in future endeavors.

The edition of the show, as well as music, for the Sul Ross production comes from the 1998 revival of Cabaret.

He says, “The orchestration is interesting because it’s hard to know exactly what’s happening,” Meyer said. “We don’t get a full score like conductors of opera orchestras do.

“The original orchestration is a jazz dance band true to the era, but all the string stuff and wind on the recordings are optional parts.”

Meyer is even including two of the student actors, Velazquez and Martinez, to play some of the optional parts in the musical.

“I like things musically that get simplified, stripped down a little and are a little more raw,” he said, explaining his musical choices. “I would rather keep [the orchestration] simple.”

Cabaret begins the week after spring break. The first performance is Saturday, March 25 in Marshall Auditorium.
Making a stand for literacy

By Rainey Miller, Co-Editor

The Avalanche, Alpine’s local newspaper, generously donated several used newspaper vending boxes to Sul Ross State University. Students from the Department of Industrial Technology refurbished the metal cases and the Art Club decorated them; now, they’re starting a new life as miniature libraries.

“You can’t not be without a book,” explained Mary Beth Garrett, librarian at the Alpine Public Library. The goal of the project is to promote literacy, allowing children to have free access to books wherever they go.

Dr. Pat Seawell, who directed the project at Sul Ross, aims to “make a gallery of little free libraries.” So far, the repurposed newsstands have already sprung up at the elementary school, daycare, Unitarian church, doctor’s office, and now the park. More will be coming soon.

“Little Free Library is a nonprofit organization that inspires a love of reading, builds community, and sparks creativity by fostering neighborhood book exchanges around the world,” reads the organization’s website.

Take a book, leave a book—it’s a simple yet elegant concept, and Alpine and Sul Ross are doing their part to help. For more information on the Little Free Library project, visit www.littlefreelibrary.org.

The orchestra for Cabaret is a small jazz dance band that includes the following musicians:

Reed I (alto sax, clarinet): Jim Wright (community member)
Reed II (tenor sax, soprano sax): Steve Kennedy (community member)
Alto Sax: Josh Martinez (student)
Trumpet I: Tim Dzida (student)
Trumpet II: Marcelino Velazquez (student)
Trombone: Max Lannom (dual credit student)
Euphonium: Valentine Shindel (student)
Guitar/Banjo: Nico Westerlink (student)
Piano: Lana Potts (community member, Fort Davis)
Synthesizer: Omar Guerrero (student)
Bass: Ricky De La O (community member)
Drums: Benjamin Guerrero (community member, El Paso)
Post-season berths on line for hoop teams

By Stephen Christopher Castillo, Sports Reporter

Despite road losses last weekend, both the Lobo women's and men's basketball teams can gain berths in the American Southwest Conference post-season tournaments.

The Lady Lobos, 6-9 in ASC West Division play, need either a win in Saturday's (Feb. 18, 1 pm, Gallego Center) regular season finale against visiting Howard Payne, or a loss in either of Hardin-Simmons' contests against Concordia University or the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor. HSU started the week with a 4-10 loop record.

A win against visiting Howard Payne University Saturday (Feb. 18, 3 pm, Gallego Center) will push the Lobo men into post-season play. Both the Yellowjackets and Sul Ross own 8-7 conference records, good for a fourth-place tie in the ASC West Division. Sul Ross defeated HPU in their other meeting this season.

The Lady Lobos fell 77-68 at UMHB Feb. 9 and 72-62 in overtime at Concordia two days later. The men lost 73-62 to the Crusaders and dropped a narrow 97-95 decision to Concordia Saturday.

UMHB outscored the Lady Lobos by 15 points in the first quarter on fast breaks and easy layups.

The Lobos got motivated and scored 23 points in the second quarter to bring them within three points, 28-25, at halftime.

After the break, UMHB was back on the court with some fire to score 29 points, even with Katy Boren tying the game at 28 with a deep three ball.

The Crusader lead drifted into double digits going into the fourth quarter, and UMHB got the victory 77-68.

With the men shooting only 37 percent in their game against the Crusaders, the Lobos were outscored in both halves as UMHB took the win to end the night at 73-62.

Against Concordia, both teams had to win to finish third on the season and a chance to get into the ASC Tournament.

The first quarter belonged to the Lady Lobos after a pair of free throws by Ellyn Avery gave Sul Ross a one-point advantage, 16-15. The Tornados had many 7-0 runs in the second quarter to hold the lead going into halftime, 33-28.

In the last minute of the game the Lady Lobos rode an 8-0 run to tie Concordia at 56 and send the shootout into overtime.

The OT battle went back and forth until Concordia scored 10 unanswered points to end the game in a 72-62 win.

In the men's game, Caleb Thomasson brought his A Game, posting a career high with 36 points and two rebounds short of a double-double.

