

THE BAJA OKLAHOMAN

Newsletter of the OU Club of Austin

1905 Shadow Brook Circle, Round Rock, Texas 78681 • 512-431-2069 / 512-255-6402 • December 2011

Sooner Wonderland



Christmas cards sent out this year by University of Oklahoma President and Mrs. David Boren feature this striking view of a snow-blanketed Bizzell Memorial Library. The structure, erected in 1929, is named for the University's fifth president, William Bennett Bizzell, who served from 1925 until 1941.

—Photo by Debbie Rudy,
OU Development Staff

Insight Bowl watch party set Friday at the Marriott

Sooners will take on Iowa at Tempe; kickoff time is 9 p.m.

Sooner fans from the Austin area will gather once again at the Marriott Hotel in Round Rock for a watch party when Oklahoma plays Iowa in the Insight Bowl this Friday.

Kickoff time is 9 p.m.

Lee Lanham, watch party chair, will be on hand to oversee the evening as the Sooners wind up the 2012 season.

See you there.

*Inside
this
issue*

Sooner men's basketball program on the upswing

— Page 2

Scholars Walk planned for the Norman campus

— Page 3

OU Club member reviews Wilkinson manuscript

— Page 3

Men's basketball showing signs of renewal

New coach Kruger's work yielding nice surprises

Lon Kruger's early work with the University of Oklahoma's men's basketball program has produced the big surprise to date in the Big XII.

Part of the reason is that the Sooners (11-1) have played only one team that's been in the national top 25 so far. But the way the team is playing has been what has raised eyebrows.

And there have been some quality wins, as well — over Arkansas, Oral Roberts, Washington St., Santa Clara and Houston.

The true test of the team, however, appears to lie in the first half of the coming conference season. But the early results are far more heartening than had been anticipated.

Women's team doing OK There was a three-game losing streak earlier but in the last two weeks the women's team has been posting wins at its accustomed rate.

OU's women stand at 9-3 so far and

Sports notes

figure to be a contender in the league's first division.

Coach Sherri Coale's team, recently out of the top 25 nationally for the first time since the 2004-05 season, has lost two players to season-ending injuries. But less experienced players are showing signs of good days to come.

Enigma in Norman It's difficult to tell just what's going on these days with the OU football program.

Reports out of Norman indicate several players are leaving the team, even though they have eligibility remaining.

And sportswriters reporting from the scene seem to sense the uncertainty but are having difficulty determining its cause.

The catalyst for all this, of course, is a season in which the Sooner football team uncharacteristically played worse as the season progressed, particularly in the bigger games. It's usually the opposite, and then some.

Public note taken The situation began to make it into public view clearly two weeks ago. For example, *The Tulsa World*, doing a story on how ticket sales were going at Norman for this week's bowl game, noted that "Joe Castiglione and other OU athletic department representatives declined to be interviewed for this story." That seemed peculiar, on such a routine matter.

Then, late last week, the *World* ran a story headlined "Loss of players impacting Sooners." A subhead added: "Recent departures provide weird feeling to many OU players."

In that story, several players report that some teammates still plan to leave the team early.

Receiver Kenny Stills used the word "weird" to characterize the feeling among team members.

Stoops offers some insight Coach Bob Stoops has provided three names so far of players who won't play this week and

probably not later: Ronnell Lewis (academically ineligible, turning pro), Brandon Williams (transferring out) and Austin Haywood (quit).

"It feels like the locker room is getting emptier and emptier," said Brennan Clay.

"For various reasons, whether it's family or issues with the staff . . . I can't say what it might be," Clay added.

Stoops explained things a bit, in general, saying last week: "Some want more playing time. Some have multiple issues that you don't know about within the program, whether it be class attendance, whether it be workout absences, whether it be drug-testing policies."

Suspensions at high level *The Daily Oklahoman's* Barry Tramel noted in his column that Stoops told him that "we've had more [player] suspensions than we've ever had to have" this season.

And *The Tulsa World's* John Hoover reported that since just before the beginning of 2011 spring practice 14 scholarship players have left the team. And five others currently on the team roster are seeking transfers.

Some of the speculation in Norman also has revolved around whether Stoops will make changes in his coaching staff. It has often been pointed out lately that he hasn't fired an assistant in his 13 years at the helm. But he has been openly critical of some of his assistants this year, for the first time in memory.

Stay tuned

Insight ticket sales Some 6,000 of OU's 11,000 ticket allotment had been sold to Sooner fans, the University's ticket office estimated recently.

However, it has been noted that OU fans also have bought tickets at other sites, such as those online.

Final Bedlam count Thirteen people were injured after the final gun sounded in OU's loss at Stillwater this month.

Of those, 10 went to the hospital and have been released.

One of those still faces surgery to repair a broken collarbone and shoulder ligament damage.

The Baja Oklahoman is a publication of the OU Club of Austin, a non-profit organization of University of Oklahoma alumni and friends of the University in Austin and Central Texas • Members are encouraged to submit material for publication. • An application for club membership appears on the club's website. Membership is \$25 a year; \$35 for a family.

