

Gender and Sexuality Alliance closes out semester with Pride Prom

RACHEL RUDD

NEWS EDITOR

The Gender and Sexuality Alliance closed out the spring semester with the return of Pride Prom, which was meant to be a “more relaxed event,” to celebrate the end of the semester. “GSA decided to host Pride Prom because we know so many, just like us on (the executive board), did not have an authentic experience at their high school prom. We wanted to have an event for everyone just to be themselves and make those memories they may not have been able to make in the past,” said GSA secretary Lucky Gilmore, who is a junior political science major from North Little Rock. Hosted at the Pavilion on April 12, the event had around 50 people RSVP. Gilmore added that many people showed up without having an RSVP. Gilmore and GSA vice president Gabriella Orick, who is a junior exercise science major from Paragould, said they were glad they could bring Pride Prom back to campus. Entry to Pride Prom was free. To cover costs, the Multicultural Center provided GSA with a fund of roughly \$1,000. GSA also received \$266 from the drag

show earlier in the semester. Around 10:30 p.m. Gilmore and Orick announced the Pride Prom royalty. There were two sets of royalty announced. The first set went to drag queen Rebekah Pruitt and her wife. “Rebekah Pruitt helped us out so much previously,” Orick said. “I wanted to give something that she had not experienced when she went to prom. I wanted to give that to her wife as well.” The second set, called the “princess and prince” went to Emily Peters, Young Democrats president and a sophomore animal science major from Cape Girardeau, Missouri, and Joseph Jordan, a sophomore computer science major from Hot Springs, secretary for the Young Democrats. “It’s kind of surreal. Honestly, I’ve been pretty much an introvert my whole life. Being put into the spotlight was kind of a breath of fresh air honestly,” Jordan said. Peters said the event helped to solidify the Young Democrats’ connection with GSA. “We’ve worked so hard to build a connection through working with GSA and the Young Dems have really felt a connection,” Peters said. “It’s really cool.

I get goosebumps thinking about it because I love it.” Orick added that Peters and Jordan were selected because they have “helped us out a lot.” GSA is planning to host Pride Prom around the same time next year. Orick said GSA wants to get a different venue, implement a voting system for prom royalty and have more decorations. The event was initially scheduled for March 31, however, it was canceled due to the threat of severe weather. Gilmore said she was proud of the executive board for making a difficult decision and “choosing safety over the success of the event.” Gilmore said she hoped the event helped students in attendance feel more comfortable and accepted on campus. “I hope it had the effect of helping students on campus have a fun and carefree time with their friends and partners. We held the event because so many people were still ‘in the closet’ during their prom and we wanted to have that space to relive those memories but as their true selves,” Gilmore added. Athena Gentry, a junior elementary education major from Highland, Arkansas, said she came to the event to help connect with



Photo by Rachel Rudd | News Editor

Saylor Bowen, Maddie Glaze and Maggie Carty danced at Pride Prom. The event aimed to provide LGBTQ+ students and allies an “authentic prom.” For more photos, see page 4B.

other people on campus. “I don’t really get out a lot on campus. So I was like ‘I don’t know very many people on campus and this could be a good opportunity to meet new people.’ I met somebody (tonight),” Gentry said.

Christina Smith, a sophomore history and communication major from Cabot said she and her partners came to the event to show their support for GSA. “Two out of the three of my poly couple here are queer, so it just felt only right to show

up,” Smith said. “I feel safe. I feel a lot more safe to actually go out and dance. It doesn’t feel like a socially awkward thing like it did two years ago when I first had my first prom.

A-State to host Earth Day celebration with on-campus events

A-STATE NEWS

PRESS RELEASE

To celebrate Earth Day the department of Environmental, Health and Safety (EHS) at Arkansas State University will host its annual event on Friday, April 21, from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. The theme of Earth Day this year is “Invest in our

Planet.” This educational opportunity will be held on the Heritage Plaza Lawn, east of the Reng Student Union. Several speakers from A-State and area organizations will be on hand to discuss recycling, local conservation, and earth-friendly practices. Speakers include Brandon Tabor of KASU, who will

serve as the emcee. A-State Chancellor Todd Shields will welcome everyone to campus. Other speakers include Jonesboro Mayor Harold Copenhaver and a representative from the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce Green Business Committee. “We are expecting up to 409 elementary students, 140

parents, and up to 200 A-State faculty, staff and students,” said Melissa Dooley, director of EHS. She said the public is welcome to attend this free event. Area businesses and non-profits will have booths set up to highlight their efforts and show their environmentally friendly practices. A-State will have a variety

of student representatives from several on-campus organizations. Food will be provided at the event including hot dogs donated by Sodexo that will be grilled by Centennial Bank, buns from Textbook Brokers, chips from Frito Lay, and drinks from Coca-Cola. “We hope, with this event, we bring increased

environmental awareness and increased sustainable actions throughout the campus and the Jonesboro region,” said Dooley.

