

PIONEER ONLINE

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EDITORIAL

REMEMBER WHO THE POLITICIANS WORK FOR

In the United States, those who are elected into office are meant to serve the people they represent. When that system fails to work, it is our responsibility to vote them out of office.

OPINION, p. 2

SMALL WORLD



UKRAINIAN REFLECTS ON TIME IN THE U.S.

Lyubov Popovych says being in OCCC's nursing program is a "dream come true."

NEWS, p. 7

STUDENT LIFE

STUDENTS, STAFF GIVE BLOOD

The Oklahoma Blood Institute sponsored a two-day blood drive. Read inside to find out how much the institute collected.

COMMUNITY, p. 10

PIONEER

JUNE 25, 2010

WWW.OCCC.EDU/PIONEER

COVERING OCCC SINCE 1978

Students face 5.5% tuition increase for fall

President says OCCC remains 'one of the most affordable colleges in the state'

JUSTIN COMBS

Editor
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Students will likely face higher tuition expenses in the fall after the OCCC Board of Regents authorized a tuition increase of \$4.60 per credit hour for resident tuition and an increase of \$7.60 per credit hour for out-of-state tuition at its regular board meeting June 21.

The State Regents for Higher Education approved the proposal June 24, said State Regents Communications Director Ben Hardcastle in a press release.

This is the second time since 2007 the college has increased tuition.

The last time OCCC's Board of Regents approved a tuition increase was in 2008 with a 6.8 percent increase for in-state students and 6.9 percent for out-of-state students tuition.

"The (OCCC) Board and I are committed to ensuring that OCCC remains one of the most affordable colleges in the state," President Paul

See **TUITION** page 9

Summer repairs



JENNIFER PEARSALL/PIONEER

Donald Worth, Facilities Management employee and nursing major, replaces a ceiling tile last week in the Main Building, Room 2J6. Worth said the maintenance workers will replace an estimated of 65 ceiling tiles this summer in the Main Building.

COLLEGE PREPARES TO DEVELOP POLICY FOR CAMPUSWIDE BAN OF TOBACCO USE

OCCC Regents vote in favor of tobacco-free campus

WHITNEY KNIGHT

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Students, staff and visitors will soon be banned from using tobacco on campus.

The OCCC Board of Regents adopted a resolution June 21 to support the development of a policy that would make all college properties tobacco free.

The regents have not set a date for the policy to go into effect, President Paul Sechrist said in an all-employee e-mail.

Sechrist is on vacation and could not be reached for further comment.

As the policy is crafted, college administrators will involve students, faculty and staff to help create an implementation and enforcement plan.

Sarah Belcher, a stu-

dent who smokes, said she doesn't believe smoking on campus is a problem.

"I understand that people who don't smoke don't want to breathe it on their way inside, but I don't think this is a solution," said Belcher, engineering major.

"Smokers should just move away from the buildings."

Currently, OCCC pro-

hibits smoking inside campus building and college-owned vehicles. Smoking also is illegal within 25 feet of any building entrance.

Kelsea Burton, film and video major, said she is relieved to hear the campus will move toward a tobacco ban, since she is allergic to smoke.

"Even with the 25-foot

See **BAN** page 9

Do you support the decision to ban tobacco at OCCC?

» YES: 31
» NO: 15
» DON'T CARE: 12

Do you smoke?

» YES: 19
» NO: 39

If yes, do you smoke while you're on campus?

» YES: 17
» NO: 2

OPINION

EDITORIAL | It's not who you are; it's who you know

Don't forget the politicians work for us

Since the recession hit, state economies have been tightening down. There have been layoffs and budget cuts, and still there isn't enough money.

For the second year in a row, OCCC is not giving its valuable teaching staff raises, and tuition prices are going up. But it seems that politicians can still find the money for favors and political ploys.

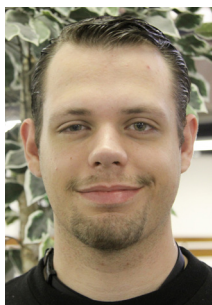
House Bill 748 was originally designed to restructure the struggling Oklahoma County Medical Examiner's office.

However, after all the bill's writers signed off on it, someone added a paragraph that would have created an \$80,000-a-year job.

The Oklahoma District Attorney's office is investigating Sen. Debbie Leftwich because, had the bill gone through, it would have allowed her to take that job and free up her senate seat for

another candidate.

The district attorney also is looking at Rep. Mike Christian, and Rep. Randy Terrill on the same corruption charge.



JEREMY CLOUD

The frightening thing is that although outright corruption such as this isn't common, padding bills in this fashion is.

On a daily basis, a lot of necessary, useful, timely legislation crashes and dies when it is distorted and destroyed by everyone tacking on a funding request here or a bit of appropriations there.

The final result is that the more important and timely the bill is, the more riders and padding it receives.

Health care reform comes to mind as a bill that is almost impossible to pass because the bill keeps getting eaten by the add-ons that no one can agree to.

So while schools and public works and state offices

lay off employees and cut their budgets to survive a recession, the politicians play with money like a national game of Monopoly.

It seems that the politicians have forgotten that while they may be well paid and given the authority to make decisions, they are still civil servants.

The way this country is designed, even the president can be kicked out and replaced if necessary.

So get out and vote. Hit the politicians where they live. Vote out the ones who have histories of overspending, or padding bills, and keep the ones that treat money like the rare commodity it is nowadays.

It may not always work, and there is a revolving door of people waiting to get into office and spend the nation's money.

But remember: Those people can be replaced.

Comment on this at www.occc.edu/pioneer

YOUR VOICE | Education helps you make up your own mind

The classroom is the perfect outlet to canvas ideas

To the editor:

I am writing this letter in reference to last week's Pioneer (the June 18 issue) discussion on evolution, intelligent design and creationism.

As a professor teaching humanities and philosophy courses, I would like to offer my opinion on the limits of intelligent design and creationism as a theory but suggest alternative humanities courses to discuss these ideas differently.

Evolution is a tested, verifiable theory taught in a biology class. The thorough investigation from the scientific community supports this theory because ample evidence suggests natural selection, genetic mutations, and adaptation.

Intelligent design or creationism is not a theory; it cannot move beyond the first stage of reasoning, according to the scientific method.

Either concept cannot be tested by physi-

cal instruments that scientists use to prove ideas in the material world.

Science proves a hypothesis through physical instruments, such as an electron microscope.

If an electron microscope or a powerful telescope can identify God, Vishnu or any creator as the basis for existence, then the scientific community must re-evaluate its understanding of the material world.

