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Still working 9 to 5: A lasting legacy

SHELBY SEU
Assistant News Editor

On Aug. 25, many across the country mourned the death of American singer-songwriter, actress and businesswoman, Dolly Parton. Yet, for Omaha's River City Mixed Choir (RCMC), her influence in both music and messages of self-love has had a predominant impact on their performances and community.

"There are a couple of characters that the LGBTQ+ community just sort of have grabbed as their own and she is one of them. Even as not a member herself of the community, she's just been such a strong ally of queer people through her entire career, and she also has these incredible life lessons which are just be yourself," Creighton University's Vice Provost of Faculty and Academic Affairs, Dr. Barron Breland said.

Breland, who also serves as the Dean of Creighton's graduate school, is the current acting Artistic Director of the RCMC. With over 180 members, the RCMC was one of the first Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses to showcase gay and lesbian singers. Their present-day membership is comprised of members across the LGBTQ+ community and their allies.

"One of the things that our director, Dr. Breland, shared a few years ago in an introduction to a concert, especially when we're seeing things like legislation being passed to limit rights of marriage rights, trans-rights, stuff like that, is that our presence on that stage, if you think about it, in Red Nebraska is a protest. We are there despite what's going on in the world around us," RCMC Chorus President John Porter said. "And some people, that I know, are singing on that stage that their family doesn't know their real identity. But they're on that stage without family in the audience or friends in the audience, just because they want to perform. And just being on that stage, I think, is important for the community to see us"

Over the course of the RCMC's 43 seasons, Parton has had a constant appearance in the group's repertoire. Some of their performances include their rendition of her song "9 to 5" at their 2026 Pride Month concert, "Express Yourself: An 80s Celebration," and "Hard Candy Christmas" which they have performed numerous times for their annual holiday performance.

"We always have joked about it every time we sing it, but I would say every other holiday show we've sung 'Hard Candy Christmas.' And people [would] say, 'Oh my God, you're

singing it again,' but it really just tells the story of 'No matter how hard it gets, I'm going to be fine,'" Porter said.

The RCMC continues to include her songs within its upcoming 2027 performances including the "Measure of a Life" concert on Apr. 18 and "A Heartland Hoedown" on Jun. 26, both at the Holland Performing Arts Center.

"We sprinkled Dolly in where Dolly does best," Porter said.

Nevertheless, to Breland and Porter, who not only find value in the music she has created, also echo the significance in her humanitarian contributions. Along with the various donations and establishment of community institutions in which Parton has advocated for the care and love of all humanity, according to the RCMC's Executive Director Katie Kresha, the simple way she carried herself daily continues to have a profound relation to the messages the chorus hopes to share and reinforce.

"In addition to her music and her advocacy, I think Dolly always managed to have fun and not take life too seriously, which is also a great fit for our chorus. She had a freedom and confidence in who she was, regardless of what other people told her she should be. So many of our chorus members have that in common with Dolly and can feel that in her music," Kresha said via email.

From concerts that advocate the importance of awareness and unity against targeted hate and suicide to the performances that are meant to be in celebration and bring communities together, the RCMC has expressed that Parton's songs have been a great fit for many of these topics due to her authenticity and genuine feeling she incorporates into her music.

"What makes Dolly Parton's music incredible is the authentic nature of her storytelling. You can be a great storyteller but when the stories you are talking about are yours, there's a compelling nature to that...She would sing about her challenges, I mean [in] the big song Jolene, there was a real woman that she was nervous about losing her partner too," Breland said. "So, audiences can tell when the stories you're telling are really coming from you. That's what makes the music selection for River City Mixed Choir so interesting because we have these great stories to tell about perseverance, about grit and about what it means to survive...It makes the storytelling so authentic and so personal which speaks to an audience..."

Parton's impact on the community can especially be seen in the reaction of the RC-



PHOTO COURTESY OF THOMAS GRADY PHOTOGRAPHY

Member Logan Steiner performs a solo at River City Mixed Choir's summer 2026 concert.

MC's audience according to Kresha.

"I think the love for Dolly transcends all boundaries, which makes her a hit with audiences. So many of our patrons of all ages have a connection to Dolly and her music, whether directly or through a loved one, that she can always make our audience smile and sometimes even tear up a bit. What I love about Dolly is that her music often moves folks from just feeling emotions into action, because she lived her life by that example," Kresha said via email.

Her impact even left a permanent imprint on the hearts of her listeners, especially for Porter, who not only grew up in Appalachia, near Parton's childhood home, but was across the street from Vanderbilt University, the hospital where Parton had passed.

"I was basically like a few blocks away from where she died, which really hit me hard...So it was, I think, maybe serendipity for me to be there where Dolly passed, on the day she passed. And it inspired me to do something I never thought I would do. I actually went and got a tattoo. And my friends are like, 'Well, you could do it when you get home.' It's like, yeah, but I'm in the place where Dolly passed, on the day that Dolly passed. And there's a tattoo shop beside her hotel that's opening next month. So, I think all of these things have aligned and I just need to do it. So, I got a tattoo," Porter said.

In a similar manner, perhaps with the help of Parton's influence, the RCMC has had an impact on their community right here in Omaha as well.

"We'll get messages that people finally decide to come out after they come to one of our concerts or they have not been getting along with a particular member of their family since they came out and they dragged them, unwillingly, to a concert and that person had their eyes open just a little bit more just by seeing what beauty can be created and what it means to have such a strong community," Breland said.

As the choir continues to prepare for their upcoming performance on Dec. 5, "Tied Up with Strings," at the Holland Performing Arts Center, they continue to provide a place of creativity, self-expression, and unity with each rehearsal and performance.

"[The] RCMC is a welcoming space for the LGBTQ+ community, with many members describing the chorus as being their chosen family. Many members have described the chorus as being the first and sometimes only space they've had that is centered around queer people, allowing them to come and be their true selves," Kresha said via email. "Members have shared that they have finally found the courage to come out to their family for the first time, because they had a queer community to support and guide them through the experience. Singers spend more than 300 hours together rehearsing in a season and we are often performing music that tugs at your emotions, creating a lot of opportunities for authentic connections to form."

A near miss with tragedy, 25 years later

EUGENE CURTIN
Alumini and Friends

Ernie Goss still has the note.
Faded now but still legible, its few words are a permanent reminder of the graciousness of human nature but also of its susceptibility to evil.
The few words are scribbled on the back

of a restaurant ticket. They are from a kindly waitress, who wished Goss and his wife, Jackie, a great visit during their time in New York City and thanked them for visiting the Windows on the World restaurant on the 107th floor of the North Tower of New York City's World Trade Center in lower Manhattan.
It was Friday, Sept. 7, 2001, and the gentility of that note within just a few days

would be countered by a historic act of evil that brought the restaurant, along with the entire World Trade Center, crashing to the ground, taking 2,977 lives. Goss was staying in a Marriott hotel sandwiched between the north and south towers, and but for a coffee-induced sleeplessness would likely have died among the rubble that fateful morning.
He was in New York City in his capacity

as professor of economics at Creighton University, where today he serves as director of Creighton's Economic Forecasting Group and as professor of economics at Creighton's Heider College of Business. He also holds the Jack A. MacAllister Chair in Regional Economics.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM GUTHRIE

Tim Guthrie, Joel Cohen Endowed Chair and professor in Creighton University’s Department of Computer Science, Design, and Journalism, poses for a photograph with his “little brother,” Max, at Fontenelle Forest. Decades later, the pair recreated the photo in the same spot.

Big hearts, bigger bond

BRENDAN REILLY-SUAREZ
News Reporter

40 years ago, a college student named Tim Guthrie made what he calls “one of the best choices he’s ever made.” He joined Big Brothers Big Sisters, and what he thought would only be a year-long commitment ended up becoming a 40-year brotherhood.

