Cafeteria renovations planned for summer

Changes to include 'open kitchen concept,' television

MICHELLE SCOBBA
Contributor

The cafeteria will undergo major renovations over the summer and will reopen Aug. 20 with a completely different look, President David Burks announced in chapel Feb. 12.

"When you come back in the fall, you will hardly recognize the building," Burks said. "Our intent is that it will be more like a restaurant instead of a campus dining hall."

Part of the renovation will include incorporating the "open kitchen concept" into the dining hall. This format will not only allow you to watch as the food is prepared, but [diners] will also be able to see from one end of the cafeteria to the other.

"Right now we have a lot of dead areas because of the placement of the fixtures. There are some seating areas, such as the back corner, that are not used. The new design will place the kitchen off to the side and will be more efficient. The space should seat more students and be better utilized."

The $2 million renovation, which has been planned for a year and a half, will include several different seating options. In addition to new tables and chairs, there will also be booths and bar stools. Many students think the new design will improve the atmosphere in the cafeteria.

"I think it's a great idea," freshman Amber Huston said. "The booths will offer more privacy when you're there with a couple of friends."

Freshman Jeremy Hammett agreed that the new setup will add to the character of the dining hall.

"One of the main reasons I go to the cafeteria right now is not only for the food but for the fellowship," he said. "I think that the environment will be better and more suited for fellowship because of the different seating arrangements."

In addition to the new "open kitchen concept," SA President Zac Lambrecht announced other changes that will be made.

"We have a great facility now, but [Aramark] wanted to constantly improve," he said. "They've really been working hard to make it our cafeteria. There will be a TV, and we're trying to work with the communication department so students can watch the news and listen to 'The Voice.' We're also looking at getting Internet connections."

While students were pleased with the new additions, they were also excited about the extension of operating hours. Clapping and whistling erupted throughout the Benson Auditorium when Burks announced that next year the cafeteria will remain open until 9 p.m. Monday-Thursday. Extended hours on weekends will be determined later.

Another feature that received an enthusiastic response during chapel was the new food options. Students will be able to choose rotisserie chicken or order fresh pancakes and omelets at the breakfast bar that will be open all day. The majority of the food stations will be similar to the choices currently offered.

"My staff and I are available to answer questions and receive more input as to how we can better fit the needs and expectations of students," Steve Ritter, Aramark food service director, said. "Our goal is to provide the best dining experience in the country, and I know we can."

The dining hall renovation is part of a larger building project, which includes the upstairs portion of the dining hall damaged in the Nov. 20 fire and a two-story addition to the science building that will connect to the McInteer building.

These renovations are funded entirely by donations intended specifically for building projects and will not affect the cost of tuition, Burks said.

"We're grateful for the many donors who give their time and money to this university," he said. "Without these donations, we wouldn't be able to operate."

Above: Design plans for the new 8 p.m. open kitchen concept layout show new seating options that will include booths and bar stools. The renovations are scheduled to be completed Aug. 20.

Right: "Open kitchen" style cafeterias are already in place at many universities around the country.

Graduate student dies in car accident

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Graduate student Janie Summers was killed Feb. 10 after she lost control of her pick-up truck on Highway 64 east of Beebe.

The 38-year-old special education teacher from Beebe had been attending classes at Harding for six years in order to earn a master's degree in special education. Summers had attended graduate courses off-and-on since 1980 and was enrolled in Associate Professor of Education Dr. Jenene Alexander's diagnostic testing class this spring.

Summers was a sixth and seventh grade teacher working in the Augusta School District.

"She was planning on becoming a special education teacher, and she was very excited about it," Alexander said. "She was very effective with her students. They loved her. She had really connected with some of the students that were struggling."

Summers' 7-month-old daughter, Sadie, was also in the truck when Summers lost control. Sadie was unhurt in the accident.

According to Augusta school officials, Summers hit a patch of black ice that had accumulated over a low bridge about five miles east of Bald Knob.

Besides Sadie, Summers leaves behind a 7-year-old daughter, Elizabeth.

Funeral services were Feb. 11.

Alexander's graduate class sent Summers' sixth and seventh grade class a vase of living peace lilies and beta fish following Summers' death.

The gift was sent Tuesday and included supplies and instructions for the care of the fish.