However, professors in a science course should be allowed to introduce "teaching moments" as long as they follow the paradigm of the scientific method.

Students should be able to think critically about the strengths and limitations of what constitutes a hypothesis and a theory.

A scientist, for example, may claim other life forms exist on Planet X. But, is this claim able to be proven

or tested?

We are testing this concept on Mars and other planets, but we cannot jump to the conclusion that life exists beyond the Earth until material evidence offers us this opinion.

Science does not operate based on assumptions, beliefs, faiths, or opinions; if it does, it loses its credibility as a discipline.

Finally, if you want to discuss ideas beyond hard evidence, enroll in OCCC's Comparative

Religions, Introduction to Ethics, History, Mythology, Folklore or any humanities class offered at our institution or any college across the United States.

There, we can talk about issues that human beings consistently question in their daily lives, including many "opinions" on the origins of life.

—JON INGLETT

ENGLISH PROFESSOR

Comment on this at www.occc.edu/pioneer

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The PIONEER welcomes **letters** to the editor and encourages the use of this publication as a community forum. All letters must include the author's name, address, phone number and signature. E-mail letters should include all but the signature. The PIONEER will withhold the author's name if the request is made in writing. The PIONEER has

the right to edit all letters and submissions for length, libel and obscenity. Letters should be fewer than 250 words. Students must list their major. OCCC staff and faculty must list their work title.

Letters to the editor can be submitted to the PIONEER office, located on the second floor of the Main Building, across from the elevator, mailed to 7777 S. May Ave., Oklahoma City, Okla. 73159, faxed to 405-682-7843, or submitted via e-mail to editor@occc.edu with a phone number for verification included. The PIONEER ONLINE also can be accessed at www.occc.edu/pioneer.

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COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

BOOK REVIEW | Vampire novel lives up to the hype of its predecessors

'Bullet' delivers great read

The latest Anita Blake novel, "Bullet," combines a fluid writing style with non-stop action. Packed with sex, violence and magic, Anita's latest adventure is the perfect summer read.

Released June 1 in hardcover format, "Bullet" is 356 pages long. The novel can be found at most major booksellers, such as Barnes & Noble.

Retail price is \$26.95, but the book can be purchased for less on Amazon.com or at Walmart.

Continuing the story begun in the last book, "Skin Trade," Anita and her master Jean-Claude begin taking steps to defend the American vampires against the old European council, whose members have seemingly gone insane.

The book moves swiftly, tying up loose ends from the previous 18 books, and setting up the series for a new set of stories and twists.



Although the plot is expertly constructed, "Bullet" would be very confusing to anyone who hasn't read at least some of the previous books. There is some exposition, but it's not enough to make sense of 18 books' worth of backstory.

Few of Hamilton's books can be recommended as appropriate for

children or young teens, due to the author's signature blend of sex, fantasy horror, and action.

But in "Bullet," Hamilton takes the sex part to another level, with several chapters devoted to complex scenes of intimacy involving most of the lead characters.

Overall, "Bullet" is a strong addition to the Anita Blake novels.

Containing all the elements that made the series a success, and setting up the series for a change in direction, this book is an essential part of the series as a whole.

For those familiar with Hamilton's novels, "Bullet" is a must-read.

But for those who are new to her works, it might be better to start with an earlier book in the series.

Rating: A+

—JEREMY CLOUD
STAFF WRITER

GAME REVIEW | Don't bring your guns to town

Morals control outcome in new game

"Red Dead Redemption" is the latest massive adventure game from Rockstar games, the makers of the "Grand Theft Auto" series.

If any game deserves a bandwagon of cheering fans, it's this one. Simply put, "Red Dead Redemption" is awesomeness incarnate.

The main storyline follows the reformed gunslinger John Marston whose family has been incarcerated by a government agency as leverage to force him to hunt down the leader of his former gang.

But that is far from all the story has to offer.

Like the "Grand Theft Auto" series, "Red Dead Redemption" is a sandbox time-sink, offering



COURTESY OF ROCKSTAR GAMES

video gamers countless hours of playtime.

Unlike "GTA," which is an anti-social and aggressive crime simulator, the western world of "Redemption" packs a lot of heart, rewarding a gamer who plays with a sense of moral accountability, as all actions have repercussions.

The canon storyline missions range from protecting ranches' chickens

from coyotes, to infiltrating military bases.

One of the highlight points of the game is a scenario where John Marston repeatedly encounters a mysterious man in a tuxedo and top hat staring off into space at strange and isolated locations.

The man speaks in riddles and offers information that can only be recalled from Marston's

personal memory. He knows everything about Marston, and gives him missions to track people down and influence their moral choices.

After doing this multiple times, Marston encounters the man spying on his family homestead and shoots him point blank, to no effect.

As the man walks off, it's obvious that the player has just encountered God, and is doomed or saved depending on how one played the missions. "Red Dead Redemption" is a leap in the right direction for people who want video games to be considered a legitimate artistic medium.

Rating: A

—DANNIEL PARKER
STAFF WRITER

YOU asked FOR IT

Q: Do OCCC students have to pay extra to use the Wellness Center and recreation facilities?

A: "OCCC students get free use of the pool, gym, and weight and cardio rooms with a valid student ID. The only things that a student has to pay extra for are group fitness classes, which cost \$20."

—JENNY KELLBACH
RECREATION AND FITNESS SECRETARY

Q: How do I join the Intermural Basketball league?

A: "It starts advertising a week after the fall semester starts. You can register online or at the registration desk of the wellness center. You'll need to fill out a form and sign up. You have an option of signing as a free agent, or putting together a team with other students. The possibility of a basketball league running in the fall is slim right now, but a flag football league is definitely running."

—ERIC WATSON
SPORTS AND RECREATION SPECIALIST

Q: When is the next book buy back?

A: "The next book buy back is 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. July 28 and 29 as well as 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. July 30."

—BRENDA REINKE
BOOKSTORE DIRECTOR

Q: If I check a book out from the school library, how long can I keep it?

A: "A student may keep a book for 14 days."
—DANA TULLEY-WILLIAMS
SYSTEMS LIBRIAN

Q: How large is the campus per square foot?

A: "The main campus is 811,465 square feet. Taking into account our annexes at the F.A.C.E. building and the Capitol Hill Center, we are at 962,619 square feet."

—J.B. MESSER
FACILITIES MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR

FILM REVIEW | A little cliché, but a little bit of fun

Remake is cliché, but still a good laugh

Almost 25 years after the end of the hit TV series of the same name, “The A-team” makes the leap to the silver screen.

Filled with laughs, machine guns and a lot of explosions, this 117-minute PG-13 homage to the classic 1980s show is a must see for the whole family.