“I was one of those skeptical-type people. I wasn’t cynical, but I didn’t think I was ever going to be married or have kids. I wasn’t planning on that stuff. When you’re young, you don’t know what you really have to offer to anything or anybody. And meeting [my ‘little brother’] and hanging out, he would always make you feel like you’re really critical to his life and stuff ... He definitely changed my outlook on things. You end up feeling like you have something to contribute. We also have similar senses of humor which made it fun to joke around,” Guthrie said.

Guthrie, who currently serves as the Joel Cohen Endowed Chair and is a professor in Creighton University’s Department of Computer Science, Design, and Journalism, originally became involved with the organization after returning to Omaha for his undergraduate education at Creighton. He knew lots of people involved in the organization, which is what initially drew him in, as well as the only 1-year “commitment.” When he went down

to the organization’s office, it matched him with his “little brother,” Max.

“Actually, the best decision was the person who matched us. It was a perfect match ... I don’t know what she said, but she matched us because she thought we looked a little bit alike. So, a lot of people actually mistake us for actual brother[s]. Not anymore now,” Guthrie said.

The Big Brothers Big Sisters organization formed in 1977 when Big Sisters International and the Big Brothers Association merged. According to the Big Brothers Big Sisters of America website, the main mission of the organization is to help “create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth.” Many youth participants within the program gain various benefits, from personal to academic.

“Youth in the program often see improved academic performance, increased self-confidence and reduced risky behaviors. Having a consistent, caring adult mentor helps them build stronger social skills and envision a brighter future,” Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Midlands (Midlands BBBS) said, via an organization news release.

Guthrie himself brought this mission to life. In his time with Max, Midlands BBBS would provide fun activities for them like bowling, putt-putt golf, Fontanelle Forest – a

TURN TO “A” PAGE 3



Weekly Campus Safety Report

This is a selection of incidents chosen by the Editor in Chief and is not a comprehensive weekly report. The full report is compiled in the Daily Crime Log which anyone can access in the Public Safety office located at 2222 Burt St.

- 1

August 22 - 7:06 p.m.

Public Safety observed that several vehicles in Dental Patient Lot C had been broken into. Further investigation revealed other vehicles in the same area in the same condition.
- 2

August 26 - 11:05 p.m.

A student reported a non-affiliate entering vehicles in the Magis Hall Lot. The suspect then stole a vehicle from a nearby street. OPD stopped the vehicle and arrested the suspect.

- 3

August 29 - 8:49 p.m.

Public Safety was called to an accident between a Lime scooter and a vehicle at 20th and Cuming. Individual was transported by OFD to UNMC.
- 4

September 1 - 4:32 p.m.

A student reported a man in a vehicle, parked that made them feel uncomfortable the previous night and the day of. Contact was made with the driver, a Sodexo employee, who parks in that location every day. (Not Pictured)

A match four decades strong

Continued from Page 2

place they frequented during the program, and when reuniting. These activities allowed the two to bond like real brothers, who are still connected 40 years later.

“Every time we were able to meet, I was just always glad that I was able to [spend time with him.] It was just incredibly rewarding,” Guthrie said.

At the same time, as stated by Midland BBBS, their youth recipients were not the only ones benefitting from the program.

“For mentors, the experience is just as rewarding. Bigs frequently report strengthened leadership and communication skills, greater empathy and a deeper sense of purpose and fulfillment from knowing they’ve made a lasting difference in a young person’s life,” Midlands BBBS said via an organization news release.

According to Midlands BBBS, “Youth in BBBS programs are: 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs, 27% less likely to begin us-

ing alcohol, 52% less likely to skip school and 33% less likely to engage in physical altercations.” However, the data they don’t include is the impact it has on the big brothers and big sisters paired with the youth.

“I didn’t expect it to be as rewarding as it was. I just thought, ‘Oh let’s see. This [is] going to be an interesting thing,’ but I think I kept getting as much out of it as [Max] was,” Guthrie said.

Tim and Max are one of the numerous examples of the longevity and impact the program has on its participants.

“We still talk all the time; he lives in New York now. It’s really nice to see him go from the life that he had when he was young to how he’s living now,” Guthrie said.

Guthrie ended the interview with a message to those that may be contemplating their participation with the program.

“If anybody reading this has ever thought of joining Big Brothers Big Sisters, they’re not going to regret it. It’s going to be one of the best choices they ever make,” Guthrie said.

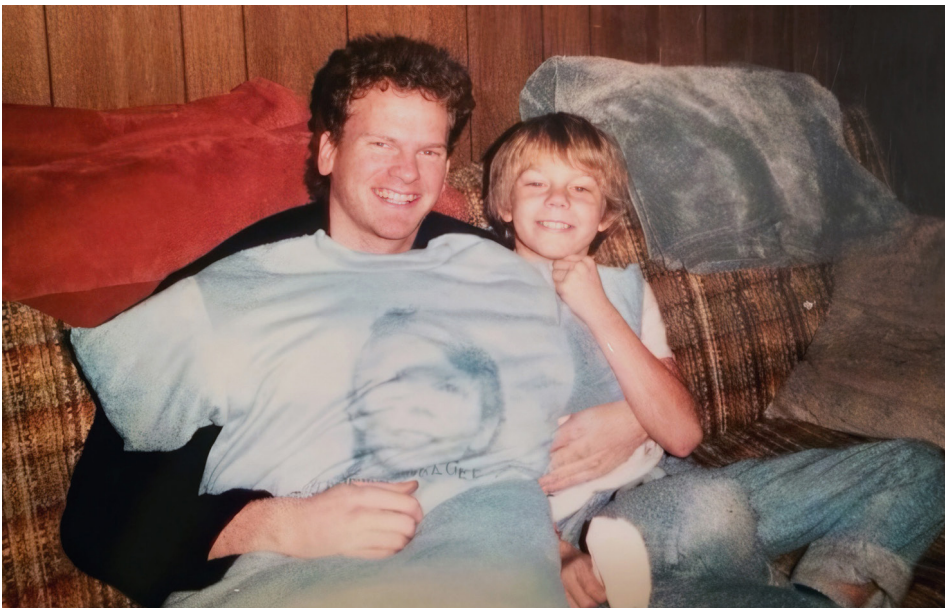


PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM GUTHRIE

After about a year together, Max and his mother made a T-shirt featuring Max’s face for Tim.

The stories behind the sculptures

MARIA CONGER
News Reporter

For Professor Littleton Alston, MFA, art is deeply tied to the stories it tells.

His story began after middle school, when



Littleton Alston, MFA
Creighton University Professor

he volunteered as a safety patrol guard. One snowy winter day, he rescued black-and-white copies of National Geographic from being discarded by the librarian. He dragged the magazines 10 blocks home, stuffing them inside his coat.

Using pencils and paper from his absent father, Alston spent hours in the basement sketching scenes from the magazines.

“I wanted to draw so much,” Alston recalls. “So, I started really loving it.”

Recognizing her son’s self-taught talent, Alston’s mother created a makeshift cardboard portfolio and worked with the middle school principal to arrange his transfer to Duke Ellington School of the Arts. He easily passed the admissions exam by drawing a still life using his familiar method of pencil and paper.

Graduating at the top of his class earned Alston a scholarship to study sculpture at Virginia Commonwealth University, a rare achievement given his circumstances.

“It was all new territory,” Alston remembers. “We were coming from another planet.”

Between work-study, a late-night job at a grocery store, classes and finding time to sleep, Alston’s life was hectic.

“I learned how to try and balance doing as much as I could,” Alston said.

After college, Alston attended a graduate program at the Maryland Institute College of Art before moving his story to Creighton, where he has served as a sculpture professor in the Fine and Performing Arts program since 1990.

Anika Roddy, a studio art and art history major, is taking Sculpture I with Alston this semester. She said his positive energy in the classroom contributes to his message that art is a form of storytelling.

“He’s this amazing storyteller,” she said. “It is such a cool quality of this very wise professor, because you feel like he’s a mentor in a lot of ways and really sees you.”

