

The Wiking

GRAYSON COLLEGE

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Winter Storm Uri is over, but impact remains

-Viking Staff

Grayson students have returned to classes a week after Winter Storm Uri left millions across the state without access to water or electricity. In Grayson County, average highs in the mid-teens left many powerless students cold.

“We were without power, probably close to 30 hours total. Consecutive was about 26 hours,” explained business student Callie Keese. During the blackout, Keese’s family huddled together in their den and used bedding to section off the rest of the family home. As their kitchen was fully electric, the family took advantage of brief periods of power to heat their food. “We had a couple of hours worth of power Tuesday afternoon and we were able to cook some Cajun-style beans for dinner, and tostadas for lunch.” Keese continued, “That was actually the first time we’d been able to cook anything since Monday morning.”

Education student Amanda Favors luckily kept her power during the storm but lost access to water. With five people in the home, including



Above: GC South Campus sits in a field of snow. (Photo by Dr. Jeremy McMillen)

her special-needs son, Favors was left with few options. “We had to melt snow to flush toilets,” she explained. “3 five gallon buckets melted only equals half a bucket of water.”

With deliveries halted by icy roads and with more and more county residents needing supplies, local businesses struggled to keep up with demand. “Trying to find food was hard because people went crazy like at the beginning of COVID,” Favors told our reporter. “Shelves were empty everywhere.”

“It was difficult working during the storm even though we were open for limited hours,” explained business student and Sam’s Club employee Lavada Burse. “First, I had to get there, and once I was there, we were slammed the entire time.” As the temperature increased, so did the crowds. “The aftermath is the same,” Burse explained. “We sell out as fast as we get items in. I’ve been exhausted every day I come home.”

(Continued on pg 3)

GC fills need for Certified Nurse Aides in Texoma

- Marlene Phillips, Director of Advising and Outreach



Above: Grayson College Patient Care Technician students practice Nurse Aid skills in class. (Photo provided by author)

Grayson College’s Center for Workplace Learning is now an in-facility test center for the Nurse Aide Competency Exam administered by Prometric. In-facility test center approval from Prometric means that Grayson College’s Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) students can receive training and test for certification in the same location on Grayson’s main campus in Denison.

“Grayson College has again met a need in service to its students and the Texoma community,” said Workforce Solutions Executive

Director Janie Bates. “When the administration of CNA certification exams changed to Prometric in September 2020, the number of testing centers fell dramatically,” Kate Corder, Director of Continuing Education at Grayson College, explained.

“Students were successfully completing our training program and employers wanted to hire them, but there was very limited availability at testing centers to get our students certified. That’s when we decided to do something about it,” added Corder.

(Continued on pg 2)

NOTICE FROM THE OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AID

Federal Student Loan EXTENSION

From March 13, 2020 - Sep 30, 2021 payment will not be due and interest will not accrue on federal student loans.

Grayson College
Financial Aid
(903) 463-8794
financialaid@grayson.edu

Above: Federal Student Loan Extension from March 13, 2020 -September 30, 2021. Payment will not be due and interest will not accrue on federal student loans. Grayson College Financial Aid. 903 463 8794. financialaid@grayson.edu.

From March 13, 2020, through at least September 30, 2021 payment will not be due and interest will not accrue on federal student loans. If you are currently attending school and are enrolled in at least 6 credit hours, you will remain in an “in school deferment” status and your loans will not go into repayment.

For more information, visit studentaid.gov.

Phi Theta Kappa opens spring recruitment period

- Lavada Burse, Student

Are you looking for a fun and engaging group to join on campus? Phi Theta Kappa is now accepting new members! Phi Theta Kappa is an International Honor Society for two-year colleges.

The chapter Omicron Psi is regionally and nationally known for its strong leadership and research and writing skills on campus. Year after year, the chapter brings home many awards that showcase their hard work from all year long. (If you would like to see the awards, they’re in the LA Building trophy case.)

Even though COVID-19 hit all of us hard, this chapter continued to provide service to the community. Letter writing to the nursing home and Toys for Tots were just two of the service projects completed this year. The chapter helped the community as well as provided community service opportunities for its members.