"She was such a happy, friendly student," Alexander said. "She loved learning."
Letter to the Editor: Secular Christian bands may not be what they process

I found the article in last week’s Bison interesting and provocative. Just as it does with Mr. Usher, music plays a major role in my life. However, I feel Mr. Usher did Christians and the Christian music industry an injustice in his article.

It is obvious that Mr. Usher is a fan of P.O.D. It is also obvious that he may not know the band as well as he thinks he does. The facts are: every Christian music label would have banned to have P.O.D. as one of its artists. Why is that? Because they play at clubs and bars! Of course not! It is because of the things they say and do away from the microphone that do not line up with the Christian message.

One only has to open the pages of GuitarWorld or any other mainstream music magazine to see what P.O.D. thinks about their Christianity. Not only do they curse in their interviews, but they brag about drinking, partying and, in essence, living the rock ‘n’ roll lifestyle.

Truth is, P.O.D. is mainstream because it is a.a.tention that only mainstream can give. Have they sold out? It’s obvious that they are fresh out of something, and I think it’s “the message.”

Yes, clubs and bars are exactly where the gospel message needs to be heard. The problem is, P.O.D. is not bringing it! The message they bring is their lyrics is a clean one, granted, but that’s about it. P.O.D. is changing about as many hearts for Jesus as the Wheel of Fortune. Their lyrics are nothing more than watered-down misconceptions of the truth. They write with a so-called “message” but somehow Jesus doesn’t make it in any of their songs.

Let it be known that P.O.D., along with the other four bands mentioned by Mr. Usher, not only neglect to be forthright about their beliefs, but actually go out of their way to keep from being labeled “Christian.” More than that, P.O.D. has been quoted bashing bands that do wear that label. These bands do more harm to Christianity than good. It would appose me if they would just drop the religious discourse all together and be serious about what they’re doing.

I agree with Mr. Usher when he says we need to embrace those artists who are reaching out to a secular audience. The question is, do we know who we are embracing?

—Tyson Kirksey, senior

Senior learns importance of ‘true’ friends at college

Throughout my four years at Harding, I have experienced many events that have influenced my life forever. As a freshman, I came to Harding not knowing what the future was going to bring but I did know that I was going to become an adult, make my own decisions and make friends... the kind of friends you keep for life.

But I learned more than just how to become an adult and face the real world. I learned what it means to be a true friend. I learned this by the friendships I made. The people that have affected my view on life have all had the same ingredients for what it means to be a true friend. Let’s take a moment to analyze the recipe for that true friend...

Jaime Fahn
Guest Room

It all started at Summer Experience when I was matched up with Melissa Crockett. Melissa is the type of friend you want to have. She is supportive, understanding and genuinely caring.

Countless times, she sat up with me while I cried over my recent breakup and complained about my classes. All the while never thinking of her own problems but focusing on mine and how she could help me feel better. She also reminded me that God was in control and that she was there for me. She is a true friend.

I met Jennifer Kendall-Ball when I was a freshman and thought she was funny and crazy. Through the years, we have traveled together, shopped together and fought with each other, but it always came back to her being a supportive and understanding person. She is a true friend.

Now those aren’t the only two people that have influenced my life throughout my college career. I have also grown to love and cherish my friendships with my professors. They too have demonstrated the qualities of friendship.

Mrs. Gowen, one of my communication professors, shared her advice and her shoulder countless times throughout my four years here. She believed in me and showed it through her friendship both inside and outside of the classroom.

Dr. James helped me gain an internship and always supported me in my quest for the spotlight, always encouraging me to do my best and take chances. Dr. Shock showed him how to make better choices and inspired me to conquer my major and to believe in myself and know what it takes.

Mrs. Organ always wanted to know how I was doing, not whether or not my English essay was written in haste, but if I was really having a good day. They are all true friends.

All the while they thought I wasn’t looking, I saw the characteristics of Jesus in all of these people and countless others since I have been here. As I look to graduation and starting life in the fast-paced world of in front of me, I will take with me the values I have seen in my true friends.

Speak out: What do you think about the cafeteria renovation plans?

The longer hours will be a great factor in wanting to eat in the cafeteria...”

Nicole Wilhelms, freshman

“I like the [possibility of] bar stools. I’ll enjoy sitting on them as watching ‘Sportscenter’.”

David Johnson, junior

“We [are going to] have a new cafeteria? Cool.”

