

# Sooner Shorts



Travis Caperton

## Mum's the word

It just wouldn't be **fall in Soonerland** without the annual bounty that is OU's south oval chrysanthemum gardens. The mum design varies yearly and includes as many as 25,000 plants that attract tens of thousands of visitors during the brief but glorious bloom. The Morris Pitman Family Gardens are financed through a special endowment.



## Taking the stink out of skunk

OU Regents' Professor Robert Cichewicz and his team at the Natural Products Discovery Group have identified a fungi that shows remarkable promise for neutralizing skunk spray. A formula utilizing *pericosine A* can provide a safe and effective neutralizer for the pungent aroma. Their findings were published in a recent edition of the American Chemical Society's *Journal of Natural Products*.

## SCHOONER SIDELINED

Shortly after being named **Sports Illustrated's "Greatest Tradition in College Football,"** the Sooner Schooner took a tumble in the first half of the OU-West Virginia game Oct. 19. No one, including Boomer and Sooner, was injured and the spill was attributed to weight distribution in the back of the wagon. Although the schooner will still appear at home football games, for now the RUF/NEKS will not be racing the ponies around the field. Officials have decided it's time to build a newer model. Possibly one with reverse thrust and anti-lock brakes.



Stacey West

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## Early warning for diabetes

**Dharambir Sanghera**, researcher with OU Medicine, recently received a \$2.5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to further her diabetes research. Sanghera's work focuses on how a person's genetic makeup interacts with lifestyle factors, like poor diet and lack of exercise, that can lead to diabetes. Says Sanghera, "Our intent is to identify biomarkers that can be used to predict diabetes and begin treating individuals who are at the highest risk."



Lynette Lobban

## PINK SPHINX

"Sphinx," a **Fernando Botero** sculpture that stands guard over the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art on the OU Norman campus, sported a pink brassiere during the month of October in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The oversized foundation garment was a gift from the Norman Regional Hospital Foundation, which kicked off the "Paint the Town Pink" community initiative Sept. 30.



## ON THEIR TOES

Four OU ballet dancers will join the Oklahoma City Ballet company as studio members of a joint trainee program that helps bridge the gap between students and working professionals. Ballet majors Caroline Young, Elena Damiani, Katie Wolfe and Allie Smith will take part in OKC Ballet's performances while finishing their OU degrees.