Directed by Joe Carnahan, the movie opens with a bit of the team’s history and how it got together.

Then the story moves quickly into the base plot of the old show.

The team members are set up to take the fall for a crime, escape prison, and sets out to right the wrong and clear their names.

The team consists of tactical genius Hannibal Smith (Liam Neeson), clinically insane pilot H.M. “Howling Mad” Murdoch (Sharlto Copley), strong man and mechanic Bosco “B.A.” Baracus (Quinton “Rampage” Jones) and con man and womanizer Templeton “Face” Peck (Bradley Cooper).

The special effects are ridic-

ulously over the top, yet they support the movie easily.

For most movies, cramming a ton of explosions into two hours would be the kiss of death.

But in this movie, it feels completely natural.

The over-the-top effects seem believable within the story’s framework.

And the most impossible stunts — ranging from flying a helicopter upside down and using car airbags as flotation devices to dogfighting jets with a tank — are impeccably and hilariously downplayed as all in a day’s work for the team.

Nearly every member of the cast turns in a flawless performance as each of their respective characters.

Neeson, known for strong paternal warrior roles like Qui-Gon Jinn of Star Wars, is the perfect choice as Hannibal Smith.

Copley, having taken on a serious role in the drama “District 9”, shows off amazing comedic skills in his portrayal of “Mad” Murdoch.

Cooper gives a strong per-



COURTESY OF 20TH CENTURY FOX

formance as the character Face, but the portrayal bears only a passing resemblance to the womanizing con man of the TV series.

But the changes work, and Cooper makes the character his own.

The plot is terribly cliché. Everything, from base story

to plot twists, is classic B-action movie.

But far from dragging the movie down in the gutter, the clichés give a tongue-in-cheek feel. This is a movie that knows it’s cliché, but is having too much fun to care.

“The A-team” is not the kind of movie you go see to

make you think. There are no real ethical or moral themes, no intelligent societal questions posed.

This is the one you go see because explosions are fun, and you need a good laugh.

Rating: A-

—JEREMY CLOUD
STAFF WRITER

MUSIC REVIEW | Re-release outshines the original

Rolling Stones’ reissue of ‘Exile on Main Street’ a blast

The Rolling Stones has recently re-released their 1972 masterpiece “Exile on Main Street.” The reissue of the classic album is a triumphant romp which is guaranteed to put the rock and the roll into any occasion.

Improving on this masterpiece is a hard task, but somehow the new version seems to be even more raw and irreverent than the original.

The reissue offers 10 additional tracks to the already abundant 18 original tracks. Adding 10 additional tracks to this classic album may seem like adding extra brush

strokes to the Mona Lisa for some fans.

However, for most Stones fans the album offers just what they were waiting for, alternate versions of “Exile” gems and unheard outtakes and b-sides.

From the first song, “Rocks Off,” the listener is greeted by Mick Jagger’s signature growl.

The other extra tracks vary from raw, alternate versions of other songs like “Good Time Women” which is an earlier



COURTESY OF ROLLING STONES

version of “Tumbling Dice” to unheard gems like “Plundered My Soul.”

The gospel backing vocals and brass give the album a different feel than other

The extra songs remind the listener that when the Stones are not in their element they can sound like your cousin’s garage band. But when they are on they can sound like the world’s greatest rock band.

“Exile” is not an album that is full of radio-friendly hits but is an album that embodies the essence of rock and roll.

Stones’ albums.

Throughout the album the Stones jumps genres easily. The album has tones of blues, gospel, and country, which are blended seamlessly.

The album was recorded in Keith Richards’ basement after the group was exiled from England for not paying taxes.

For those who are not fans, the album may sound over-indulgent and tired, but for Stonephiles the reissue turns a great album into a magnum opus.

Rating: B+

—CHRISTIAN KOSTED
STAFF WRITER

CAMPUS SIGNAGE/WAYFINDER PROJECT UNDER WAY

Entry signs part of update project

ETHAN HENDRICKS
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OCCC students and visitors may soon find it easier to navigate between classes and buildings thanks to new signs that are being installed on all campus buildings, said John Boyd, vice president of Business and Finance.

The latest signs posted were installed June 18 on the front and sides of the Visual and Performing Arts Center.

The signs are part of a Cam-

pus Signage/Wayfinder project, which aims to ease navigation of the college for students, Boyd said.

The sign project will cost the college \$218,000.

The college also is re-numbering the buildings.

"All of the building faces that used to have entry numbers have been removed," Boyd said, "and we've renumbered the entire campus to correlate with the buildings."

Each one of those buildings will have its own unique numbering system, Boyd said.



Boyd said prototypes of the new signs and numbers can be seen on the Transportation and Technology Center on the east side of campus.

"That exterior signage design will be on all the buildings eventually," Boyd said.

"When people come in from the parking lots they will be able to see which building they are entering."

In turn, the same information will be reflected on new signs which will soon be placed near Faculty Circle, the road that encircles the college, Boyd said.

The signs will not be limited to outside buildings, Boyd said. The college also is considering replacing inside directory maps with electronic touch-screen kiosks.

These kiosks will be placed

near main entry points to all buildings.

The college has not set a date on the installation of the new kiosk maps.

"The signs are just one part of a campus renovation Master Site plan which includes parking lot extensions, new buildings and making the college more welcoming," President Paul Sechrist said.

This money will be drawn from the college's Section 13 Offset Budget funds, money that is earmarked for capital projects, Boyd said.

\$15 million theater just one project set for fall

ETHAN HENDRICKS
Senior Writer
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Change is coming to OCCC this fall and spring as many projects are scheduled to get under way said President Paul Sechrist.

Those include a groundbreaking for a theater at the Visual and Performing Arts Center, Capitol Hill Center renovations, and various other campuswide renovations and improvements.

VPAC Theater

Groundbreaking for the new theater is scheduled for the fall.

The theater will be constructed on the west side of the VPAC and is expected to cost \$15 million.

The college had raised \$13.2 million for construction of the theater by March 2010, but still needed \$2.8 million said John Boyd, vice president of Business and Finance.

Sechrist said the college had recently acquired the money via a government-lending program called the Master Lease program.

"The ... program provides a way for all the colleges to go together and put their projects into a lump proposal," Sechrist said.

"This lease-to-own arrangement allows the college to get better rates and to take care of the \$2.8 million we needed back in March."

John Massey Center

Construction is expected to begin in spring 2011, Sechrist said.

Also to begin in spring 2011 is construction of the new John Massey Center, which houses the financing and human resources departments of the college.

"The new center will be on the south side of campus about 50 feet from the Child Development Center," Boyd said.