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EARTH DAY, 4A

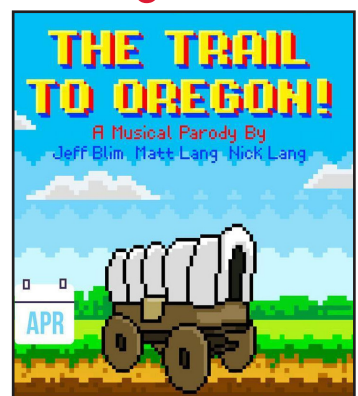
A-State Department of Theatre finishing semester with “The Trail to Oregon”

CAROLINE AVERITT

PHOTO EDITOR

The Arkansas State University Department of Theatre is presenting “The Trail to Oregon” at the Fowler Center. The musical opened the weekend of April 14 and will be performed April 21 and 22. “The Trail to Oregon,” a satirical comedy based on “The Oregon Trail” video game, will close out the A-State Department of Theatre’s season. The show follows a family as they make their way to Oregon and chaos ensues along the way. Miraya Gerardo-Munguia, a senior theatre and psychology double major from Searcy, Arkansas, acted as stage manager for the show. “This show is hilarious. It is so funny. There’s so much audience interaction. The fourth wall doesn’t exist in the show and it’s so nice to be able to see the actors interact with the audience and

the audience interact with the actors,” Gerardo-Munguia said. The musical, originally performed by StarKid productions, invites crowd participation and forces the cast to improvise. The cast asks for the audience to choose names for five of the characters and by round of applause, the audience chooses the character who dies at the end. Dallas Martinez, the director of the show, said, “it’s going to be different every night because we don’t know who’s going to get chosen. It really is the audience that has to make those choices.” Though the original musical can be seen for free on YouTube, Martinez never watched before directing it. “(The script) reminds me of the sort of western frontier ideals that the old shows my father used to work with, like ‘Bonanza’ and ‘Davy Crockett,’” Martinez said. “But it’s very



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

“The Trail to Oregon” will be performed on April 21 and 22 at 7:30 p.m. at the Fowler Center. much a boardwalk caricature of that, like if you go to Disney World, or Six Flags, and you see those western guys and so that’s sort of the feeling I got from this.

CONTINUED:
THEATRE, 4A

CAMPUS CRIME



RACHEL RUDD

NEWS EDITOR

April 16 | 10:53 a.m.

Officer Billy Branch noticed the west door of Pack Place Building 2 was standing open. As he entered the parking lot, he found that the entrance gate was broken and laying on the ground. After securing the open door, Branch reviewed video of the gate. He found that on April 15 at 6:20 p.m., the vehicle belonging to suspect one pulled up to the card swipe. Another vehicle pulled up next to him and rolls down their window. The gate raises to the up position and the other vehicle enters the parking lot. While the gate is still up, suspect one’s vehicle is seen attempting to also enter the lot before the gate lowers. As the vehicle was doing so, the gate came down and struck the hood of the listed vehicle.

The vehicle is seen entering the lot and parking. The driver then exits and walks over to the other vehicle and speaks with them after they park. Both drivers are then seen entering the building together. In the video it appears that the other vehicle may have been driven by someone related to suspect one. Branch identified the vehicle and found that it does have white scuff marks on the hood area. April 16 | 2:09 a.m. Officer Dustin Mitchell observed a vehicle speeding on Johnson Avenue. Mitchell used his radar gun to clock the vehicle at 46mph in a 35mph zone. Mitchell pulled the vehicle over and made contact with the driver. The driver said he did not have an ID in the United States, but did for Mexico. Mitchell took the driver’s name and date of birth and ran him through dispatch.

Dispatch said the driver had a license, but it was out of Arkansas and suspended. The return did not have a picture to be able to check to insure it was not the driver. Mitchell compared the return with the driver’s name, date of birth, middle initial and prior addresses. The driver said his brother had once used his name with law enforcement and could have been the reason he showed a suspended license. The driver added that his brother was deported around nine years ago. The driver was issued a citation for driving on suspended. Mitchell told him to take all information regarding his brother to the court date. He was issued a court date for May 23 at 9 a.m. at the Craighead County Courthouse. The vehicle was then turned over to witness one, who had a valid license.