Greg Thomas, junior

The Bison is a campus newspaper written, edited and largely financed by students, seeking to provide high-quality journalistic discussion of issues of concern to the Harding community. It also serves as an educational tool for students, providing practical experience to enhance skills learned in the classroom. The Bison recognizes its responsibility to be accurate, fair and objective in its reporting while upholding the Christian ideals for which Harding University exists. It attempts to serve as a forum for student perspectives, welcoming letters to the editor which adhere to ethical and professional standards. Editorial opinions appearing in The Bison are the views of the writer and may not reflect the official policy of the Harding University administration. Signed columns represent the personal views of the authors, while unsigned columns represent the view of the editorial board. The Bison is published weekly (except during breaks, test weeks and summer sessions) by Harding University, Searcy, AR 72140. Subscription rate $15 per year. Periodical postage (USPS 7976600) paid at Searcy, AR 72140. Postmasters: Send address changes to Harding University Box 11192, Searcy, AR 72143-0001. Contact The Bison office at 501-279-4319 or 501-279-4671 or send faxes to 501-279-4415. The Bison is online at harding.edu/bison.
Pizza Wars ready to grease Rhodes

CURTIS SERIGHT / The Bison

Junior Clay Walliski encourages students to buy tickets to the annual Pizza Wars Thursday after chapel in the student center. The event, which allows students to taste samples from five local pizza places and then vote on their favorite, will be Monday at 5:30 p.m. in the Rhodes Field House. Tickets for the event cost $5 if purchased in advance.

Petit Jean staff meets final deadline of year

CLAUDIA RAMIREZ

Staff writer

Tuesday nights will be a lot more relaxing for junior Renee Lewis and the 11 other members of the Petit Jean yearbook staff. The staff completed its final deadline for the 2003 Petit Jan Feb. 18.

The theme for this year’s annual will be announced when the book is presented to the student body in chapel April 24.

The 320-page yearbook, which highlights the year’s activities through feature stories and hundreds of color and black-and-white photographs, will contain a magazine-style layout and an overall design that will be attractive to students, according to Lewis, editor-in-chief.

Lewis said producing the book was a team effort.

“The whole yearbook is a challenge,” Lewis said. “I think the biggest task is reorganizing everything to have a different looking book each year.”

Before the school year started, the Petit Jean staff members participated in a retreat in Morrilton, Ark., where they began brainstorming ideas for the book.

“We spent three days at Petit Jean Park where we had time to hang out, get acquainted with each other and put down some ideas on how we wanted the yearbook to look,” Lewis said.

In addition to the required Tuesday night meetings, which lasted from 7-11 p.m. each week, Petit Jean staff members got together at other times throughout the year. The group took a trip to Topeka, Kan., in September to tour the Jostens publishing plant (where the Petit Jean is printed) and had a Christmas party in December.

“When a group of people work together as closely as the Petit Jean staff does, friendships are easily formed,” Jim Miller, director of student publications, said. “The staff really enjoys being together, so we planned several activities in addition to our regular yearbook meetings.”

The staff met five deadlines, one each month beginning in October, to ensure the book would be delivered in April.

“On deadline nights we can work until 3 a.m., whatever it takes to get the work done and to meet our deadline,” senior Emily Sane, people section editor, said. “It is a lot of work, but the outcome is worth the effort.”

An accurate recording of the memories and events of the year is the foundation on which the success of a yearbook is built, according to senior Tricia Luethke, copy editor.

“Students make the stories,” Luethke said. “As staff members for the Petit Jean, we keep track of all these activities and portray them in the book as accurately as possible.”

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In Depth

Harding Homeland Security

Administration and students respond to increased warnings

DEANN THOMAS
Copy editor

As of Wednesday, the United States remained under a warning issued by the Homeland Security Department about a high-level risk of terrorist attacks. While officials say the risk level should be lowered soon, the government urges the public to take certain precautions to prepare for any possible terrorist attack.

According to the department's Web site, these precautions should include assembling an emergency supply kit, developing a family communication plan and staying informed about the types of dangers that need to be faced.

The Web site suggests supply kits contain food, water, flashlights, a radio with extra batteries, a first-aid kit and other basic survival items.

The Web site also suggests that the kit should contain duct tape and some plastic garbage bags that can be used to seal windows and doors in the event of a chemical or biological attack.