He said the \$2.6 million for the center came from a deal struck by the college with Chesapeake Energy.

Boyd said he hopes to present design plans for the new center to the OCCC Regents in August.

He said once the board approves the designs and the Child Development Center is moved off campus to the Family Community Education Center, construction on the new center will begin.

Boyd said the plan is to have the new center finished within the next two years.

He said OCCC has made arrangements with Chesapeake

to allow the college to continue using the current center rent free for the next two years.

Capitol Hill Center

A third project was approved by the college regents June 21, when Boyd presented a recommendation for a Brown's Field Revolving loan fund in order to treat an asbestos issue in the college's Capitol Hill Center.

Boyd said the funding will come from money that Oklahoma City was awarded and OCCC applied for.

"We've been awarded \$200,000 of that money."

Boyd said once the asbestos issue is taken care of, the college could begin renovating the center using \$1.5 million of its Section 13 Offset funds.

"Section 13 Offset funds is money granted to the college by the state which can only be used for capital projects such as the VPAC Phase 2," Boyd said.

"They are limited to use only in capital projects."

Not all students are happy about the improvements.

Brandon Conrad, network major, said he wonders how the college can afford all these projects with the tough economic times.

"Everybody's low on money these days," Conrad said.

"Our staff and faculty could

use some raises in their salary.

"Instead of giving raises to the people who run the college, they are building all these new projects."

Boyd said the the repairs and raises are unrelated as the majority of the money being used for these projects couldn't be used for anything else.

www.occcc.edu/pioneer

FOURTH OF JULY

Students sound off about favorite fireworks



"Roman Candles were always fun, and they were my favorite."
—Frank FoShee
Business major



I like the pagoda because it's very interesting. ... It just spins on the ground and looks very pretty."
—Sylvia Tran
Architecture major



"I like black cats because they scare people."
—Kiecharita Woods
Diagnostic and Medical Sonography major



"I like the water dynamites because you can hold them longer and blow stuff up with them."
—Branden Winn
Accounting major



"I like the satellites because, they spin, make noise and light up."
—Lacey Robertson
Nursing major



"I like the volcano ones. I shoot them off every December in memory of my grandma because she loved them."
—Christopher Al-Abdala
Business major

PHOTOS BY JENNIFER PEARSALL/PIONEER

Fire chief offers July 4 safety tips

WHITNEY KNIGHT
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As the Fourth of July draws near, many will celebrate the occasion by lighting fireworks.

But when it comes to handling the explosive devices, Mustang Police Capt. Willard James said safety is a must.

Mustang, Choctaw and Okarche are among the few Oklahoma cities that allow citizens to sell and use fireworks, James said.

All fireworks, including childhood favorites such as snakes and sparklers, are illegal in Oklahoma City.

"The most important thing to remember when you're handling fireworks is to read the instructions on the package," James said.

He advised those handling fireworks to wear clothing made of flame retardant material such as coated nylon and rayon.

He said the clothes also should be tight fitting.

"The problem with loose clothes is, when you bend down you run the risk of catching the sparks on your clothing."

If a firework is wet or you think it's older than two years, James said, lighting it can be

dangerous.

"It's hard to get them to light," he said. "And if you do, they might not discharge properly and you'll be left holding a smoldering bomb in your hands."

He said everyone, especially children, should be supervised when lighting fireworks.

The most common firework injury burns are most often received by persons who tried holding a lit firework in their hand, James said.

"Always light it on the ground," he said. "Never attempt holding a firework if it's burning."

After using a firework, James said to immediately soak it in water. In addition, he said, a water source should be kept nearby in case a fire ignites.

James said he recommends those lighting fireworks keep a cell phone handy, in case emergency assistance is needed.

If an injury occurs or a fire starts, he said to call 911 immediately.

For more information, visit the National Council of Fireworks Safety website at www.fireworksafety.com.

A full list of Oklahoma fireworks laws may be found at www.firework.com.

Some state cities cater to fireworks enthusiasts

BETH'S FIREWORKS
37803 WACO ROAD, SHAWNEE
405-275-3761

SOONER FUNDS UNLIMITED
3521 NW 32ND STREET, NEWCASTLE
405-392-4442

AJ'S FIREWORK INC
151 W WATERLOO ROAD, EDMOND
405-359-7277

RUDY'S FIREWORKS LLC
3226 COX STREET, CHOCTAW
405-390-9735

TNT FIREWORKS SUPERCENTER
2403 E STATE HIGHWAY 152, MUSTANG
405-745-5765

Metro area cities plan Fourth of July shows

The Fourth of July holiday offers several events in and around the metro area — from parades, carnivals and beauty pageants to fireworks shows. Among many, four major events will be held in Oklahoma City the weekend of the fourth.

- **Red, White, and Boom Independence Day celebration** is 8:45 p.m., July 3, east of Bricktown Ballpark at East Reno and Charlie Austin Avenue in Oklahoma City. Craig Ricks, Broadway vocalist and former Oklahoma resident, and the Oklahoma City Philharmonic, will precede the downtown fireworks show. For more information, visit www.redwhiteandboom.org

- **The Bethany Centennial Freedom Festival** is July 3 at Eldon Lyon Park. The events will begin at 10 a.m. with the Bethany Centennial Freedom Run. A parade will follow at 11 a.m. Patrons can enjoy carnival rides, a car show, and musical entertainment throughout the day, then watch the city's largest fireworks show to date. For more information, visit the city of Bethany's website at www.cityofbethany.gov.

- **Yukon Freedom Festival** is June 26 through July 4. The annual Cherry Bomb Triathlon begins at 8 a.m. June 26, followed by the annual Stars and Stripes Volleyball tournament at 9 a.m. Both events are held at City Park at 2200 S. Holly. The activities will continue from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. July 3 at City Park with a car show. A Children's Parade starts at 11 a.m. that same day, followed by a rock and roll concert by Mike Black & the Stingrays. Irv Wagner's band will follow. On July 4 the Rodeo Opry Show is 5 to 8 p.m. at the Chisholm Trail Gazebo with a hot dog eating contest and a free performance by the Oklahoma City Philharmonic that will precede a fireworks show at dusk. For more information, visit www.cityofyukonok.gov.

- **Edmond's LibertyFest** was selected by CNN and USA Today as one of the top 10 places to be in America on July 4. The weekend offers a car show, rodeo, KiteFest, Concert in the Park, a parade and fireworks show. For more information and event map, visit www.libertyfest.com.

it's a small world

Ukrainian student makes dream come true at OCCC

BISHAL MALLA
Staff Writer

A 26-year-old nursing major has found herself grateful to OCCC after a challenging start and originally not wanting to come to Oklahoma.