Club officers — 2011-12

President	Fred Dupy
Vice president	Dan Hodges
Secretary	(vacant)
Treasurer	Jessica Benedict
Membership	Janet Atwood
Watch parties	Lee Lanham
Communications co-ord.	(vacant)
Scholarship chair	Alisa Macy
Student recruitment chair	(vacant)

Club website:

<http://www.ouclubofaustin.com>

Webmaster: Craig Likes

Club email:

austin-club@ouclubofaustin.com

Greg Olds, bulletin editor

e-mail: gold@s@ustin.rr.com

2811 Inridge Dr., Austin 78745

phone: 512-891-0078

'NEATH A WESTERN SKY: Scholars' Walk planned on the south oval to honor academic accomplishment

Athletes, coaches and former administrators are honored in statues and similar permanent tributes throughout the Norman campus of the University of Oklahoma. This month, the school's regents decided it is past time to give similar recognition to another group: people who have excelled academically.

After their meeting in Norman, regents announced that a Scholars Walk is to be established on campus.

The walk will be in the Van Vleet (south) oval, extending north from Lindsey St. to Brooks.

The walk will feature paving stones bearing the names of OU students who have received major scholarships, such as the Rhodes, Truman and Marshall grants.

And the walkway will also feature statues of one outstanding faculty member for every 50 years of OU's history.

Work is expected to begin next summer, said David Boren, University president.

Tobacco use on campus Even tougher measures against smoking on the OU campus in Norman are being investigated.

Earlier this year, President Boren

Campus notes

formed a committee to study the idea of a tobacco policy that would be more stringent than present state law. Oklahoma law now bans smoking in campus buildings and within 25 feet of a building entrance.

OU's campuses at Oklahoma City and Tulsa already have policies more stringent about smoking than state law but there is nothing in place yet at Norman.

On the study committee named by Boren are students, faculty, staff and administrators. The panel has been gathering opinion as to what should prevail at the Norman campus regarding smoking.

Tulsa medical school planned Officials of the universities of Oklahoma and Tulsa are moving ahead with plans to establish a four-year medical college at Tulsa.

The Tulsa School of Community Medicine would be located at the eastern edge of downtown and would offer a four-year curriculum.

The plans are designed to address

the shortage of physicians in the state.

The accreditation process already is under way and hopes are to open the new college in 2014.

Some 400 students and faculty are envisioned for the college once it attains full use.

Toby Keith still at it Plans have been announced by country singer Toby Keith's foundation for the erection of an \$8.5 million home for family members of patients undergoing treatment for cancer in Oklahoma City, including the OU Medical Center's Children's Hospital and the Peggy and Charles Stephenson Cancer Center.

The OK Kids Korral home will include 12 overnight suites and four day suites. Completion is set for late 2013.

Keith's foundation has been active in this regard in recent years.

Eighty per cent of young cancer patients who come for treatment in Oklahoma City are from out of town.

Norman weather conference Since 2011 seemed to present so many disastrous weather events, a number of officials from across the country decided it would be a good idea to get together and discuss that, and make future plans.

Twelve of the worst events of the year cost an estimated \$52 billion in damages, it was reported.

The gathering occurred this month at Norman's National Weather Center. The meeting was billed as the Weather-Ready Nation workshop.

Participants discussed 2011's disasters and looked at ways to improve public awareness and preparedness.

'Dear Jay' to be released Jan. 15

OU Club of Austin member asked to check Wilkinson book manuscript

The letters of former OU football coach Bud Wilkinson are the subject of a book due to be released next month.

Wilkinson's son, Jay, compiled 47 of his father's letters to him during Jay's years attending college at Duke, where he earned All-American honors in football in 1963.

The manuscript was sent to a member of the OU Club of Austin. Mo Anderson, who has contributed significantly to the club's scholarship program, reviewed the writing and says the book will be well worth anyone's time.

Beginning with the first letter Bud Wilkinson wrote his son when Jay left home to attend Duke, the collection shows a father guiding his son toward his own path while stressing the importance of service to others.

Jay, a Norman High graduate now living in Oklahoma City, offers comments about each letter, providing context and further insight.

The book will be released on Jan. 15 by the University of Oklahoma Press.

To order in advance, go online to Amazon.com or contact the OU press.

Got a news tip?

email:
goldsa@austin.rr.com

OU Club of Austin
1905 Shadow Brook Circle
Round Rock TX 78681

Forwarding services requested

Calendar of events

Event/(TV channel)	Day/date	Time	Where
Football watch party OU-Iowa (ESPN)	Dec. 30 Fri.	9 p.m.	Marriott Hotel, 2600 La Frontera (near Tx 45, between MoPac and I-35)
Women's basketball OU @ Texas (FSN)	Feb. 25 Sat.	5 p.m.	Erwin Center, 1701 Red River St.:
Men's basketball OU @ Texas (ESPN2)	Feb. 29 Wed.	8 p.m.	Erwin Center, 1701 Red River St.:

Next issue:
January

Got a tip? email:
golds@austin.rr.com



CLUB OF AUSTIN

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Work No. _____

E-mail address _____ Fax _____

Areas of interest _____

Membership dues: \$25 a year • \$35 for a family NEW RENEWAL

O.U. Club of Austin • 1905 Shadow Brook Circle • Round Rock, TX 78681