Even at Harding, officials are taking steps to prepare the university in case of a terrorist attack.

"No one can really know when or how a terrorist is going to attack," Deb Bashaw, insurance coordinator and executive assistant, said. "So, we have to make plans for how to deal with all the situations that could happen."

Bashaw is a member of the emergency crisis team that is revising Harding's existing emergency plans for the campus.

The team is made up of representatives from security, public relations, communications, student services, the nursing department and the insurance coordinator.

One of the biggest issues the team is focusing on is communications, according to Bashaw. She said the team has already created a Web site that will be linked to the Harding home page in emergency situations, so that students and parents will be able to access information during an emergency.

The team plans to maintain communications to the students and faculty through the resident life coordinators, the student services office and department chairs.

The team has also been training personnel on handling certain emergencies. They conducted a fire drill in Collett dorm in April 2003 and plan to conduct a tornado drill this semester. The security staff has also been trained to recognize certain hazardous materials.

Bashaw said the emergency plans will be completed by the end of the semester. At that time, they will begin training the faculty, resident life coordinators and resident assistants how to handle each situation.

Sophomore Malinda Thiede said she has friends who have had to take extra precautions while attending the University of Texas in Austin. When the threat level was raised, the university took immediate action by canceling all campus tours and installing metal detectors.

Thiede said she believed these actions were necessary for the larger campus but that Harding did not need to take such actions.

"At a school that big, there's a lot more to do," she said. "But, I don't think Harding would have as much reason to worry."

For many Harding students, the threat of terrorism is so remote that they don't see any reason to take extra precautions.

"I just don't think about it," junior Bevin Cloninger said. "I don't think Harding would have as much reason to worry."

Other students recognize the significance of the threats and keep up with current developments but don't believe they should let it alter their lifestyles.

"I know there is a legitimate threat, but I'm not going to change my life because of it. That just gives the terrorists too much satisfaction."

Joel Stephens, freshman

Emergency tips from Dept. of Homeland Security

- Assemble an emergency kit that includes food and water, extra clothing, sleeping bags, flashlights, a radio and extra batteries, a first-aid kit and any necessary medication, duct tape and plastic garbage bags
- Make a plan for contacting family members and keep a list of emergency numbers near the phone.
- Learn where to find information during an emergency.
- Take a first aid and CPR class so that you can provide emergency medical help.
- Review your insurance policies to reduce the economic impact of a potential disaster.
- Remember to make accommodations for elderly family members and neighbors or those with special needs.
- Finally, try to make arrangements for pets not allowed in public shelters.

For more information, visit the Department of Homeland Security's Web site, http://www.ready.gov. The site contains information on what to do in case of an explosion or a nuclear blast; or a radiation, biological or chemical threat.

WEEK FIVE: The forum of Corinth

The ruins of Roman Corinth provided wonderful examples of Greek culture and history. A paved marble road complete with gutters led to the forum. Elaborate fountains, along the way provided water to the city, and ancient underground ducts gave us the opportunity to venture beneath the city in pitch-black darkness. Inside the pedestrian-only forum were a market meadow, shops and various monuments and statues. In the center stood the Bema—a speaker's platform, a colonnade covered the platform and judgment seat and a column in front provided a place to chain the accused during trial.

In Acts 18. Gallo released Paul after finding that he did not violate Roman law. The people beat Sosthenes (Acts 18:17) and his name is still visible today in the theater along with that of Erastus (Romans 16:23). Paul left the church in Corinth after the trial and proceeded on his journey. He sailed out of the port of Corchea (Acts 18:18) for Ephesus.

We stood along the shoreline on the remains of an early Christian church long engulffed by the rising sea and looked out over the bay where Paul set sail. The waves lapped at our feet, and we sang praises to God. Paul left on the sea with an uncertain future; he had only the memories of a new church and hope in a future entrusted solely to God. While the sites we visited are important, they are certainly not holy. We do not worship them, and we do not worship Paul, rather we share a common bond in Christ and a faith based on history.

The student's pharmacy is the...

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Harding alumni serving Harding students

Boyce Arnett, P.D.
Class of '66

Casey Lutrell, P.D.
Class of '97

Happy Birthday, Greg!

Your staff & employees

Charley's Pizza
809 S. Main
219-777
Tuesday-Saturday
10:30 a.m.- 9 p.m.