Alston’s storytelling is on display at Creighton in sculptures such as “The Flame” and “St. Ignatius.” According to his Public Art Omaha profile, his larger-than-life sculptures of Martin Luther King Jr. and Bob Gibson stand across the city. His work also extends to Washington, D.C.’s National Statuary Hall, where Pulitzer Prize-winning Nebraska author Willa Cather proudly represents the state.

Most recently, Alston created a sculpture for Loyola University Chicago depicting Sister Jean Dolores Schmidt, which sits on the Jesuit campus after Alston’s careful production.

Reimagining someone’s life and legacy through sculpture is an intricate process. It requires researching photographs from different stages of a person’s life, selecting an appropriate age to represent, perfecting the likeness, creating molds, casting and scaling the sculpture and selecting its final patina.

Alston intentionally weaves the subject’s story into the sculpture’s form. He seated the sculpture of Sister Jean so students can sit beside it and coated it in light gold to give it a vibrant, commanding presence. He also preserved Sister Jean’s calming spirit through the sculpture’s hands, which hold a basketball — a symbol Alston likens to God’s steady hands holding Earth.

“You also think about how you capture their soul in their eyes, and in their posture. There’s only one person like that that’s ever lived on this Earth,” he said. “As a sculptor, I think my task is really to try and do justice to what God has created.”

Alston instills this perspective and approach to storytelling in his students through his teaching.

“Sculpture is something that is a gift that you give,” he said. “I want to appreciate the wonder and beauty of each individual and try to recreate that gift that they’ve been given: life.”

A faded note, an unforgettable day

Continued from Page 1

A research paper Goss wrote for the National Association of Business Economics had been named “Paper of the Year,” and he was invited to receive an award at the association’s 43rd annual meeting held from Sept. 8 to Sept. 11, 2001.

The award ceremony was held Sept. 10, the evening before the conference’s concluding events the next day.

“My wife and I got there on the Friday before the Tuesday that would become 9/11,” Goss recalls. “We had a beautiful evening.

“We went to Windows on the World, which was the most beautiful restaurant I had ever been in simply because of the view. We were situated so that we were looking up Manhattan from Wall Street. The waitress, who I remember was from the Bahamas, was very nice and she wrote on the back of the ticket, ‘I hope you have a great visit in New York and thank you for being with us.’

“She might well have been one of those who died. Those people working in Windows

on the World did not live.”

Jackie Goss, due to family responsibilities, returned to Omaha on Sept. 10 while her husband stayed to receive his award before leaving the hotel for a mid-morning flight to Des Moines, where he had a Sept. 11 speaking engagement with a travel industry association. That evening, Goss says — the evening of Sept. 10 — he drank coffee, which he almost never does. A restless night ensued, followed by an early morning decision to pack up and leave early.

Had Jackie stayed for the award ceremony, he says, it is almost certain they would have been in their hotel room when the steel and concrete rained down.

“I have thought about this a lot,” Goss says. “My wife works out, and on top of the Marriott there, at the World Trade Center, you can run on a treadmill while watching planes fly into LaGuardia. If she had been working out, which is what she would have been doing if she had stayed, she would have seen the plane when it hit. Now, that’s just hard to imagine.”

Those who remember that dark day will

recall the confusion that reigned as aircraft all across the nation were grounded in response to fears that other attacks might join the assaults on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and, apparently, on the Capitol building before passengers crashed a third hijacked plane into a field in Pennsylvania.

Having left his hotel before the checkout clerks were at their stations, no record existed of Goss’ departure, and the conference organizers, assuming the worst, called Jackie to tell her of the terrible possibility that her husband might have died in the rubble. Having already heard from her husband, however, she was able to put them at ease.

The surrealness of the day remains with Goss.

“We got grounded in Saint Louis, and I didn’t know why,” he says. “I heard the attendants saying, ‘And they did what?’ Everybody had to get off the plane. I just sat back there and heard them saying, ‘They attacked what?’ I thought it was some kind of nuclear attack; I just didn’t know.”

The truth emerged in the bar at the St. Louis airport, where the television news was

full of reports of the terrorist attacks. And then the grounded planes began swooping in.

“It was eerie to watch all the planes being grounded,” Goss recalls. “It wasn’t like normal, where one lands and gets off the taxiway and then another one lands. No, no, one plane did not get off the runway till the other one landed. It was boom, boom, boom, landing.

“That was obviously crazy. But then we learned that everything was being shut down, the whole nation was shutting down.”

Back at the World Trade Center, where many of the approximately 300 conference attendees were listening to a concluding address, the first plane hit the north tower.

Goss, by now almost 1,000 miles away, looked on in horror.

“It was horrible,” he says. “Worse than horrible, people were jumping from the towers.”

And the waitress?

“I still have her note,” Goss says. “It’s quite faded now. She might have died. I don’t know. I wish I knew.”

‘It all happens here’: NE State Fair



SAM GIANFRANCISCO/THE CREIGHTONIAN

Nebraska's state fair was full of livestock shows, local art, and passion for the gathering and message that the state presents. Kids of all ages are invited to lean in to their interests and talents.

GRETA WALLER Assistant Sports Editor

The smell of roasted corn drifts past the neon signs for Outlaw Fries, Slush Factory and Pizza Hut. Live music carries across the fairgrounds. A street-side magician works a small crowd, and the Sky Tram keeps moving overhead. Everywhere there are bright colors, people, music and food.

Then the smell changes.

Inside the livestock barns, the air is thick with hay and manure. Industrial fans run overhead while cattle and goats make noise from their pens. Families sit in folding chairs beside their animals, some eating snacks and some watching a portable television showing high school football. A few people nap in their chairs between events. Kids in dark red 4-H shirts move through the aisles, the words “It all happens here!” printed across the back. For the kids in these barns, the shirts are not exactly exaggerating.

One of the signs in the barn reads, “Stay humble, hustle hard.”

Daryl Nelson, a cattle farmer from Saline County, watches his six-year-old grandson work nearby. The boy picks up a 48-inch shovel to help clean the pen, the handle taller than his small frame.

“Don’t just stand around,” Nelson says, jokingly.

The boy gets back to work, and Nelson watches him with the kind of attention that suggests he has heard that line before.

For many of the young people showing livestock at the Nebraska State Fair, the competition is only one part of the experience. The fair works with Nebraska 4-H and Nebraska Future Farmers of America (FFA) to hold contests in beef, swine, sheep and goats, among other species. Exhibitors are automatically entered in the showmanship category for each livestock species they enter, with judges looking at the exhibitor’s preparation, poise and ability to handle the animal. Other classes focus on the animal itself, depending on whether it is being shown as a market or breeding animal.

Zaia Hansen, a junior from Hamilton County, has been in 4-H since she was 12. She shows market steers and competes in showmanship. Preparing for the fair takes more than four hours of work each day, she

said, and the routine demands attention long before she walks into the show ring.

“It’s a lot of commitment. You can’t have other distractions, otherwise you’re not going to have the outcome that you want,” Hansen said.

She also talks about the people she has met through 4-H, many of whom she sees only when they come together for events like the state fair.

“It’s a great opportunity to make friends from around the whole state of Nebraska,” she said.

For Aislynn Jensen, also a junior from Hamilton County, the livestock barns have become a family place. She started 4-H when she was 8 and has always shown cattle. She competes in showmanship, breeding and market classes, and now three of her four siblings have shown cattle. Her youngest sister started this year.

“This is probably the most exciting time of the summer,” she said.

Ryder Brabec remembers being the first person in his family to compete.

Brabec, a freshman at Northeast Community College, has shown pigs for 10 years. His parents did not show when they were growing up, although his father raised pigs and cattle. When Brabec expressed interest in competing, they went along with it.

“I told them I wanted to do it, and we kind of just took off running,” he said.

From the beginning, his parents gave him room to take ownership of his animals.

“Even early on, they pretty much let me handle it by myself. It’s been a great learning experience for me,” he said.