Phi Theta Kappa has benefits for everyone; you have to join to start

reaping them. Like everything else in life, you get out of it what you put in. There are no involvement requirements, and the membership fee is a one-time fee for life.

The Society offers several scholarships year-round. Some transfer colleges even give you money just for being a member, so don’t forget to ask them.

Whether you are transferring or career tech, there is something for you. From the self-paced, online professional development courses to the International leadership opportunities available to you, you don’t want to let this chance pass.

Invitation letters have been mailed to eligible students, so check your mail. If you have any questions about the requirements or how to join, please reach out to the contact advisor by emailing Professor Mary Linder at linderm@grayson.edu.

If you want to hang out with the chapter and get to know more about Phi Theta Kappa, join one of the weekly chapter meetings on

Wednesdays @ 12:30 Pm via Zoom. The Zoom link is provided each week on the Chapter’s Facebook and Instagram page’s

@ptkomicronpsi. The meetings are open to everyone, so bring a friend with you.



Above: Phi Theta Kappans Timothy Ferguson and Callie Keese pose during the 2020 GC Toy Drive. (Photo by Mary Linder)

Home Remedies interest COVID researchers

- Marlea Trevino, English Professor

Here in Grayson County, there were 544 new COVID-19 cases between January 22 and February 3 with 62 new hospital admissions, according to the Center for Diseases Control and Prevention's "COVID Data Tracker." The majority of COVID-19 sufferers wait out their illness at home and never become severe enough to be admitted to the hospital.

So if you've tested positive for the Coronavirus, how should you take care of yourself at home?

Follow typical care for flu

Although the Coronavirus is not flu, you should follow many of the same guidelines. According to the CDC's article "What to Do if You Are Sick" with COVID-19,

Stay home except to get medical care.

Separate yourself from other people.

Monitor your symptoms.

Call ahead before visiting your doctor.

If you are sick, wear a mask over your nose and mouth.

Cover your coughs and sneezes.

Clean your hands often.

Avoid sharing personal items.

Clean all high-touch surfaces every day.

The CDC also recommends **hydrating frequently**. Drinking an electrolyte-based fluid (like Pedialyte, Gatorade Zero, Powerade Zero) can help, according to Registered Dietician Judy Erickson of Spencer Hospital.

Other good options, says Erickson, are "water; clear fruit juices, like apple, grape, cranberry; broth; popsicles; Jell-O; ginger ale, Sprite, and 7-Up." Consider drinking water with lemon and honey, peppermint tea, or apple cider.

Fruit smoothies with peanut butter can help add calories. According to the Mayo Clinic's article "Cold Symptoms: Does Drinking Milk Increase Phlegm," consuming milk "may make phlegm thicker and irritating to your throat."

Certainly **resting** is important to allow your body to recover.

Regarding **medicine**, the CDC recommends acetaminophen (ex. Tylenol) or ibuprofen (ex. Advil) for aches and pains. Taking a decongestant like Mucinex DM and breathing

in steam (humidifier or hot shower) can help keep airways open.

The often-shared advice to sleep on one's stomach to improve oxygen flow is best applied to hospitalized COVID patients, states Dr. Brian Boer, critical care physician and pulmonologist at Nebraska Medicine. Boer does, however, recommend moving around often to help with breathing and decrease the likelihood of blood clots. Since COVID is a virus, antibiotics generally don't help, adds Boer. Neither does the previously touted Hydroxychloroquine.

Home treatments interest researchers

Researchers are studying some COVID-specific treatment options that might help those toughing it out at home.

Taking Pepcid (famotidine) to help with muscle cramps

Taking baby aspirin to prevent blood clots

Taking vitamin D if you have low level

Cardiologist Dr. Raymond McKay of Hartford Healthcare reported on HHC's website in September 2020 that of 900 HHC COVID patients studied, those "taking Pepcid were 45 percent less likely to die in the hospital and less likely to have combined adverse outcomes leading to death. The patients were also 48 percent less likely to need help breathing from a ventilator."

McKay planned the study after hearing of similar success from a Columbia University study in June 2020. That study found that "hospitalized COVID-19 patients who received a common heartburn drug, famotidine, were twice as likely to survive," as reported by Assistant Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology Dr. Daniel Freedberg on the university's website.