We regretfully announce that Greg Tatera's youth will expire on 27 February 2003. The dearly departed may be viewed at the offices of ARARARK ServiceMaster or walking around campus. Condolence calls may be made at the offices of ARARK ServiceMaster.

We hope this week brings you all the wonderful things you desire. Happy Birthday, Greg!
Security beefs up ability
Officers receive certification, offer safety awareness classes

CAILEY TAT
Staff writer

In an effort to better prepare its officers, the security department is extending its training in the area of emergency assistance, aiming to have all officers Medical First Responder certified by Feb. 22.

About two years ago, the security department began assessing campus needs and found that help was needed in the area of emergency medical assistance. Because security officers are usually the first to respond to emergencies involving Harding students, department officials believe Medical First Responder certification, which enables officers to treat, stabilize and provide victim assessments to ambulance personnel, is beneficial to the campus.

Some of the medical emergencies they are able to treat with the certification are broken bones, breathing problems, cardiac arrest and minor burns, cuts and bruises. Most officers are already CPR certified, which is a pre-requisite of the Medical First Responder training program.

After receiving clearance from the administration, security officers began training in Oct. 2001 for certification in advanced first aid with North Star Ambulance Service in Searcy.

"In the past the most we could do was call 911 and wait for an ambulance," Capt. Kevin Davis, assistant director of campus security, said. "Now we can treat [victims] and assess the situation so we can provide greater assistance to the paramedic team that comes to give advanced care. The students really appreciate it, and we are happy to be able to provide that service for them."

The security department also began offering a women’s safety awareness class in the dorms last semester. The one-hour class, which took place in a different women's dorm each week and will be offered again in the fall, involved a Power Point presentation in which Capt. Drew Dawson talked to the women about dangerous situations and ways to avoid them.

"A lot of the time the girls laugh it off and don’t see how serious it could be because of how insignificant it seems to them," Katrina Timms, residence life coordinator in Pryor Hall, said. "But as a mother, I know how valuable [the students] are to their parents and the thought of something going wrong because of a mistake is too much of a burden. Any way we can make the girls more aware of their surroundings and what’s going on is truly a great thing, and I am deeply thankful to security for trying to do that."

Although the class was designed to offer women safety tips that help prevent attacks, such as avoiding unit areas at night and avoiding suspicious people in cars, the security officers also instructed the women about defensive devices which can be used against an attacker. These items include umbrellas, backpacks and squirt bottles containing lemon juice.

"It was really eye-opening in that a lot of us didn’t realize what goes on around here, because we have that tendency to think ‘oh it’s just Searcy,’” senior Shadrack Scandlen said. "At least now we’re up to speed and know something to do, things that seemed very obvious but a lot of us honestly never paid attention to."

The success of the women’s classes has spurred the department to start a men’s class later this semester on drug and alcohol awareness.

The security department hopes to teach men how to tell if someone is an addict and the affect drug use has on crime.

"We’re going to set up new ‘families’ for these kids or pretend wives. ‘Morally inviolate Daddy’ They will be past being able to handle that sort of a transition,” she said. "We are, however, going to give them with the loss of their family, create a secure and dependable home and environment and help them learn how to cope with their situation and live in the world without them."

Sheltered Path will function out of two facilities: The Ranch and the Mountain Shelter. The facilities will be built on a piece of land at the end of Main Street near Camp Will Wood.

Everyone entering the program will begin at the Ranch with other children of various ages. They will be at the ranch for no longer than a year, learning "basic and essential" life skills such as having respect for themselves and those around them, caring for themselves and their personal space, and living successfully in a group environment. They will be taught to appreciate education and hard work.

When they "graduate" from the Ranch, they will move into the Manor, a large house capable of accommodating more than a dozen people and where they can include girls’ and boys’ living areas, a dining room and kitchen, laundry rooms and a few classrooms. Ganus said the Manor will be a place where the children will be nurtured by a live-in support staff of counselors, assistants and others.

The children will attend a private school, a public school designed to target a particular group of children like the Sheltered Path community.

Ganus sees Searcy as a wonderful location for Sheltered Path because of the service-oriented community and the college students who are interested in jobs and volunteer work at the home.

"I’m excited about the group of students that are coming out of Harding right now,” she said. "They seem to be looking for something to do with their lives that makes a difference. I think Sheltered Path will be a different excellent opportunity for many of them.