Now Brabec competes in commercial breeding gilt, market gilt and purebred breeding classes. He is studying animal science at Northeast and hopes to eventually run his own operation breeding show pigs.

He is also the oldest of four children. This year, his youngest brother won Senior Showman Champion. Brabec was proud of him.

“It takes a lot of dedication and hard work. Early mornings aren’t always fun, but I enjoy every minute of it,” he said.

Meredith Ruda’s work has taken her beyond showing one kind of animal.

Ruda, a sophomore at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln studying agricultural leadership and communication, grew up around

cattle. Both of her grandparents own cattle, and she spent time at their farm before her family moved to a ranch when she was in fourth grade. That gave her the chance to begin showing her own animals.

She still wears a shiny gold belt buckle she won at the Dodge County Fair for the round robin show. When asked about it, she grins.

The round robin requires exhibitors to work with several kinds of livestock and demonstrate what they know about the animals. Ruda competed from county fairs to state fairs and then at national-level events, including the Oklahoma Cattlemen’s Congress in January. The experience has forced her to learn parts of animal science beyond simply leading a cow into a ring.

“It’s taught me to get out of my comfort zone. In the barn, there are certain things that are scary to do at first, but then I teach myself how to do them,” Ruda said. “It pushes me in a lot of ways.”

She also likes what happens when visitors ask questions about her work.

“I have the most fun talking to people who aren’t even familiar with the livestock world. People come up to ask about my cattle ... and they might be from in-town and haven’t been to a show before,” she said. “It means so much when I get to educate others.”

That part of the fair is not limited to the livestock barns.

Tucked inside a nicely air-conditioned room next to the Bosselman Conference Center, the Education Department offers another place for Nebraska students to bring something they have spent time learning or making. Inside the room are clay figures, artwork, writing, science projects and other schoolwork, much of it made by students who came to the fair to see their work judged and displayed.

The Education Department invites students who completed kindergarten through 12th grade in spring 2026 to enter. Students can submit work in categories ranging from art, photography and poetry to history, science, penmanship and other academic competitions. Some entries are displayed and judged, while other events take place as live competitions or tests.

Deb Lawson, one of the Education Department superintendents, has worked with the department for four years. Before that,

she taught dual-credit speech at Grand Island Senior High and judged the poetry recitation competition for 12 years.

Now, she moves through the exhibits with the familiarity of someone who has seen them year after year. She stops at a group of small clay pigs.

“I just love these. Look at their little ears!” she says.

Later, Lawson kneels beside a sixth grade art project and points toward the blue ribbon attached to it.

“I like seeing the faces of the students who come in, saying, ‘Wow, I won a blue ribbon! Mom, take a picture with me,’” she said. “It just warms my heart.”

The students’ recognition matters, but Lawson sees value in the work itself.

“It teaches creativity, it teaches perseverance ... and not everybody wins, you know? So there is an element of sportsmanship, too,” she said.

One of the featured 2026 divisions is Warmth for Veterans, where students can make items such as quilts, blankets, pillows, hats, scarves or other gifts to donate to veterans. Many might gift their project to a grandparent that served, while others choose to donate to their local American Legion office.

“This is a wonderful project, because it teaches kids to care about something bigger than themselves,” Lawson said.

Lawson has watched teachers turn projects into class assignments, or individual students return year after year with subjects they care about. Homeschool families might bring in art that siblings crafted together. Some students come looking for a ribbon, while others simply enjoy seeing their work on display. That is part of what makes the fair different from a day spent walking through the midway. The students are not only there to see others’ work, but also to get their own small piece of the fair.

The State Fair gives Nebraska kids a place to show what they know how to do, whether that means handling an animal, answering a question or making something with their hands. The fairgrounds may be filled with things designed to entertain people, but if you stop and look closely, you’ll see kids still finding wonder in the simple things.

ROLE MODEL returns with ‘Chuck Timely’

CHLOE CARRILLO
Scene Editor

On Aug. 7, ROLE MODEL released his third studio album “Chuck Timely & the Hourglass.” Fresh off the success of his second album and its deluxe version, “Kansas Any-more” and hits like “Sally, When The Wine Runs Out,” this was an extremely anticipated release.

ROLE MODEL, known for leaking music and not taking anything too seriously, had released snippets and eventually singles for the album, which only encouraged listeners. “High Hopes 3000” and “Joy” were quick hits for pop listeners, and assured fans that “Chuck Timely and the Hourglass” was not going to disappoint.

With his unique something-between-country-indie-and-pop sound, the first two singles featured ROLE MODEL’s signature brutally honest lyricism and fun instrumentals. And, if you are a fan of a good bridge in a song, this album has definitely got you covered.

The opener to the album, “Chuck’s Mantra” features a ticking clock in the background. ROLE MODEL enters, proclaiming he is “deserving of something real, something true, someday soon,” and that time is “no friend” of his. It sets the tone for the album, with a chilling and emotional backtrack of long chords and what sounds like a choir singing with him.

“Song Is All You Get” is the next track (after single “High Hopes 3000”) on the album, and talks about how sometimes, in his experience, relationships leave you with nothing but a song, or just the thought of someone.

With somewhat of a tone switch, “Love I You” talks about how sometimes, yearning for romance can be a messy escapade. It also features actress Dakota Johnson’s voice in the bridge, seemingly a flirty banter between the two. The song is reminiscent of Sabrina Carpenter’s “Go Go Juice,” so if that is a song you enjoy, I recommend “Love I You.”

“Chasing Midnight” follows a sense of impending doom in a relationship, but for the second, they are “chasing midnight,” and “dancing around the fact that you’ll be gone in a minute.” The instrumentals of this song are slower, with a more acoustic feel.

Raw, unfiltered lyricism continues in “Good Thing,” where ROLE MODEL gets extremely authentic about his doubts and lack

of trust or belief in whether this new thing is good or not.

“Service Receipt,” the next track after single “Joy,” returns to lighthearted instrumentals, and examines his journey in trying to move on with other people while he can’t stop thinking about his past.

“Honeydew” is another slower track, but a sweet one, in my opinion. ROLE MODEL is seemingly relating to the person in the song, that he has been where they are, and that he’s there to help them in any way he can.

The next track is reminiscent of something you might hear out on a boat, or just lying on the beach in the summer. The flute and fun backing are something that stands out on the track “Stain,” and the lyrics compare a past relationship to a stain that he just can’t get out. While there are speculations on who the song is about, I think the lyrics “well I’m sorry that it didn’t work out with your man / But there’s nothing fun in feeling like a backup plan / Just write a few songs / Put a pen in your hand / That worked for me babe” are silly and fun, and something that only ROLE MODEL can say in a half-joking, half-serious way.

If you’re looking to be happily devastated by a song, I recommend “The Wedding.” ROLE MODEL gets real here, saying how he thought he knew himself when he went to a friend’s wedding and thought he would never be that person, but he’s realizing “hope ain’t lost on me.”

“Harmony,” the closing track, is a beautiful and fun conclusion to this “Chuck Timely” journey. In my personal favorite song of the album, ROLD MODEL talks about how he is finally at peace or finding harmony. It’s a good mood-lifter, and a reminder to not let many things keep you up at night — play a good song and “settle into some harmony.”

For the sappy listeners, throw on some “Chuck’s Mantra,” “Chasing Midnight” or “The Wedding.” For those looking for a new pop jam, “Joy” and “High Hopes 3000” might be your next listen. And, for anyone who wants to feel uplifted on maybe a bad day, “Harmony” has got you covered.

Whether you’re feeling introspective, blasting some music with your best friends with the windows down, or just casually listening, ROLE MODEL has something for you on his new album “Chuck Timely & the Hourglass.”