Lyubov Popovych, whose first name means “love” in Ukrainian language, said she at first resisted moving to the U.S. for school, but has found the experience exciting and rewarding.

Popovych said her English professor and friends at her university in Ukraine inspired her to come to the States to pursue her studies in nursing.

Popovych said she became interested in being a nurse after interacting with her neighbor, who was a nurse.

“I always liked what she did, being a nurse, and that motivated me to become a nurse,” she said.

Coming to the United States provided her with a better path to becoming a nurse, Popovych said.

“Studying nursing in Ukraine was almost impossible for me because it’s very expensive over there,” she said.

Ukraine is an Eastern European country that borders Poland, Romania and Moldova in the west, and Russia in the east.

It is the world’s 27th-largest country in terms of population, according to CIA World Factbook.

Arrival in the U.S.

Popovych said she first came to the United States in the summer of 2007 for a girls summer camp in Maine.

However, she said, she enrolled at OCCC in the English as a Second Language program in fall 2008 and saw things that impressed her.

She said she still remembers



Lyubov Popovych

the day she met OCCC President Paul Sechrist.

“It was very interesting to meet the president of the college in the first day,” Popovych said.

She said she was amazed to see the college so big and well facilitated, and was surprised to see the college had computers nearly everywhere.

“We don’t have computers everywhere in the universities in Ukraine,” she said.

Popovych said OCCC is a great place for students to start their educations. She said the people she has met are always ready to help.

“I am very grateful to OCCC because it makes possible to make my dream comes true,” she said.

Popovych — who has fallen in love with American foods such as salsa with chips, doughnuts, bagels and lasagna — has a vision of the college many full-time students don’t get.

She has worked for the college part time since 2008 at Carson’s Cafeteria in the College Union.

Popovych said she likes working in the cafeteria because her supervisor is always flexible with her schedule and people are helpful and nice.



Ukraine — (yew • KRYAN)

Capital: Kyiv (Kiev)

Population: 45,415,596

GDP: \$294,000,000,000 (USD)

Size: 233,090 sq. miles (about the size of Texas)

National Languages: Ukrainian

Currency: Hryvnia

Government: Republic

World Region: Europe



Religions: Eastern Orthodox Christianity

Details: Ukraine was the center of the Kyivan Rus, which was the most powerful state in Europe during the 10th and 11th centuries. Weakened by quarrels and invasions, Kyivan Rus was incorporated into the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and eventually into the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The cultural and religious legacy of Kyivan Rus laid the foundation for Ukrainian nationalism through subsequent centuries. A new Ukrainian state, the Cossack Hetmanate, was established during the mid-17th century after an uprising against the Poles. Despite continuous Muscovite pressure, the Hetmanate managed to remain autonomous for more than 100 years. During the latter part of the 18th century, most Ukrainian ethnographic territory was absorbed by the Russian Empire. Following the collapse of czarist Russia in 1917, Ukraine was able to achieve a short-lived period of independence, but was reconquered and forced to endure a brutal Soviet rule that engineered two forced famines (1921-22 and 1932-33) in which more than eight million died. In World War II, German and Soviet armies were responsible for some seven to eight million more deaths. Although final independence for Ukraine was achieved in 1991 with the dissolution of the USSR, democracy and prosperity remained elusive as the legacy of state control and endemic corruption stalled efforts at economic reform, privatization and civil liberties.

*source: www.cia.gov

Corrine Aguilar, general manager of Carson’s Catering & Food Concepts, describes Popovych as a reliable, responsible and trustworthy person.

She said Popovych always tries to learn different things and also shares some of her cultural differences with those around her.

Notable differences

Popovych also has been able to share some of her culture with those outside the college.

Popovych, who lives with an American host family, said she has seen a lot of differences between the U.S. and her home.

She said public transportation is much easier in Ukraine.

“There are busses, trains, trams and subway everywhere,” Popovych said. “And it’s cheaper to use public trans-

portation rather than having your own car.”

She also finds the weather of Oklahoma different than that of her country.

There are four seasons in Ukraine and one can easily notice them. But it’s different in Oklahoma, Popovych said.

She said she thinks the weather changes too fast in Oklahoma.

The language differences also have posed challenges, Popovych said.

She said she used to say “broom” instead of “groom,” which makes her still laugh sometimes.

Popovych said she was fascinated when she learned about American Indians after visiting the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City.

“I used to think that Na-

tive American doesn’t exist anymore,” she said. “I really liked the history and culture of Native Americans.”

Though she said she still has a long way to go, Popovych said she is thankful for what she achieved at OCCC and her host family.

“I am very grateful to my host family who supports and helps me in everything,” she said.

Popovych said she believes if a student is ready to study and work hard, OCCC provides the best opportunity.

Know a student or professor from another country you would like to see featured?

editor@occc.edu

Let us know!

SPORTS



Carry that weight

Alex Savage, Wellness Center and music major, works out in the weight room. Savage, in between reps of lunges, said he listens to rock music while working out which inspires him. The weight room is free to all OCCC students with a current student ID. Non-OCCC students wishing to use the fitness area can purchase a year-long membership for \$220. For more information about the facilities and memberships, call Recreation and Fitness at 405-682-1611, ext. 7310.

JENNIFER PEARSALL/PIONEER

RECREATION | EVENT ENCOURAGES HEALTH AND CONFIDENCE

Competition sets tone for campus health

DEMERYE PAULIN
Staff Writer
staffwriter2@occc.edu

OCCC students, faculty, and staff are being encouraged by the Wellness Taskforce to embrace the challenge of competing in the "Tour de Route 66 Wellness Competition" in celebration of the Tour de France.

"Tour de Route 66," an event to promote a healthier campus, is July 3 through Aug. 13.

Participants may sign up through July 2. Registration, free of charge, can be completed by sending an e-mail to tourwithme@occc.edu.

Faculty, students, and staff are all eligible to participate.

The tour is the latest effort by the task force to motivate employees to become healthier, said Legal Assistant and Risk Management Coordinator Lisa Vaughan.

Vaughan said each participant will be assigned a piper bicycle on a map,

competitor number and bike color after choosing one of three levels on the route.

They also will be responsible for keeping up weekly with their minutes of exercise and submitting their totals electronically on a weekly basis.

The winner each week given a yellow jersey to wear for that week, Vaughan said.

The three courses will include: a 121-mile course of Miami, Okla., to Tulsa; a 237-mile course of Miami, Okla., to Oklahoma City; and a 395-mile course of Miami, Okla. to Texola.