Upon Sheltered Path’s opening, the facility will need cooks, teachers, administrators, resident assistants for Sheltered Path and volunteers to keep everything running smoothly.

The organization is currently in the process of acquiring funds from various corporations. They will also receive funding from grants and government support.

Ganus will take the Licensed Professional Counselor boards this summer to become a certified counselor. She plans to be personally involved in the Sheltered Path program. She said managing Sheltered Path is her way of helping those in need.

"I have always had a heart for children and for those in trouble,” she said.

Campus of Character
February’s character trait: Sincerity

Eagerness to do what is right with transparent motives

News

Security beefs up ability
Officers receive certification, offer safety awareness classes

February 21, 2003

The Bison

Facility mem offer plans child shelter

BETHANY THOMPSON
Staff writer

Debbie Ganus, adjunct professor for Bible and communication, first envisioned creating Sheltered Path, a program that would provide a permanent home and on-site schooling for children who are wards of the state and have a low chance of adoption, around five years ago.

Now, after years of research and planning, Ganus said the program, which is the first of its kind, will be operational by 2005.

Sheltered Path will focus on helping the children in foster care that are usually the most difficult to place in permanent care. This group consists mainly of children who are more than 10-years-old and those who are part of a sibling group, Ganus said.

Ordinarily, these children would be placed in long-term foster care, which involves many transitions and changes in environment. Ganus came up with the idea for Sheltered Path so these children could be placed in a permanent home instead.

Ganus admits the home will not be conventional.

"We’re not going to set up new ‘families’ for these kids or pretend wives. ‘Morally inviolate Daddy.’ They will be past being able to handle that sort of a transition," she said. "We are, however, going to give them with the loss of their family, create a secure and dependable home and environment and help them learn how to cope with their situation and live in the world without them."

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Campus of Character
February’s character trait: Sincerity

Eagerness to do what is right with transparent motives
Students find married life takes some getting used to

MARINA SHANNON
Staff writer

Everyone knows that marriage brings new changes to a relationship, but most have no idea that could mean obsessing about electricity bills. Students choosing to get married before graduation day can experience a juggling act of school, jobs and prioritizing their marriage.

Senior Nate Dutile married his wife, Kerri, in August; before the fall semester began.

"It's been a lot of fun but a lot of work," Nate Dutile said. "One of the things that I remember people telling me before I got married was that dating is based around entertainment and marriage is based around work. That has been the biggest adjustment. You are not only around the person when you are taking them out to eat.

For some, sharing a home can be the biggest change. Junior Alic­ia Williamson married her husband, Carl, in June 2002.

"It changes your routine because [when you are dating] generally you are taking time to go out during the week just to see each other but now when you are home you are able to be together," she said. "It's given us more time together because we are not always having to plan to see each other.

The biggest adjustment is getting used to how [your spouse does] particular things from day to day including how they spend their spare time," she said. "You have different expectations of a spouse and when you get married sometimes they are met and sometimes they are not. The first week [of our marriage] I realized that Carl could watch two or three movies in a row. I couldn't understand how he could sit and watch that many movies and do nothing with his day. I was so surprised when I walked in one day to find him watching 'Little Women' because he had watched every other movie in the house."

The Dutiles have created a routine to help handle the housework. "It usually works out that whoever makes lunch doesn't have to do the dishes so nobody is doing all the work at one time," Nate Dutile said.

Nate Dutile said he usually does his homework while his wife makes dinner and she does her homework while he cleans the kitchen. This routine gives each of them time to focus on schoolwork. Senior Regan Epps and his wife, Sarah, also wed in June 2002. The couple started dating before they came to Hunting. Sara Epps said being married is better than being single because you have your spouse and when you get married that is one less thing you need to worry about.

"You have your spouse and best friend as a roommate instead of some random person," she said. "You don't have to worry about making time to see each other because you are with each other all the time."

Sometimes, being newly married can affect the friendships maintained before the wedding. Alicia Williamson tries to have dinner with her single friends and attends a weekly prayer group. "Friendships do change, sometimes for the better, sometimes worse," Nate Dutile said. "You have to have a giving attitude at all times to have time to focus on schoolwork."

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Club championships

Sports

Baseball starts 7-2, fights rain

CODY UISHER
Staff writer

With only a week left before opening Gulf South Conference play against Christian Brothers, however, Coach Mike Fuller said his team’s major foe is the weather.