May 1
Friday

Pre-health 101: Foundations
3:30 PM
Graves LL-18

Black Excellence Celebration
3:30 PM
Skutt Ballroom

May 2
Saturday

Crescenda’s Auditions
12:00 PM
Lied Center 210

May 3
Sunday

CU Project Sunshine
3:00 PM
Ronald McDonald House

May 4
Monday

Letters of Love Meeting
5:00PM
Harper 2057/58

May 5
Tuesday

Hispanic Heritage Month Tabling
12:30 PM
Skutt Fireplace

May 6
Wednesday

Entrepreneurship Club Weekly Meeting
5:30 PM
Harper 2079

May 7
Thursday

Hispanic Heritage Month Tabling
12:30 PM
Skutt Fireplace

Sign Language Club Meeting
5:00 PM
Creighton Hall 331

A CU student’s guide to Minnesota’s fair

CHARLEY HECHTL
Advertising Manager

With roughly 28% of Creighton University’s undergraduate student body coming from the Upper Midwest, Minnesota holds a strong connection to the Creighton community. That connection is reflected in Creighton’s incoming classes, with Minnesota representing the largest out-of-state population in last year’s freshman class, bringing 188 new Bluejays to Omaha, according to Creighton News.

For Minnesota students attending school in Omaha, the Minnesota State Fair offers more than an annual end-of-summer tradition. Only a few hours away from campus, it can be a chance to reunite with family, share a piece of home with friends and experience one of the state’s largest cultural events.

Held annually since 1859 and located midway between the state capital of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, the Minnesota State Fair stretches across roughly 322 acres and celebrates Minnesota art, agriculture and industry. Beyond that, the fairgrounds welcome around two million visitors over the course of 12 days, with attendees gathering from all over to experience everything from live

livestock births and butter sculptures to concerts, rides and, of course, a wide array of fair food — even deep-fried ranch.

As a Minnesota native, I got to experience this yearly tradition, more commonly known as “The Great Minnesota Get-Together,” this past weekend. I have been going to the state fair for as long as I can remember. With the gates opening at 7 a.m. and most food vendors following soon after at 9 a.m., I knew to arrive early, beating the initial rush of people that would soon turn into waves of fair-goers.

My first stop was a “must-eat,” a Pronto Pup on-a-stick. This skewered hot dog, made fresh in Wisconsin, keeps true to its Midwestern roots. The sausage is dipped in a unique batter of corn flour, wheat flour and rice flour, then deep-fried to golden brown with just the right amount of crispiness. While I may be biased, this fair essential is better than a traditional corn dog — but you’ll have to go try for yourself.

Getting recommendations from TikTok and Instagram, I knew what my next stop would be: Rick’s Pizza. As a pickle lover myself, I had to try the viral hand-tossed pizza slathered with dill ranch sauce, mozzarella cheese and crunchy sliced dill pickles. Who says you can’t eat a pickle pizza for breakfast?

This year, some of the biggest hits — drawing some of the longest lines at the fairgrounds — were a new food vendor called Minnesota’s Original Apple Fries; and Peachey’s Baking Company, which serves its famous oversized Amish glazed doughnuts. One customer said the doughnuts “are worth the hype,” despite the 15- to 45-minute wait.

A fair visit is not complete without the food — and the feeling of being so stuffed you can’t move. Thankfully, visitors walk roughly five miles around the grounds, according to the Minnesota State Fair.

The Minnesota State Fair is known for its dairy with its iconic All-You-Can-Drink Milk Stand offering bottomless 12-ounce cups of 2% white milk and chocolate milk for only \$3.

And what’s milk without cookies to dip in it?

You can’t say you visited the Minnesota State Fair without stopping by the legendary yellow-clad Sweet Martha’s Cookie Jar. This fair favorite is known for its gravity-defying buckets of freshly baked chocolate chip cookies. Even on the hottest days, these ooey-gooey cookies are just what you need.

Apart from the food, the fair has a little something for everyone, from exhilarating rides and boardwalk games where you can

win oversized stuffed animals — which you’ll have to carry for the rest of the time there — to numerous livestock barns where you can even see farm animals being born. One of my personal favorites is the Education Building, which hosts the annual K-12 competition, showcasing ribbon-winning student art, creative writing and school projects.

If you are a Minnesotan attending Creighton, the fair is the perfect destination to bring your friends. Introduce them to your favorite foods and the attractions you grew up visiting — a taste of what makes Minnesota feel like home.

And even if you don’t know someone from Minnesota, the fair is a must-do on your bucket list. You are bound to meet someone there — they don’t call us “Minnesota nice” for nothing. Though I do recommend bringing a comfortable pair of walking shoes.

With Labor Day earlier this week, another remarkable year of the Minnesota State Fair has come to a close. But the tradition is far from over. For Minnesota natives, the countdown to next year’s Great Minnesota Get-Together has just begun — and yes, I am counting down the days.

Who really gives a flock?

AINSLEY SMITH
Assistant Opinion Editor

The left, right and center have finally found something to agree on: their contempt for Flock cameras, or Automatic License Plate Readers (ALPR), which collect and upload photos of vehicles to law enforcement databases.

Critics of newly installed Flock surveillance systems cite privacy concerns and fears of an institutional surveillance state that could threaten public safety. Their apprehension isn't unfounded. Last month, the Washington Post released an exclusive feature on the misuse of Flock technology, reporting that there have been 46 documented cases of law enforcement officers using Flock for unauthorized purposes, including stalking women. Half of the cases investigated by the Post alleged officers used the technology to spy on partners, exes and other women.

But resistance to Flock has expanded beyond showings of public opinion. Flock cameras have been vandalized, obstructed or

destroyed in 36 different states. Social media is being used to document vandalism of Flock cameras and create followings for citizens who have dedicated themselves to dismantling ALPRs in their community. It certainly seems like people have had enough of big tech companies surveilling America.

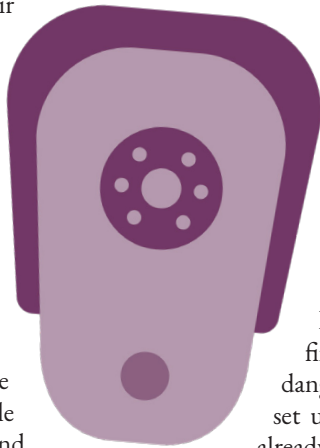
So why do we keep contributing to it?

The prevalence of Flock vandalism on social media is its own form of surveillance - Americans commit crimes against "Big Brother" and can't help but submit evidence of it to a bigger, more accessible database. It's become second nature to tell on ourselves for attention, to report our most embarrassing or socially (in this case, literally) incriminating moments to an audience of prying eyes. More commonly, we use social media to shame and denigrate the actions of others. Apps like X, Instagram and TikTok thrive off

non-consensual photos or videos of people deemed to be bad actors, which could include everyone from a skeezy guy on the subway to a woman in a cringe outfit at the bar.

We are afraid of what people with access to Flock cameras could do to us and what we could be witnessed doing, and yet! We keep our phones within reach, our fingers on the trigger, ready to expose anything and everything to the panopticon. Citizens may wonder how Flock was implemented in the first place, how tech with such dangerous potential was seemingly set up overnight. The truth is we already consented to it.

The backlash toward Flock is a promising sign of solidarity, resistance and political advocacy among Americans. I can only hope it encourages us to think deeper about the things we voluntarily offer to big tech. Dismantling a culture of surveillance keeps the institution at the door.



Not every club needs you

CLARA JOHNSON
Opinion Writer

Getting involved can be one of the highlights of your college years. Skutt Shutdown and other recruitment events have kickstarted the email lists and GroupMe chats, welcoming another wave of students into the ranks. Obviously, being involved on campus is a great way to meet people and advance your career, but can too much of a good thing be a bad thing?

College schedules are hectic, that's not news to anyone. Between classes and extra credit seminars and the required reading that might take you all night, there's barely time to eat and sleep. Maintaining a social life and doing your best to call home every once in a while might be stressful enough that you haven't even had time to think about joining clubs, but if you have, let me applaud you.