The miles represent how much a competitor has traveled in terms of exercise while traveling around on the map at the same time.

Participant's bicycles are added to a map, segregated by level, and two miles is awarded for at least 10 minutes of any exercise.

The progress of each competitor is displayed on the map in the hallway near the Recreation and Fitness office.

The scoreboard will encourage all who see it to get up and get active, and utilize the Wellness and Aquatic centers as well as to finish all aspects of a race, not to just win says Erin Logan, director of Student Relations and Student Services.

"I want to work out and help others as well, encourage students to get involved in clubs and to create opportunities for themselves" Logan said.

Participants also are invited to a healthy meal cook off at a date to be later determined which also will include taste testing, Vaughan said.

In addition to the Tour de Route 66, the Wellness Taskforce members are also planning a free "3 Lunch N Learn" session throughout the competition.

The sessions center around three aspects: cancer prevention, bike safety, and cooking healthy meals with food grown in Oklahoma.

For more on the "Tour de 66," contact Lisa Vaughan at 405-682-1611, ext. 7148, or lvaughan@occc.edu.

UPCOMING
INTRAMURALS
EVENTS

• **June 28-July 2:** The Youth Sport Camps will offer Multi-Sport 1 for ages 6 to 11 and 12 to 14. The cost is \$60 per child. Youth Sport Camps also will offer swimming for children ages 9 to 11 and 12 to 14. The cost is \$40 per child. For more information, contact Eric Watson, Recreation and Fitness specialist, at 405-682-1611, ext. 7786.

• **June 28-July 2:** The FitKids Camp will offer Party In The USA for children ages 6 to 12. The cost is \$35 per child. For more information, contact Eric Watson, Recreation and Fitness specialist, at 405-682-1611, ext. 7786.

• **June 28-July 2:** Camp-Rec Youth will offer Olympics to children ages 6 to 11. The cost is \$40 per child. Camp-Rec Teen will offer Waterworld to children 12 to 15. The cost is \$40 per child. For more information, contact Eric Watson, Recreation and Fitness specialist, at 405-682-1611, ext. 7786.

• **July 6-July 9:** The Fitkids Camp will offer Fitness Fun to children ages 6 to 15. The cost is \$35 per child. For more information, contact Eric Watson, Recreation and Fitness specialist, at 405-682-1611, ext. 7786.

• **July 12-July 16:** The Youth Sport Camps will offer Multi-Sport 2 to children ages 6 to 11 and 12 to 14. The cost is \$60 per child. Youth Sport Camps will also offer Swimming-competitive stroke to children ages 9 to 11 and 12 to 14. The cost is \$60 per child. For more information, contact Eric Watson, Recreation and Fitness specialist, at 405-682-1611, ext. 7786.

• **July 12-July 16:** The FitKids Camp will offer We Are Family to children ages 6 to 12. The cost is \$35 per child. For more information, contact Eric Watson, Recreation and Fitness specialist, at 405-682-1611, ext. 7786.

Have sports news?

E-mail Demerye Paulin at
staffwriter2@occc.edu

Computer misuse, car accident top weekly campus crime reports

ETHAN HENDRICKS
Senior Writer
seniorwriter@occc.edu

A sex offender viewing inappropriate content on a Keith Leftwich Memorial Library computer and a car accident between campus visitors kept OCCC security officers busy this past week.

Officer Jeffrey Porter was dispatched to the library at 3:50 p.m. June 14 after Safety and Security received a call regarding an individual allegedly viewing what looked like pornographic content on the computers.

Officers Austin Plackemeier and Brandon Wheeler accompanied Porter to the library and met with Dana Tuley-Williams, systems librarian.

Tuley-Williams told officers there was an individual at a computer viewing an inappropriate website.

According to the crime report, when the three officers approached the indi-

vidual, they could see inappropriate content on the computer.

The individual identified himself as Timothy Wright, and Porter directed him to the west side of the lobby.

"When we arrived at the west side of the library lobby, Wright was checked for weapons and asked if he knew why we were making contact with him today," Porter said.

"Wright stated he did know why and that it was for the content he was looking at on the computer."

When asked if he was aware of the college's policy on computer use, Wright said he did not.

Porter said Wheeler checked Wright's criminal background for any warrants while Plackemeier obtained a trespass-warning document.

Porter said the officers asked Wright if he had ever been in any trouble and he responded he is a registered sex offender. He also said he has plans to

attend Mid-America Christian University.

After being issued a trespass warning, Wright was warned by officers to stay off any OCCC property for six months or he would be arrested. He was then released.

On June 16, Jon Corea informed Safety and Security that his Honda had been hit in parking lot A on the east side of campus.

Officer Fredrick Evans inspected the vehicle and reported damage to the quarter panel behind the driver's door.

Officer Jacob Roby reviewed camera footage of the accident and discovered a white Ford Taurus hit Corea's Honda.

Officers located the Taurus in parking lot B, and left a warning on the vehicle.

Saviour Johnson, owner of the Taurus, came to the security office and was interviewed by Roby before she was released.

Ban: Next step will be developing new policy, Sechrist says

Continued from page 1

rule in place, no one really followed it," Burton said. "The smoke always gagged me on my way inside."

Ike Sloas, Safety and Security director, said no enforcement plans are in place.

Sloas said he wasn't aware the tobacco ban issue was even up for vote at the regents meeting until Sechrist sent the e-mail to staff and faculty members.

"We haven't talked about it yet," he said. "No decision has been made."

However, Sloas said, he anticipates Safety and Security will be in charge of enforcing the ban on campus.

"We will follow whatever instruction the administrators give us," he said.

Greg Gardner, Academic Affairs associate vice president, said he finds the number of college students who smoke concerning.

"I can't talk, because I did it too," Gardner said. "I smoked for many years."

He said the college is moving in a positive direction.

"Anything that promotes good health, anything that can get students to stop smoking, even for a little while, is a great thing," Gardner said.

Tuition: Students speak out on proposed increase

Continued from page 1

Sechrist said.

The raise in tuition, he said, aligns with the 5.5 percent increase requested by Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education Chancellor Glen Johnson.

Sechrist said Johnson requested presidents in the state system consider holding tuition and mandatory fees increases to 5.5 percent in light of the legislative budget agreement that reduced state appropriations to 5.3 percent for fiscal year 2011 in comparison to 2010.

The modest increase, Sechrist said, is consistent with the college's priority of keeping tuition increases to the minimum of what is absolutely necessary.

Dustin Miller, computer technology major said the raise in tuition could hurt a lot of people already struggling financially.