Even so, the Tornados went almost shot-for-shot against Sul Ross in the first half until Xavier Webb got a three to pull the game away just before the break, 47-37.

The Tornados came back to go on multiple 8-0 stretches to gain on the Lobos. Thomasson put a stop to that with a layup tying the score at 87.

Later in the half the game was pushed to a 95-95 tie with Concordia shooting two at the foul line with seconds left on the clock. The Tornados got the throws to take the lead by two and win, 97-95.
Men’s soccer heading to Sul Ross Fall 2018

By Stephen Christopher Castillo
Sports Reporter

In a Feb. 8 announcement, Athletic Director Bobby Mesker stated that Sul Ross will field an official men’s soccer team starting in the fall 2018 season.

Sul Ross will become the 13th team to offer men’s soccer.

Marquis Muse, current Sul Ross women’s soccer coach, will take on the role of head coach for the men as well.

“Coach Muse has brought our women’s soccer program to not only a competitive level but to its first post season appearance in just its second season. We’re confident that similar strides will be taken with our men’s soccer program,” Mesker said.

Muse has said that he is “looking forward to adding an extra dimension of competition to our athletic program.”

Sul Ross currently sponsors 13 NCAA Division III sports.

Lobos split four games at Tucson Classic; 4-3 for year

Following a 2-2 finish at the Cactus Classic baseball tourney in Tucson, AZ Feb. 10-12, Sul Ross will play an eight-game homestand at Kokernot Field.

Coach Bobby Mesker’s Lobos, 4-3 overall, defeated the University of La Verne 14-11 Friday (Feb.10), tripped Occidental College 9-8 Saturday, then lost 3-0 to the University of the Redlands later in the day.

Sul Ross concluded the tourney Sunday with a 5-4 setback to 22nd-ranked California Lutheran University.

The Lobos face Howard Payne in a pair of doubleheaders Friday and Saturday, Feb. 17-18 at Kokernot Field. On Tuesday, Feb. 21, University of Texas Permian Basin comes to town for a 5 p.m. single game.

A three-game non-conference series against Trinity University Feb. 24-25 (Saturday doubleheader) rounds out this portion of the home schedule.

After winning the final two of a three-game set at the University of Dallas Feb. 3-4, Sul Ross traveled to Tucson and extended their winning streak to four. In the opening game, Ryan Almager and Phillip Russell combined for seven hits and eight runs batted in and Peyton Marett pitched three innings of one-run relief for the win. The Lobos erased a 10-8 deficit with a six-run seventh.

Marett gained the save by inducing a game-ending double play as the Lobos held off Occidental 9-8 in Saturday’s first game.

Led by Johnny Campos’ four hits and two runs scored, Sul Ross built a 9-3 edge before Occidental rallied for five in the ninth. Russell had three hits and Almager two. Cody Remore gained the win, working five innings and allowing two runs.

University of the Redlands scored single runs in the third, sixth and seventh and kept the Lobos off the scoreboard to win Saturday’s second contest. On Sunday, California Lutheran snapped a 4-4 tie with a sixth inning run.

Campos rapped a two-run single for Sul Ross’ first tallies in the second. After falling behind 4-2, the Lobos tied the score in the top of the fifth on Holden Simpson’s single and Jonathan Bigley’s sacrifice fly.

Tennis teams fall in opening matches

By Stephen Christopher Castillo
Sports Reporter

Both Lobo tennis teams traveled to Texas Lutheran University Feb. 11 for their first matches of the season.

Despite the high velocity of both teams, the Bulldogs bested the Lobos in each matchup. The men lost, 5-4, while the Lady Lobos were defeated, 7-2.

Tennis season is just getting started, though, and the Lobos are set to take on Schreiner, LeTourneau and Southwestern universities in Kerrville today and tomorrow (Feb. 17-18).
Lobo softball wins one against UT-Dallas

Bailey Garrett’s six-hit shutout highlighted a 1-3 weekend as the Lady Lobos hosted ASC powerhouse University of Texas at Dallas Feb. 10-11.

Garrett struck out three and did not issue a walk as Sul Ross (2-4, 1-2 ASC) gained a 4-0 win in Friday’s (Feb. 10) second game. UTD (7-1, 2-1) broke a 3-3 tie to win the opener 9-3.

Destanie Hernandez slammed a two-run double and later scored as the Lady Lobos notched three runs in the first inning of Friday’s second game. Sul Ross added an unearned run in the second and Garrett kept UTD off the scoreboard.

The Comets swept Saturday’s doubleheader 13-5 and 7-2. The second game was a non-conference game.

Sul Ross travels to Concordia Feb. 17-18 for a three-game ASC series. Coach Troy Canaba’s team returns home Feb. 21 for a non-conference doubleheader against the University of Texas Permian Basin, then plays University of the Ozarks in a three-game conference set Feb. 24-25 at Lobo Field.
GO LOBOS!

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