“Our biggest concern right now is staying out of rain,” he said. “We’re just trying to get games in before conference starts.”

After having four games rained out last weekend, the 7-2 Bison are in action this weekend with a pair of doubleheaders. Harding takes on Central Baptist on Friday and Northwestern (E.L.A.) State on Saturday. The action starts at 1 p.m. both days, weather permitting.

According to Fuller, the baseball team’s strength so far this season has been pitching. Nine Bison pitchers have combined for a 2.25 ERA through the first nine games.

“The biggest standout has been pitching in general,” Fuller said. “The pitching staff has consistently hit their spots. We’ve had a stellar pitching performance so far this season.”

The Bisons have struck out 78 batters this season while walking 22. Opponents are batting .223.

“The pitching staff has cut down on our balls,” senior pitcher Matt Walter said. “I’ve been able to keep the defense on their toes. The defense will have a big part in helping us out.”

The Bisons opened the season with a sweep over Williams Baptist. In the two games, Harding shut the Eagles out for 14 innings and struck out 16 batters. Walter and senior Aaron Gorse pitched up, with junior Juston Goodrich and sophomore Justin Cone earning saves.

Goodrich continued the pitching dominance with a 10-strikeout performance at West Florida. Sophomore Brandon Kimbrough saved the win for Goodrich. Cone and junior Mark Connell combined to pitch the Bisons’ fourth win in a row against West Florida.

“When West Florida comes around,Fuller said. “They’re becoming more confident. They started to warm up against Arkansas State.”

Bison can provide for the offense. Fuller said of Harding’s five home runs and knocking in six runs. Sophomore second baseman Luke Kirby is leading the team with a .345 average.

Junior Matt Smith has been a lethal, speedy base runner behind the plate for Harding by throwing out six runners. Fuller and the pitching staff have prevented opposing catchers from bringing up the club.

“Smith calls a real good game,” Walter said. “The Bison players are happy with what the weather is doing and that they’ve got a team that’s going to keep the defense on their toes.

Curtis Sergent / The Bison

Junior Justin Goodrich pitches Monday during the first game of Harding’s doubleheader sweep at Jerry Moir Field. Goodrich is in his first year with the Bisons after two seasons at Northwest Mississippi Community College, "I fell out one short of the first perfect game in school history.

“As a team we’ve worked around our pitching staff as well as batting,” West Florida.

The offense has struggled early in the season. The Bisons are batting .258 with five home runs. Epstein has been the good of a team that’s going to keep the defense on their toes.

The offense has struggled early in the season. The Bisons are batting .258 with five home runs. Epstein has been a constant threat at the plate, however, despite a .205 average.

“We’re not nearly as consistent this year as we were last year,” Fuller said. “We’re not nearly as consistent this year as we were last year.”

The offense was led by senior pitcher Matt Walter, who compiled a 2.78 ERA through the first nine games.

“The biggest standout has been pitching in general,” Fuller said. “The pitching staff has consistently hit their spots. We’ve had a stellar pitching performance so far this season.”

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L
ast season, the Bisons had to battle down to the final minute of their final game to secure a berth in the Gulf South Conference Tournament.

The 2002-03 team, which is ranked No. 5 in the NCAA Division II South Region, is hoping to do something similar a little earlier this year.
The Bisons (18-5, 10-2 GSC) had won six in a row and 11 of their last 12 entering Thursday night's game against Christian Brothers in Memphis. Results of that game were not available at press time.

A Harding victory against the Bisons would have locked up a trip to Tupelo, Miss., site of the conference tournament to be held March 7-9.

Even if Harding lost, a win in any of its last three games or a Christian Brothers loss in any of its last three games would assure Harding a berth.

"I don't know if you can say we're in yet," coach Jeff Morgan said Tuesday. "But the cards are definitely in our favor."

But the Bisons are looking for more than a spot in the postseason, Morgan said.

"There's other goals that we're trying to pursue and stay really hungry," Morgan said.

If the Bisons win out, they will at least tie Henderson State for the West Division title.

"We've got three [games] before that one, and we can't look ahead and mess up one of those other ones," Morgan said. "It would be nice to be in a position where, come March 1, we're in position where we're playing for a conference championship." But first things first - Harding will host Ouachita Baptist on Monday before going to Russellville to face Arkansas Tech on Thursday.