"A big reason people go

Tuition increases

- \$4.60 per credit hour for resident tuition
- \$7.60 per credit hour for out-of-state tuition

to college is to make more money," Miller said.

"I don't think it's fair for the students."

Prabess Podsaini, business major, said he already pays a lot in tuition for being an international student and thinks tuition is already too high.

correction

The Pioneer incorrectly reported about the graduation process in its June 18 issue. Students who file to graduate this summer and meet degree requirements will be officially graduated. Students are not required to participate in commencement any semester.

"A big reason people go to college is to make more money. I don't think it's fair for the students."

—DUSTIN MILLER
OCCC STUDENT

"I'm an international student so it's hard for me to find a job," Podaini said.

"So I rely on scholarships and if tuition raises, then I'll have to find more scholarships."

Ben Fenwick, public relations news coordinator at

Rose State College, said its college Board of Regents also approved a tuition increase June 17.

However, as with OCCC, the increase also must be approved by Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education before it can be implemented.

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STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

ORGANIZATIONS | Students give time and blood to help others within the community



JEREMY CLOUD/PIONEER

Jo Dabiri, history major, gives blood at the Oklahoma Blood Institute Drive, June 22, in the College Union. The drive was held partly because of the great need for blood in the summer months.

Blood drive circulates compassion

Officer says past OCCC recruitment successful

BONNIE CAMPO
Staff Writer
staffwriter1@occc.edu

Dozens of students, and some faculty and staff, laid down and rolled up their sleeves Tuesday and Wednesday as OCCC held a blood drive in the Student Union.

The drive, held 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. both days, and sponsored by the Oklahoma Blood Institute, was titled "Feel Wild, Give Blood" because of a connection with the Oklahoma City

Zoo," said Blood Program Consultant Jennifer Beattie.

Beattie said all who donated blood received a voucher good for admission for two to the Oklahoma City Zoo.

Donors also were given a free health screening and a T-shirt.

Forty-seven donors gave both blood and plasma, according to OBI records.

Beattie said she was expecting 70 during the two-day event.

She said there is always a need for blood in the summer because people travel and vacation, and donors are seen less.

Beattie stressed the importance of being a

blood donor.

"It is important to give blood, because one in three people need blood in a lifetime," Beattie said.

The blood gathered at OCCC could end up at any of OBI's affiliated 110 hospitals, she said.

OCCC student James Davis smiled as he gave plasma Tuesday.

"I donate because I want to help others," he said.

The process was relatively fast for the donors who laid in either of the two beds covered with pink blankets, Beattie said.

"We tell people to take 45 minutes to an hour to donate, but most of that is paperwork and

the actual drawing of [blood] is only usually 5 to 7 minutes," she said.

The next blood drive for OCCC is scheduled for Sept. 1 and 2.

Students and staff who missed the blood drive can still donate at a few locations in Oklahoma City, Beattie said.

Those are 10th Street and Lincoln Boulevard, and at 50th Street and N. Portland Avenue.

Other centers include Midwest City at 1113 South Douglas Boulevard, 1004 24th Avenue Northwest in Norman and in Edmond, 3409 South Broadway Ave.

For more information, contact Beattie at 405-401-6832 or visit www.obl.com.

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

Chesapeake scholarship

Applications are available at the OCCC Foundation and Admissions office and are due by 5 p.m. July 23 at the Foundation or Recruitment offices. The scholarships range from \$500 to \$1,000 per semester and require applicants to carry a 12 credit hour schedule, minimum 3.0 grade point average, be involved in a community club or organization, complete an associate degree and come from an Oklahoma high school. A current college transcript must be attached, along with an essay. For more information, contact Pat Berryhill at pberryhill@occc.edu.

Wellness Challenge

OCCC is celebrating the Tour de France July 3 through Aug. 13 by inviting its employees to a Tour de Route 66 event. Contestants are awarded two miles for every 10 minutes of exercise they choose to participate in. Each person is assigned a cut out paper bike, number, bike color and a map to track their progress located at the Recreation and Fitness office. Contestants will virtually travel through towns and can be awarded extra miles for attending extra learning sessions or answering trivia questions about wellness. Many prizes will be given but employees must register online at tourwithme@occc.edu by July 2. For more information, contact Lisa Vaughan by e-mail at lvaughan@occc.edu.

Bookstore bustle

OCCC bookstore will stop taking special orders July 18. The last day to charge books for the 2009-2010 semesters is June 25. The store will close June 28 for an annual inventory check. Requisitions for 2010-2011 are being processed and once a purchase order is received items can be charged for the new year. For more information, contact Bookstore Director Brenda Reinke at 405-682-7510.

Book club meeting

"Kindred" by Octavia Butler will be discussed at 2 p.m. July 15 in Room 1C5 of the Main Building. This will be the last time Director of Language Arts Department Cheryl F. Stanford will direct the meeting, but the meetings will continue in the fall. For more information, contact Stanford at 405-682-1611, ext 7142.

Watermedia Association art exhibition

OCCC is hosting a free art show 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday until July 22 in Room 124 of the Visual Performing Arts Center. Fifty-one pieces by 31 artists will be shown. Each piece uses two forms of media. For more information, contact Janice Gordon 405-848-8883.

All Highlights are due 5 p.m. by Monday for inclusion in the next issue.

Highlight forms can be picked up in the Pioneer office, located on the second floor of the Main Building, across from the elevator.

CLASSIFIEDS

Pioneer classified advertising is free to all enrolled OCCC students and employees for any personal classified ad. Ad applications must be submitted with IDs supplied by 5 p.m. Mondays prior to the publication date. For more information, call the Ad Manager at 405-682-1611, ext. 7674, or e-mail adman@occc.edu.

FOR RENT

ROOMMATE WANTED: Female roommate needed to share room in SW Oklahoma City. Must have a good reference. Roommate offered own bedroom. Pets are allowed inside the house. Smoking and drugs are not allowed. Call Kelli at 405-205-0740, only after 6 p.m. or e-mail poohbear73064@hotmail.com.

AUTOMOTIVE

FOR SALE: 2006, Hyundai Tiburan, electric lock windows and doors, very low mileage, two doors, black sports car. Good condition and drives great. \$8,000. OBO. Contact: Maria at 405-659-8028.

FOR SALE: 1998, Chevy Silverado C1500, 350 engine, A/C, electric lock windows, automatic. \$3,500. OBO. Contact: Kimberly at 405-686-0940.

TEXTBOOKS

“THE RED BACKPACK”: Selling OCCC Nursing Program Kit. \$99. Call: 405-701-5931. Leave a message.

FURNITURE

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FOR SALE: Samsung 19”, color television with remote. Great picture. \$50. Call: 405-200-8690.