Choosing the right clubs to join can be stressful and choosing just how many to commit yourself to is a different problem. There are enough student organizations on campus to fill up your free time completely, and all of them have their own strengths and benefits. However, overcommitting and stressing yourself out too early can ruin it all.

When you're joining clubs, don't sign up for every email list and try to attend every single first meeting. Be selective with your time and make sure you have the space to fully commit to something before jumping headfirst into the fray.

Getting involved is good for you but signing up for 12 clubs and never going to any of them because you're too overwhelmed -- that's not as good.

It's natural to want to be involved and to think that if your friends can do it then so can you, but everyone's schedule looks different.

Evaluate what you're missing in your college career, then start making decisions. Maybe you miss playing sports, so you feel like intramurals are the place for you, or maybe you want that extra resume help so a pre-professional club is the way you'll go.

Stressing yourself out with a calendar full of meeting notifications and application deadlines is a sure-fire way to burn out and end up more uninvolved than before. Once you've made your choice, be sure to show up to the clubs you chose and participate in their events. Being very active in a handful of clubs on campus will make you feel better than being on the email list for too many and barely showing up.

Remember, your time is valuable, so you need to be careful with it. College is about trying new things, meeting new people and getting involved. Join the club, or don't, it's all part of the experience.

It's time to end the 8 a.m.

LIAM SOMMERFELDT
Opinion Writer

It's arrived.

You've made the poor choice to stay up far too late on a school night and now you're paying the price. You grasp your head in a fit of grogginess, roll yourself over to stare at the harsh light of your phone and gaze at the ceiling contemplating your life choices.

The 8 a.m.

It's the bane of every college student's existence. Whether it comes for you or your roommate, no matter if you're a senior or a freshman, the 8 a.m. class remains an undeniable fact of collegiate life. It raises an interesting question: why do we have 8 a.m. classes?

Surely someone in the long line of the chain of command must have suffered the disgrace of trudging to an 8 a.m. class. Why hasn't someone thrown their hands into the air and said, "enough is enough?" Where is the outcry against what must be the highest cause of last-minute schedule changes? We ask ourselves these questions in vain. All the same, the dreaded morning rolls around after

a poor night's sleep, and we find ourselves just as starved for caffeine as we were yesterday.

What if I told you it didn't have to be this way? What if I told you that despite the research, colleges around the U.S. refuse to acknowledge the downsides of 8 a.m. classes? A 2017 research study by NPR concluded that 8 a.m. classes "start too early in the morning for students' brains." NPR goes on to list the ideal starting time for college students as 10:00 or 11:00 a.m. And NPR's study and conclusion are hardly unique; as time goes on, greater amounts of evidence against the 8 a.m. get discovered.

In the interest of fairness, we must consider which parties these classes do work best for. The obvious candidate is the professor. The professor of an 8 a.m. is a fully developed adult who has attained a normalized sleep schedule. For them, 8 a.m.'s are simply the reality of their chosen careers. The start time of the 8 a.m. may benefit the parents, older students or even commuters that make up every university student body. For them, it's extremely helpful to schedule classes at a time where they can still juggle kids, a career or commute time. While 8 a.m. classes work

well for some students, most students who make up those classes are younger and live on campus. And, as we've discussed, 8 a.m.'s were not even remotely designed with these students in mind.

So why then do they persist? Who is the sadist that sits in an office every year and perpetuates this cycle? The truth, somewhat less dramatically, is that when it comes to higher education, tradition is paramount. People enjoy the predictable; and when there has been and always will be the reliable evil of the 8 a.m. course, everyone gains a common enemy and shared triumph. It persists, in part, from a disconnect between professors' and students' interests. Professors see the 8 a.m. as a mild inconvenience and downplay the negative effects. Students suffer the consequences. For students, 8 a.m. can be the difference in a test grade, a GPA point or even a grad school admission; and no one wants those things to hinge on something as preventable as early mornings.

So, I ask: do we march on? Blindly following an outdated, harmful tradition? Or are we in for a rude awakening?

Meta's reforms: too little too late

TOMMY CARREAUX
Opinion Writer

For most of Gen Z, our relationship with social media didn't start with a conscious decision. We downloaded Instagram, Facebook and many other social media platforms before we had even heard the word "algorithm," let alone understood how much time we would waste on these apps. Now, more than 15 years after Instagram launched, Meta has agreed to pay up to approximately \$18 billion to settle claims by 47 states alleging that Meta platforms harmed and addicted users under 18.

As part of the settlement, Meta must also make major changes to its platforms for users ages 13 to 17, including a two-hour time limit, blocking access from midnight to 6 a.m., muting notifications during school hours, disabling cosmetic filters and hiding likes. These changes are a step in the right direction, but they may be far too late for the millions of people who have felt the consequences of growing up on social media.

There is something strangely familiar about all of this. In the late 1990s, major tobacco companies faced their own reckoning for what they knew about nicotine addiction and the health consequences of smoking cigarettes. Though the products are different, the underlying question seems similar: What responsibility does a company have to its customers when its profits depend on getting people hooked?

Meta continues to face lawsuits from school districts and individuals, while other social media giants like YouTube, Snapchat and TikTok face legal scrutiny of their own. Yet after nearly a decade, if not more, of addictive social media practices being implemented on Meta platforms (Facebook and Instagram), Meta released an "Open Letter to TikTok and YouTube to Join Us in Supporting Teens." They emphasized the importance of teen safety as the "new industry standard," which makes one wonder if the previous industry standard was something along the lines of "How Can We Maximize Profit from Underdeveloped Brains?" But Meta's clear enthusiasm for this reform becomes less inspirational when you notice the fine print within the settlement: approximately \$5.3 billion of this payment is contingent on TikTok and YouTube adopting similar restrictions and making payments of their own.

The settlement works to make social media safer for the generation coming after us, which is obviously a good thing. But for Gen Z especially, these new restrictions bring to light an uncomfortable question: Why are companies only now required to protect us from the features many of us have been using since middle school?

Bluejays tested at home

GRETA WALLER
Assistant Sports Editor

The Bluejay Invitational gave No. 15 Creighton volleyball three chances to test itself—and three very different ways to be tested. Across three matches, Creighton found momentum, lost it, adjusted and fought its way back, finishing the weekend 2-1 with a better sense of what it does well and where it still needs to grow.

In the first match of the weekend, with former Bluejay Destiny Ndam-Simpson across the net, Creighton's serve sent Arizona out of system, the Wildcats scrambled to keep the ball alive, and a Bluejay block finished the rally. The D.J. Sokol Arena crowd reacted immediately. A few points later, the-then No. 10 Bluejays had another block, then an ace and another to force Arizona to call a timeout.

For a few rotations, Creighton looked like the team it wanted to be when the Bluejay Invitational began. Then, the first set got complicated.

Creighton led 21-12, then watched Arizona erase the advantage. At 24-24, a misplayed first contact left the Bluejays scrambling near the net again. Trinity Shadd-Ceres, a junior outside hitter, answered with a kill, and Arizona gave Creighton the set with an attack error.

The Bluejays eventually won the match 3-2, but the five-set match showed how much work remained. Creighton played some of its best volleyball in stretches, then gave Arizona openings through missed connections and defensive confusion.

Shadd-Ceres kept the Bluejays in the match when they needed points. She finished with a career-high 29 kills and hit .420, including 17 kills over the final two sets. Her offense became more effective as she adjusted to Arizona's block and worked farther across the court and higher over the hands.

"Getting more into the cross and hitting higher and deeper is something I'm working on right now," Shadd-Ceres said.

Creighton also changed its shape. After dropping the second and third sets, head coach Brian Rosen moved the Bluejays from their 6-2 formation to a 5-1, giving senior fifth-year setter Katie Dalton more control of the offense.

"A 5-1 allows our outsides to move more, too," Rosen said. "It spread our offense a little more and forced their middles to hold."