The Bisons defeated both teams earlier this season - Ouachita Baptist by five points in Arkadelphia and Arkansas Tech in a blowout in Steary.

"Ouachita is fighting hard for a playoff spot and playing really well right now, and then you've got Arkansas Tech," Morgan said. "We're going to be over there on Senior Night and they're talented." Harding's final regular-season game is March 1 at home against first-place Henderson State.

"We're already getting a lot of interest for that game," Morgan said. "I've got people calling from all over the state, and I know Henderson is planning on bringing a bunch of people." The Bisons four-game winning streak has come in convincing fashion, most recently a 105-74 drubbing of Central Arkansas on Monday.

"We had a great start and the guys were real focused today," Morgan said. "It was a great team effort." In their wins at Arkansas-Monticello and Southern Arkansas last week, the Bisons used dominant first halves to cruise to victory.

"We've been making some defensive stops," Morgan said. "We were getting a lot of home shot, and then going down and scoring. In the last week or two, we've been pretty good defensively." Senior Chris Campbell has contributed the biggest plays in double figures every game this month, including a 22-point performance against Delta State.

"He has been real consistent coming off the bench for the last two-three weeks," Morgan said. "This second half of conference play, he's just played really well." Led by seniors Aaron Farley and Jason Malek, who are fourth and sixth, respectively, among scoring leaders in the GSC, the Bisons continue to lead the conference in several offensive categories, averaging 90.2 points per game, nearly 10 points better than any other GSC squad.

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**Lady Bisons shock No. 11 UCA to stay in postseason contention**

RYAN COOK
Sports editor

A Feb. 10 loss to Arkansas-Monticello seemingly took the Lady Bisons out of realistic contention for a berth in next month's Gulf South Conference Tournament.

Until Monday, that is.
The Lady Bisons vaulted back into the playoff picture by stunning No. 11 Central Arkansas, 75-68, Monday night at Rhodes Field House.

It was Harding's first victory against the Sugar Bears since 1993 in the Ganus Athletic Center.

Senior Julie Hammitt scored 17 points against UCA and was named West Division player of the week Wednesday.

"That was so awesome," Hammitt said after Monday's win. "We came together as a team and never gave up. We got down a couple of times and just came back and proved it."

The win left Harding (16-7, 7-5 GSC) in fifth place, one game behind Delta State for the fourth and final playoff spot.

"We knew coming into the year that we were going to have to beat one of the top teams in the league to get into the conference tournament," coach Brad Francis said.

Harding played at last-place Christian Brothers on Thursday, but the result of that game was not available at press time.

The Lady Bisons will wrap up the regular season with a tough stretch of three games next week, hosting Ouachita Baptist on Monday, going to Arkansas Tech on Thursday and hosting Henderson State on March 1.

In its first matches this year, Harding defeated Ouachita Baptist in a close game on the road, but lost to both ATU and HSU.

The Lady Bisons have never won at ATU. Harding is 1-31 all-time against the Golden Suns, with its only win coming Feb. 6, 1993 in the Ganus Athletic Center.

To qualify for the GSC Tournament, the Lady Bisons will need to win one more game than Delta State over the final four games, then hope for the tiebreakers to fall their way.

Harding lost at Delta State on Jan. 9 but upset the then-ranked Lady Statesmen Feb. 6 at Rhodes Field House.

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**Men's BB**

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**End of Regular Season**

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**This week's games**

*February 21, 22* 
- Arkansas vs. Henderson State  
- Arkansas vs. Central Arkansas  
- Arkansas vs. Texas Tech  
- Henderson State vs. Central Arkansas  
- Henderson State vs. Arkansas  
- Arkansas Tech vs. Arkansas

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**Next week's games**

*February 28, 29* 
- Arkansas vs. Henderson State  
- Arkansas vs. Central Arkansas  
- Arkansas vs. Texas Tech  
- Henderson State vs. Central Arkansas  
- Henderson State vs. Arkansas  
- Arkansas Tech vs. Arkansas

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**Conference Tournament**

Arkansas coach Ron Marvel was called for a technical foul, junior Tiffany Phillips scores one of her 13 points. The Lady Bisons defeated the No. 11 Sugar Bears, 73-66, to back in the middle of the Gulf South Conference Tournament race.