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TODAY'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE

- ACROSS**
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 - 6 Priests' robes
 - 10 Scandinavian capital
 - 14 Giraffe's relative
 - 15 Trickle
 - 16 Wharf
 - 17 Fairylike
 - 18 Ringlets
 - 19 Cartoonist Peter
 - 20 Went out with
 - 21 Made more rewarding
 - 23 Young grizzly
 - 25 Expression of disgust
 - 26 Skillful
 - 29 Brewery kiln
 - 32 Bid
 - 37 Luau memento
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 - 39 Flowery shrub
 - 40 Rock-band instruments
 - 43 Scoundrels
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 - 10 Brilliant fish
 - 11 Father
 - 12 Be a banker
 - 13 Gold, to Pedro
 - 22 Polish-born composer
 - 24 Razorbacks
 - 26 Wide-awake
 - 27 Underneath
 - 28 Feudal lord
 - 30 Yvette's boyfriend
 - 31 Denominations
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PIONEER Treasure Hunt

Search the Pioneer for answers to our weekly treasure hunt questions.

Correctly answer four Treasure Hunt Questions and be entered in our final drawing of the semester:

- 1: What is the percentage increase in student enrollment this summer compared to last summer?
- 2: Who won the Supersprint Traithlon, male and female, June 12 at OCCC?
- 3: Which department at OCCC, hired a new vice president?
- 4: When is Student Employment and Career Services hosting Career Power Workshops?

Send your answers to: adman@occc.edu.

Failing students have two weeks to drop class

JUSTIN COMBS

Editor
editor@occc.edu

Students in academic trouble have until July 16 to withdraw from classes and avoid a costly grade.

However, they will still have to pay for those classes.

Students can drop classes in person at Records and Graduation Services on the first floor of the Main Building or through their MineOnline account.

Mary Turner, learning support specialist in Student Support Services, said students who aren't sure if they should drop a class by July 16 should talk with their professors.

She said students need to know first-hand from their professors how they're doing

grade-wise and then, make a decision.

Students receiving financial aid also need to be in touch with their financial aid adviser before deciding to drop classes.

Turner said students need to understand how dropping a class could affect their future financial aid.

"Students need to do some fact finding and weigh everything out," Turner said.

Turner said she has already received 30 academic warning referrals from professors concerned about their students' academic performance.

"The referrals mean a professor has noticed a student is not in class or performing well and we're trying to intervene early so that we can help save them," she said.

“We’re just trying to get them the help they need to remain academically successful. Nobody wants a lot of Ds and Fs on their transcript.”

—MARY TURNER

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES LEARNING SUPPORT SPECIALIST

Turner said when she gets a referral, she tries to work with the referred student individually.

"We're just trying to get them the help they need to remain academically successful," Turner said.

"Nobody wants a lot of Ds and Fs on their transcript."

With the summer semester being only eight weeks, Turner said, she sees more intense situations of students struggling with their studies.

She said students should examine other circumstances

outside of their studies that may contribute to their academic downfall.

"A lot of times students will think they will catch up, but just have too much going on," Turner said.

She said she's met with students who give a laundry list of reasons for being behind.

"I've had students who missed the entire first week of classes because they thought the class was a different time, [were] struggling to get online or just didn't think it was that important," Turner said.

"That's hard to come back from."

Brandon Conrad, computer science major, said he is aware of the impact of falling short while taking summer classes.

"Summer semester is much shorter, so you need to stay focused through out the semester," he said.

Courtney Perkins, business major, said students need to know what they're getting into when enrolling for the summer.

"A lot of people think summer classes are easier, but not really," Perkins said.

"The classes are more compact and you can't get behind," she said.

For more information about dropping classes, contact Records and Graduation at 405-682-7512.

Open mic nights offer inexpensive creative outlet

DANNIEL PARKER

Staff Writer
staffwriter3@occcc.edu

Oklahoma City's open mic community is composed a loose knit group of musicians, songwriters and poets. There is roughly one show for every day of the week, at different locations around the metro.

At open mic performances, audience members listen for free, and the amateurs performing onstage play for free, taking their art from their bedrooms to the public. The only cost of watching is travel and purchasing a cup of coffee.

Chris Parker, a 22-year-old psychology major at OCCC who said he wants to be a singer like Lou Reed, played on a recent Friday night at Coffy's Café, on NW 16th Street in the plaza district.

"I try to play five to 10 open mic nights per month so I can become a better musician," Parker said.

"I'd recommend it to anyone who is interested in performance, because playing an open mic is practice and ex-

perience, and you have start somewhere."

Parker cathartically sang an original song, "Berlin," to a crowd of people who were either listening intently or quietly waiting for their turn to speak.

Even though he's become a fixture of the circuit, whenever he strums out a song on his electric guitar in front of a crowd, he's plagued by the "wait-a-minutes" and the "oops-hold-ons," which might be expected of a hobbyist songwriter.

Parker said not all venues are equal for expressing his art.

At some, he has good experiences while other places will advertise an open mic and then appear closed when he arrives, or the open mic will consist of a lone figure playing an acoustic guitar who is stowed away in the corner of a bar behind boxes and karaoke screens, he said.

Coffy's Café, owned by Janice Francis-Smith, is one of the venues he enjoys.

Francis-Smith said her club attempts to offer an intimate

setting where people can express themselves creatively.

"There's a lot of amazing talent in Oklahoma city, especially the singer-songwriters here. A lot of people who go to clubs expect to hear a certain genre of music, and the singer-songwriters get lost in the shuffle and don't have a place to play," she said.

"We provide a service to those people. We let their voices be heard."

The scene, which holds a hippie communal idealism closely, is not well publicized, and remains hidden underneath the highly-advertised concerts and clubs in the area.

Coffy's Café is not the only amateur showcase in town.

Jennifer Hudgens runs the Red Dirt Poetry slam every Wednesday night at Suced, a pizza parlor and art gallery at 2912 Paseo Drive.

Hudgens said for the community of regulars, going to an open mic night is like going to church.

"Open mics are entertainment for people who are broke," Hudgens said. "A lot of people

into the arts don't have a lot of money.

"People always complain about not having anything to do. Well, open mics are something you can do every night of the week and it doesn't cost anything," she said.

"People just need to learn to see something besides what's directly in front of their face."

Those who would rather

catch a show in Norman can go to the Deli, located on 309 White Street.

There, performer Jared Bolhm plays dream pop songs regularly. He claims The Deli has the best open mic in the city and encourages budding musicians to start there.

"We all just hope you enjoy our music as much as we do," Bolhm said.