The change gave Creighton a different look at the net. Senior opposite Jaya Johnson became a bigger part of the attack, and junior middle blocker Ayden Ames continued



ALLY SEEVERS/THE CREIGHTONIAN

Junior Trinity Shadd-Ceres delivers her career-high 29th kill of the match to clinch the fifth set, 15-12, and secure the 3-2 victory over Arizona.

to pressure Arizona with quick swings and blocks. In the fourth set, Creighton hit .769, the third-best set percentage in program history, while Shadd-Ceres put down 11 kills on 12 swings.

The set also had the feel of a team settling into the match. The score was tied 15-15 when Creighton began to pull away. Shadd-Ceres hammered a ball into the Arizona block at 19-17, sending it into the right-side concourse and bringing the crowd to its feet.

"We just got lit, I mean, we were turned up," Dalton said afterward. "We thought, 'Let's go, foot on the gas,' hyping each other up."

Creighton carried that energy into the fifth set. The Bluejays started 4-0 and never trailed. Arizona eventually cut the deficit to 12-11, but Shadd-Ceres ended the match with her 29th kill. Creighton had six blocks in the final two sets and finished with 77 digs and 72 kills.

Shadd-Ceres did not frame the performance around her own numbers.

"Just playing for my team — that's the reason I play volleyball," she said. "I trust everyone I'm playing for, and I just do my job for them."

On Saturday, the Jays faced a different challenge early. Pepperdine started quickly and forced Creighton to spend most of the first set chasing. Rosen called timeout with his team trailing 12-8 and asked for a stronger defensive mentality. Creighton still needed time to settle in, and the Bluejays finally tied the set at 18-18 after a sequence of blocks and a Shadd-Ceres kill.

That pattern continued through the afternoon. Creighton repeatedly absorbed an early run, adjusted and found another way to score.

Sophomore outside hitter Abbey Hayes became a major part of that process. She finished

with 11 kills and eight digs, and she described one of the adjustments the team had been emphasizing all week.

"All week we've been working on pass-to-attack, because that's something we struggled with at the beginning of the season," Hayes said. "Katie's just been great. We all give her feedback, and she adjusts so quickly."

Senior libero Saige Damrow also became more vocal as the match moved along. At one point in the second set, she spoke to the team during the huddle.

"No matter what, if I'm playing good or bad, I have to bring the energy and lift up my teammates around me," Damrow said.

Creighton lost that second set 25-17, then controlled the final two. Hayes opened the third with two kills. Shadd-Ceres added a solo block. Johnson found points against Pepperdine's left-side block, and senior middle blocker Eloise Brandewie finished with nine kills and a match-high four blocks.

Creighton won 25-18 and 25-16, collecting 10 aces, 58 digs and seven blocks. Damrow had a season-high five aces, and Dalton posted 42 assists and 14 digs. The win gave Creighton its 300th home victory since the volleyball program returned in 1994.

Then came Tulsa. The Golden Hurricane had not played the Bluejays the previous season, but Creighton had watched them push Kansas earlier in the fall. Rosen said before Sunday's match that he thought Tulsa was the best team in the tournament.

They eventually proved him right.

Creighton won the first set 26-24 after Tulsa erased four set points, and the Bluejays later forced a fifth by taking the fourth 25-22. Sophomore right side Ashlyn Paymal helped during a seven-point run in the fourth, which turned a 16-16 tie into a 20-16 lead.

Creighton's blocking continued to im-

prove through the weekend. Senior middle blocker Eloise Brandewie finished with a career-high 12 blocks, and Creighton recorded 18 as a team.

"In practice, we worked a lot on communicating with pins, talking about tempo, staying low and over," Brandewie said. "It got better every single day, so it made my job a lot easier."

Creighton could control stretches with its blocking, but momentum stalled as it gave Tulsa easy points. The Bluejays committed seven service errors in the first set and tallied 11 attack errors in the second.

"It was just one of those nights where the serves didn't click," he said. "They weren't even good errors, they were kind of wild at times."

Tulsa took the fifth set 15-10 after jumping ahead 7-1 and 10-2. That ended Creighton's 14-match home winning streak and left the Bluejays 4-2 heading into the next weekend.

"We're all competitive," Hayes said after Sunday's loss. "I know that fired us up. It just makes me want to go practice right now."

The tournament gave Rosen the chance to see his team against three distinctly different opponents and three matches that reached a deciding set or came close to it. It also gave the Bluejays a clearer picture of where their progress still depended on repetition.

"We're still fighting really hard for consistency, and we're just not there yet," Rosen said.

The Bluejays play next at the Rice Invitational in Houston. Their first match is against the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) this afternoon at 3 p.m. All this weekend's matches can be streamed on ESPN+.

Late goal seals women's soccer victory

SYDNEY FLANDREAU
Sports Reporter

Creighton women's soccer remained unbeaten in its last three matches on Friday, Sept. 4, defeating Northern Colorado 1-0 at Morrison Stadium during the annual "Soctoberfest" celebration.

The Bluejays and Bears remained scoreless through most of the match before sophomore Sarah Hyde broke through in the 88th minute. After receiving passes from Kassey Dzenis and Olivia Duray, Hyde beat a Northern Colorado defender and found herself one-on-one with Bears goalkeeper Thordoris Melstad. Hyde then scored from about 20

yards out to give Creighton the lead with 95 seconds remaining.

"I kind of blacked out," Hyde said of her critical goal.

Hyde entered the match with about 10 minutes remaining and said she was prepared to make an impact despite the limited time on the field.

"I just wanted to run my butt off and make something happen," Hyde said.

The goal gave Creighton its third-consecutive 1-0 victory and third shutout of the season. The Bluejays have now gone 407:24 without allowing a goal, marking the fifth-longest scoreless streak in program history.

The match was played in temperatures

around 95 degrees, making player rotations an important part of Creighton's approach.

"It was really hot conditions, so we focused on getting fresh legs out on the pitch," head coach Jimmy Walker said.

Creighton finished with eight shots on goal compared to four for Northern Colorado.

Walker said the Bluejays still have areas to improve as the season continues, particularly when it comes to recognizing opportunities in the attack.

"They need to be more aware of finding runners after the ball and capitalizing on attacking moments," Walker said.

Despite the close match, Walker said he was pleased with the team's effort.

"I'm proud of the girls, proud of the effort

and proud of the way they continue to compete," Walker said.

Hyde said the team's chemistry has continued to develop throughout the season. She pointed to the team's pregame dance circle as one of the ways the Bluejays build energy and connection before matches.

"We do a dance circle as a team and get hyped up," Hyde said.

Creighton improved to 3-2-1 with the victory, while Northern Colorado fell to 1-2-2. The win also moved the Bluejays to 7-1-3 all-time in Soctoberfest matches.

The Bluejays return to Morrison Stadium Sunday, Sept. 13, to host Gonzaga for Senior Day at 1 p.m.

Rorick races to first D1 win

JAKE BOND
Sports Reporter

Senior Taylor Rorick collected her first collegiate cross country win in dramatic fashion as she beat Kansas State’s Emma Baum by half a second in the women’s 5K at the sixth annual Platte River Rumble Gold meet last Friday. Rorick anchored the Bluejay women to a second-place finish as the men placed four runners in the top 10 to also finish second in the program’s first meet under interim head coach Matthew Fayers.

After commanding a sizeable lead through the first 3,000 meters of the race, Rorick momentarily lost her advantage to a trio of Kansas State runners before a decisive push through the final turn positioned her to take the win.

“It was a really fast finish,” Rorick said. “It was a lot of fun, and they really pushed me at the end.”

Despite the meet being rescheduled from evening to morning due to forecasted heat, Rorick notched a three-second PR of 17:41 in the 5K in what Fayers termed a “roasty toasty” morning at the Olsson Cross Country Course.

“We kind of had an idea that Taylor could mix it up with K-State’s top two,” Fayers said. “We thought [Baum and her teammates] would go out a little more aggressive, and so it was a very interesting race.”