A study by the University of Maryland School of Medicine reported in June 2020 found that "hospitalized COVID-19 patients who were taking a **daily low-dose aspirin** to protect against cardiovascular disease had a significantly lower risk of complications and death compared to those who were not taking aspirin." The study was led by Assistant

Professor of Anesthesiology Dr. Jonathan Chow, published in the journal, and reported in an article written by Deborah Kotz on the university's website.

As for the relationship between **vitamin D** levels and COVID susceptibility, an October 2020 study reported in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism* found that over three-fourths of the COVID patients studied had low vitamin D levels. The study supports findings reported in a *JAMA: Journal of the American Medical Association* article published in September.

When to go to the hospital

If you seem to be getting worse rather than better, it's time to get medical help—now! The CDC recommends in its "What to Do if You Are Sick" article that you "seek emergency medical care immediately" if you have

Trouble breathing

Persistent pain or pressure in the chest

New confusion

Inability to wake or stay awake

Bluish lips or face

How long to isolate

Many COVID sufferers report that their recovery stopped and started—a few days better then a few days worse. But if you're consistently feeling a lot better, can you safely get out and about? Is that journey to the grocery store (still masked, of course) safe for you and for others?

According to the CDC's article "When You Can Be around Others after You Had or Likely Had COVID-19," you no longer need to isolate if it's been

10 days since symptoms first appeared and

24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and

Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving (besides taste and smell loss).

Even if you had no symptoms after a positive test, you still need to isolate 10 days. If you were sick enough to be hospitalized, check the CDC website for more extensive guidelines.

How to stay safe while staying warm

- James Poplewell, Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Technology Program Director

It is getting colder! What should you remember to do for your home heating?

Change your filter!

If you have a gas furnace system make sure it has adequate return air. Your return air should have a minimum freeair return of two (2) feet in all directions. In fact, all systems require the same free-return air distancing.

If you own an electric heat system and you find that nothing is coming on, it could be your first stage heat not working and will require a qualified technician to repair it.

If you use a thermostat that requires batteries, and the display screen is missing, you may need to replace the battery (make sure the breaker is turned off first for the indoor unit). No-batteries-required systems and the display is off, the indoor unit may have another issue (blown fuse) or bad transformer.

If you have a heat pump system, once the outdoor temperature falls below generally 26 degrees F, turn the system on to emergency heat until the outdoor temperatures remain above that temperature. This will keep you from getting too cool or cold. Some higher-cost thermostats can switch automatically. These are the extreme-high-dollar thermostats.

Any questions, please contact me at **903-463-8713** or **poplewellj@grayson.edu**

Calling all writers! Grayson offers creative writing course

- Dayna Ford, English Professor

Calling all writers! Grayson has a new elective creative writing class, perfect for you word crafters out there.

You will learn to world build, plot, characterize, and write in spite of writer's block. You will learn how to make your readers step into your world and walk alongside the characters as they experience the twists and turns of their travels. Even if your world exists in the space of a TV commercial, you will learn how to create an ad worthy of the Super Bowl or a play fit for Broadway.

You will begin to see how writing a 300 page novel is in fact doable rather than overwhelming. Whether you want to be a blogger, a poet, a songwriter, or screenwriter, you can begin to gain the tools needed in order to make writing a full-time job.

Summer and fall of 2021, Dr. Dayna Ford will be teaching English 2307: Creative Writing. This will not be a class where your writing is judged good or bad, but where you will learn the job of being a writer. I hope to see you all there!

FALL 2020 GRADUATION STATISTICS

This fall 2020 semester, Grayson College graduated **330 STUDENTS!**

That's **172 ASSOCIATE** degrees, **130 CERTIFICATES**, and **59 BACHELOR'S** degrees!

119 STUDENTS completed the Texas core curriculum.

Graduates ranged in age from **18 TO 73**, with an **AVERAGE AGE OF 31**.

At **70% WOMEN** made of the majority of graduates.

58% of students were on **FINANCIAL AID**.

The average overall grade point average was **3.22**.