Freshman Tatum Neilson finished tenth in her collegiate debut, posting a time of 18:37 as she finished alongside her fifth-year teammate Sophia Valentine (11th, 18:38). The women’s team relied on a mix of experience and youth as five of the ten runners that toed the line made their Creighton debut, including four freshmen. Sophomore Sarah Vaske (15th, 19:04) and junior Alexis Leone (17th, 19:15) rounded out the scorers for the Bluejays.

“Our ladies went out really strong and went out there with a competitive attitude ... we are just going to continue to get better on the women’s side,” Fayers said.

The men’s 6,000-meter race featured an aggressive start, with a large pack of Bluejay and Wildcat runners passing the 1K mark in three minutes. K-State’s top three pulled away in the second half of the race as senior Tommy Murray battled to finish fourth with a time of 18:47. Fifth-year Dominic Ricci finished sixth in a breakout race (18:57) while senior Evan Kraus (seventh, 19:10) and juniors Andrew Sauer (10th, 19:23) and Lucas Bossinger (11th, 19:25) also scored.

Friday marked Murray and Kraus’s first cross country races since 2024, as both men took redshirt years in 2025. Fayers described the efforts of his upper-classmen as “super encouraging.”

Following a week off from racing, both teams will travel to Ames, Iowa, for a return to the traditional 8K (Men’s) and 6K (Women’s) distances on the course set to host November’s NCAA Midwest Regional meet.

“You could honestly consider it a bit of a scouting trip,” Fayers said. “I think we’ve got really good goals at the end of the season.”

The teams will return to action on Sept. 18 at Iowa State.

Creighton climbs to No. 12



ALLY SEEVERS/THE CREIGHTONIAN

Junior defender Brian Edelman celebrates senior Matthew Reed on his go-ahead goal in Creighton’s 2-0 win over Gonzaga during Socctoberfest.

ALLY SEEVERS
Editor in Chief

Six matches into the season, Creighton men’s soccer has already surpassed its entire goal total from a year ago.

The Bluejays scored six goals across two home victories last week, defeating Gonzaga 2-0 during Socctoberfest on Sept. 4 before closing the Jesuit Invitational with a 4-1 win over Santa Clara on Monday. The pair of victories pushed Creighton to 5-0-1 and helped the Bluejays climb 11 spots to No. 12 in the latest United Soccer Coaches poll.

Creighton opened the Jesuit Invitational Friday night with a 2-0 victory over Gonzaga in front of 3,521 fans at Morrison Stadium as part of the 14th annual Socctoberfest.

The Bluejays controlled possession for much of the night and finished with a 17-8 advantage in shots, but Gonzaga’s defense kept a relentless Creighton attack off the scoreboard for the first 80 minutes.

Creighton started quickly, creating opportunities through its movement and penetrating runs, but Gonzaga adjusted as the match progressed.

“I thought the first 15, 18 minutes that we came out in the first half, we were clicking,” head coach Johnny Torres said. “Offensively, we were moving the ball pretty well, and we were making some penetrating runs.”

But Gonzaga’s adjustments made it difficult for the Bluejays to maintain that early rhythm.

“At that point, Gonzaga made a good adjustment,” Torres said. “They were plugging up lanes, being resilient, getting down and defending well ... and we lost a little bit of the control of the match in that first half.”

Creighton responded after halftime, regaining control and continuing to pressure the Bulldogs. The breakthrough finally came in the 81st minute when senior Matthew Reed finished from eight yards in front of the net, after passes from freshman Spencer Sappleton and junior Brady Bragg.

Just under six minutes later, Bragg put the match away. He finished a corner entry from freshman Carter Derksen in the 87th minute, giving Creighton a 2-0 victory.

“I think at the end it turned into who was still able to have some gas in the tank,” Torres said. “To me, it seemed like, with 15 minutes left, we had a little bit more gas in the tank.”

Torres credited the entire group for finding a way through a stubborn Gonzaga defense.

“I’m just so proud of the guys to be able to come out and produce,” he said. “I thought it

was a collective effort.”

The victory also gave fifth-year transfer Amari Thompson his second shutout in his third start between the posts. Thompson stepped in after an injury to junior Matthew Hudson.

The atmosphere at Morrison Stadium added another layer to the opening match of the invitational. With Socctoberfest bringing 3,521 fans through the gates, Torres said the crowd gave the Bluejays an extra boost.

“It’s the biggest party in Division I football,” Torres said. “For the people to come out and push on the Jays is extra special.”

The Bluejays returned to Morrison Stadium on Monday for the final match of the Jesuit Invitational, where they once again found a way to respond to adversity, this time with an offensive outburst.

Creighton navigated a rocky opening stretch against Santa Clara after senior Edward Morales went down with an injury just minutes into the match. The Bluejays then appeared to take an early lead when senior co-captain Andrija Savic found the back of the net off a corner, but the goal was waved off.

Rather than letting the early setbacks disrupt their rhythm, Creighton responded with four unanswered goals.

Freshman Carter Tavares sliced through the Broncos’ defense in the 13th minute before centering a ball for junior Angel Lopez, who finished for his third goal of the season to officially put Creighton on the board.

Creighton doubled its lead in the 31st minute when sophomore Ayden Kokoszka finished a series of touches from fifth-year Allan Juarez and freshman Jordan Igwenma.

Igwenma then added his second goal of the week with less than two minutes remaining in the first half, gathering a blocked shot from junior Toraji Narazaki to send the Bluejays into halftime with a 3-0 advantage.

“We had some things going against us there at the beginning of the match, but these guys were resilient on Friday. They’ve been resilient throughout the season, but we continue to develop and get better. [There is] still a lot of room for improvement, but [I’m] really proud of the guys for how they responded.”

Reed added his team-leading fifth goal in the 53rd minute, finishing touches from Juarez and junior Bautista Rossi to give Creighton a four-goal cushion. The goal marked the co-captain’s fifth in four matches, earning him BIG EAST Defensive Player of the Week honors.

Santa Clara added a late goal in the 89th

minute, but Creighton held on for the 4-1 victory and completed a sweep of the Jesuit Invitational.

The win capped a week that showcased both Creighton’s resilience and its growing chemistry, while also giving the Bluejays another opportunity to represent the Jesuit community in Omaha.

“It’s a special event to be able to get three Jesuit institutions together to be able to give back to the community,” Torres said. “It’s great to be able to show our guys that there’s more than just sport, right? And to be able to come together through sport for the community or service of others is amazing. It’s a nice feeling knowing we went 2-0 at the Jesuit Invitational.”

The Bluejays’ offensive output has been one of the biggest differences from a season ago. Creighton now has 22 goals through six matches, surpassing the 21 goals the team scored throughout the entire 2025 season.

And the numbers don’t stop there.

As of Sept. 9, Creighton leads the nation in total goals (22), total assists (30), total points (74) and assists per game (5.0), according to NCAA statistics. The Bluejays have distributed their offensive production throughout the lineup, with seven different players finding the back of the net through the first six matches.

Torres said the chemistry behind that production has been noticeable.

“The biggest thing that I’m most proud about ... with our group is they are embracing one another. They’re enjoying playing with one another,” he said. “They’re enjoying the challenges that we’re put in front of them, the challenges that our opponents are put putting in front of them, and they’re doing it as a collective ... When you’re able to rotate guys and these guys are bought in to what they’re trying to do with great energy, great spirit, with gratitude towards what they’re doing, it’s makes it a lot of fun.”

The two victories extended Creighton’s unbeaten start to 5-0-1, propelling the Bluejays 11 spots in the United Soccer Coaches poll from No. 23 to No. 12.

Creighton also collected a trio of Big East weekly honors. Along with Reed’s Defensive Player of the Week selection, Tavares earned his second Freshman of the Week honor of the season, while fifth-year goalkeeper Amari Thompson was named to the conference honor roll.

Following a match with Saint Mary’s College last night, Creighton now turns its attention to Yale on Sunday for Senior Day. Kick-off is set for 4 p.m.