HEALTH SCIENCE was the most represented pathway at **58%**, followed by **ARTS AND HUMANITIES AT 13%**, **BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP AT 9%**, **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AT 8%**, **PUBLIC SERVICE AT 7%** and **INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGIES AT 4%**.

(Continued from GC Fills Need page 1)

To meet the in-facility test center requirements, Grayson College's Maintenance Department installed a sink with hot and cold running water in a classroom, and Crystal Wilcoxon Health Sciences Instructor collected the required testing room equipment and supplies. The testing center requirements include a working hospital bed, call light, wheelchair, full-sized mannequin, and a lengthy list of supplies.

"Offering the Nurse Aide Competency Skills Exam in a place that's familiar and known to students should reduce test anxiety and improve test performance," emphasized Wilcoxon. "Students earn a higher wage if they're certified so this designation not only saves students money in terms of travel costs; it also helps them earn more money," continued Wilcoxon.

According to data from Workforce Solutions Texoma there are 482 annual openings for nursing assistants in the Texoma area.

In 2020, 105 students enrolled in Grayson College's Patient Care Technician and Certified Nurse Aide training programs, making them eligible for certification as a Nurse Aide. These recent successful completers of the Certified Nurse Aide course will be the first to take their Nurse Aide Competency Exam at Grayson College.

With funding from the Texas Workforce Commission's COVID-19 Special Initiative and Self-Sufficiency grant programs, Grayson College will continue to offer full-tuition scholarships for upcoming Certified Nurse Aide classes. The next class will begin May 10 and additional classes in June and July will be added soon.

Prospective students interested in the scholarship for training can learn more by visiting **grayson.edu/cwl** or by calling Grayson College Center for Workplace Learning at **(903) 463-8765**.

Please reach out to the Center for Workplace Learning Director of Advising and Outreach Marlene Phillips with any questions – **903.463.8752** or **phillipsm@grayson.edu**.

Editorial Information

The Viking is published by Writers Unlimited and Sigma Kappa Delta as an ongoing service project to the college. This newspaper is provided as a forum for public opinion. Participation in the production of The Viking is open to all students, faculty and staff of Grayson College.

The views expressed in The Viking do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, Writers Unlimited, Sigma Kappa Delta, the Board of Trustees, the administration or the faculty and staff of Grayson College.

Submissions and corrections may be sent our editor, Storm Anderson, by email at andersons@grayson.edu.

Phi Theta Kappans plan ambitious service efforts

-Viking Staff

In their first weeks back from winter break, Grayson College's own Phi Theta Kappa chapter launched an ambitious initiative to complete one large service project a month for the remainder of the academic year. "Community service has always been a main priority for the chapter," explained chapter president Storm Anderson. "when life transitioned online last Spring, we knew we wanted to continue our legacy of service."

In 2020, the honor society worked with the College and the United Way to host a virtual resource fair in order to connect students with area services addressing food and housing insecurity, childcare, healthcare, and utility coverage. "The success of the resource fair really allowed us to think big when planning our Spring service activities," explained Anderson. "We know the pandemic has put extra pressure on community resources, so the chapter is really pushing itself to help

where we can." For January, members took inspiration from a previous chapter project in which they sent valentines to residents at the Denison Homestead. "With many nursing homes not allowing visitors due to COVID, we wanted residents to know that there were people outside wishing them well," Anderson explained.

For late February and March, members are helping to promote "Cougarthon," an event created by Collin College's Phi Theta Kappa chapter in order to raise money for the Children's Miracle Network. Information about the event can be located at @CougarThonCollin on Facebook and Instagram.

On April 22nd, the chapter is hosting two service events. At 7pm, the chapter will again work with the College to host a virtual conference on sexual assault and prevention. Members are also in early discussions for an Earth Day celebration that afternoon.

Continued from Winter Storm Uri pg 1



Both North and South campuses were without water throughout the weekend. Community members and campus staff worked together throughout the weekend to provide students living on-campus access to water. In a February 18th Facebook post, college president Dr. Jeremy McMillen thanked community members and campus staff for "working tirelessly to make the adjustments needed to continue to make the magic of education possible."

Burse, who used her work connections to provide the campus bottled water, said of the effort, "Students on campus were in need like the rest of us off-campus. I was happy to use my connections to assist Grayson College. I know how it feels to be without the essentials and no way to get it. I didn't want to see students go through that."

Throughout the effort to restore utilities to Grayson College, maintenance crews discovered several leaks on the Denison campus. On February 22nd, Dr. McMillen announced the restoration of the campus's water system via Facebook, "A crew of dedicated folks, including members of the leadership team, helped inspect buildings to make sure we didn't have

busted pipes. We found several leaks, but our amazing maintenance team has isolated them."

McMillen went on to say in the post, "We will be working hard to repair our campus heating loop, which burst under several of our buildings. After that, we will turn our boiler system on to see what other opportunities we have in the journey that is February 2021."

On Tuesday the 23rd, on-campus classes resumed in Phase II of the Return to Campus Plan. Students coming to campus for classes are encouraged to dress in layers as crews are still addressing heating and air conditioning units of some buildings.

Texas property owners are encouraged to report damages to the Texas Division of Emergency Management at www.TDEM.texas.gov/warm. This voluntary survey is available in both English and Spanish and helps state and federal officials access statewide damage and disaster assistance.

At the time of writing, residents throughout the county remain under boil notice. While this is not ideal, those who went without are grateful. Said Favors, "Color is nasty still. But at least I have got water for a shower."

LITERATURE

Holocaust 2021

-Fatima Arif, GC AEL Administrative Assistant

Sitting on my bed sipping tea, looking out to the palm trees swaying in the breeze ... I open my Instagram and the usual fashion, clickbait, and politics. Covid strains are mutating, the death toll rising. Israel complaining. Nothing has changed since March, we handled it badly, blah blah. I have seen it before, just more of the same

Then I come across the Uighur news in China. They need help. There is a holocaust happening. Everybody is suffering from the virus. Convenient. No one looks behind the curtain to see the real crime they unleashed in the world. UN cries to 'free' Saudi women from their 'veiled oppression'. UN remains silent now. I have seen it before, just more of the same.

In 2019 there were a thousand camps. In 2020, there were more. Mulan was filmed. Didn't watch it. Couldn't stomach it. People were buried alive just a few blocks away from the Disney princess. Fast fashion. Don't shop anymore. Big brands are complicit in forced labor. Typical. I have seen it before, just more of the same.

China has a spotless international appearance. Same as our 'weapons of mass destruction' era. Same as our Blackwater era. Same as our war on Vietnam. The play of power. I have seen it before, just more of the same.

Many of us are cramped into a unit. There is a small hole in the middle. The toilet. We memorize books on Xi Jinping. We give tests. If we fail there are consequences. We have The Chair, The Glove, The Helmet, The Rape Stick. We get pills. I feel sick. I think of all the babies I won't have. I die a little inside. We are not allowed to talk. We are not allowed to think. We are not allowed to live.

After midnight the suited men come into our room. Pick one of the women. We close our ears. The screaming begins. They pay to have the youngest and prettiest. They pay to torture. Every woman who goes into 'the black room' for the first time never returns the same. They are told not to reveal. They are told not to share. They are told not to be human.

I think they want us to go mad. Most of us have. I think they don't want us to reproduce. Most of us can't. I think they want us to die. We are barely alive.

I hear screaming. But it's lunchtime. Daylight. There is a crowd. Oh no. Oh God please. The new roommate. The small woman. They are taking turns. We are not allowed to look away. If we look away it will be our turn. She is screaming. I can't watch. I look away. It is my turn now. I know what to expect but it hurts just the same. They know me. The electric rod is shoved into me. I scream. The world blacks out.

I close my Instagram. I shed a tear or two. I continue my work from home. I sit on my bed sipping tea, looking out to the palm trees swaying in the breeze...

WANT TO SEE YOUR WORK IN The Viking?

Email us at: andersons@grayson.edu NEXT DEADLINE: MARCH 19



Above: GC North Campus gym and water tower sits in a field of snow.

(Photo by Dr. Jeremy McMillen)

Left: GCPD pose with Sherman ISD Superintendent David Hicks before distributing bottled water.

(Photo by Dr. Jeremy McMillen)

Below: Fans placed in the Arts and Communications building to dry water left by leaking pipe.

(Photo by Viking Staff)

