

PIONEER ONLINE

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EDITORIAL

MUSIC SHOWN TO INCREASE LEARNING

Staff Writer Grant VanWinkle says throughout history music has helped heal the mind and body. Turn inside to read his thoughts.

OPINION, p. 2

NEWS

OCCC'S ROCK BAND FORMED, READY TO ROLL

Auditions are over, members have been chosen and practice has started for the newly formed rock band. Meet the band and find out where they are playing.

NEWS, p. 6

SPORTS

SELF-DEFENSE CLASSES START IN OCTOBER

Students can sign up for an Intro to Karate class that begins Oct. 25. A second session is scheduled to begin Nov. 2. See page 8 for more information.

SPORTS, p. 8

CAMPUS LIFE

MUSLIM CLUB INVITES ALL STUDENTS

The Muslim Student Association have a goal of educating everyone about Islam, said club President Sebgat Noori. Read more inside.

COMMUNITY, p. 10

PIONEER

OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SEPT. 20, 2013

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COVERING OCCC SINCE 1978

Mobile learning



ERIN PEDEN/PIONEER

Child Development major Kasey Aufiero plays an interactive learning game at the "Powered by ONE" Mobile Unit on campus Sept. 12. OneOK and Oklahoma Natural Gas brought the 53-foot expandable trailer to OCCC as a way to educate students and staff about the benefits of natural gases and liquids. Turn to page 5 for more information.

Nursing graduates continue to excel

State exam pass rate at all-time high of 96.85%

LAUREN DANIEL
News Writing Student

Nursing graduates at OCCC have been getting better and better at passing their state licensure exam to become registered nurses.

Deborah Myers, nursing school director, said the nursing program had 222 candidates pass their exam on the first try in 2012, which made the pass rate for OCCC a high 96.85 percent.

The students in the OCCC nursing program take the same state board exam as students at

four-year colleges and major universities. However, OCCC students come out with an associate degree in nursing, versus a bachelor's degree at a university.

"We have the largest single-site program," said Deborah Myers, nursing school director. Single-site programs only have one campus, whereas other programs have multiple campuses in various locations throughout the state.

The second largest single-site program for undergraduates is at the University of Oklahoma.

"Our pass rate has obviously been very good ... it has steadily increased over the last five years," Myers said.

The increase has been at-

tributed to a number of factors, including the number of staff, increased simulation activities that give the students a feel of real situations in the patient-care

setting, active learning that gives the students hands-on experiences, and curriculum-support

See **EXAM** page 9

Students should start transfer process early

PARIS BURRIS
Editor
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Former OCCC student Yvonne Campbell said she wishes she had known about transfer scholarships and their deadlines prior to transfer-

ring to the Gaylord College of Journalism at the University of Oklahoma in 2009.

"I had never really looked into the scholarship opportunities available to transfer students specifically and I wish I had,"

See **TRANSFER** page 9

OPINION

EDITORIAL | Writer says learning to play the guitar helped him through tough times

Music soothes, heals, raises IQs

One thing that will never change is the way music creates inspiration and opportunity for people from all walks of life. This was not evident to me until just recently when I attended the Carnival of Madness tour. The headlining band was Shine-down.



GRANT
VANWINKLE

Lead singer Brent Smith took a break to have a heart-to-heart talk with the audience. What he said hit home. Although he spoke about rock music, his words encompass all music really.

“... Rock ‘n’ roll is a way of life for a lot of people,” Smith said.

“When you’re upset, rock ‘n’ roll pushes you over the edge to have you break through those barriers to give you strength again. When you’re down, when the world doesn’t make any sense and no one understands who you are, you have to think about how many times rock ‘n’ roll has been there for you when you needed it most.”

It’s true. Music can be an outlet or an escape from reality. It can help you understand who you are and offer support.

When I was a teenager I went through a hard time

after finding out I had dyslexia and again, when my parents divorced. Music helped me get through those tough times and kept me from turning to other outlets to feel good — outlets that could have proven dangerous.

Instead, I learned to play the guitar which gave me a chance to express myself, increased my self confidence and helped me deal with my dyslexia.

History shows that all types of music can provide inspiration. Music also can be used as a form of healing and therapy.

The earliest references of music therapy date back to the time of Aristotle and Plato, according to www.musictherapy.org. The profession of music therapy made its debut after World War I when musicians would play for thousands of veterans suffering from physical wounds and emotional trauma.

More recently, music therapy is being used as treatment on a widespread scale: to promote wellness, manage stress, help reduce pain, express feelings, enhance memory, improve communication and as a form of physical rehabilitation.

Children exposed to music from an early age do better in school.

A study published in 2007 by Christopher Johnson, music education and music therapy professor at the University of Kansas, revealed that students in



elementary schools with superior music education programs scored around 22 percent higher in English and 20 percent higher in math scores on standardized tests, compared to schools with low-quality music programs, regardless of socioeconomic disparities among the schools or school districts. Johnson compares the concentration that music training requires to the focus needed to perform well on a standardized test.

If you haven’t yet experienced what positive improvements music can bring to your life, it’s not too late. OCCC has three choirs and several performance bands. Get involved.

Support the arts.

—GRANT VANWINKLE
STAFF WRITER

LETTER TO THE EDITOR | Falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries in adults age 65 and over

State health department warns: older adults at risk for falls

To the editor:

Every 15 seconds, an older adult is seen in an emergency department for a fall-related injury. Each year in Oklahoma, nearly 7,000 older adults are hospitalized and about 300 die from a fall. Falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries for those age 65 and over.

The Oklahoma State Department of Health reminds health care professionals, older adults, caregivers, and family members that the chances of falling and being seriously injured in a fall increase with age.

Experts recommend a physical activity regimen with balance, strength training, and flexibility components; consulting with a health professional about getting a fall risk assessment; having medications

reviewed periodically; getting eyes checked annually; and making sure the home environment is safe.

Oklahoma offers “Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance” classes around the state to older adults. The program has been proven to reduce the risk of falls. It focuses on improving balance and physical function, to reduce fall-related risks and frequency.

Current classes are posted at <http://falls.health.ok.gov>.

Preventing falls is important for preserving quality of life. Some fall prevention tips include the following:

- Exercise regularly. Exercises that improve strength, balance, and coordination are the most helpful in lowering the risk of fall-related injuries.
- Ask a health care provider or pharmacist to review

both prescription and over-the-counter medications to monitor side effects and interactions. Some medications or combinations of medications can contribute to drowsiness or dizziness, which may increase the risk of falling.

- Have vision screenings at least once a year. The wrong prescription eyeglasses or health conditions, such as glaucoma or cataracts, limit vision and may increase the risk of falling.
- Reduce hazards in the home that may lead to fall-related injuries.

To receive more information on how to prevent falls, contact the OSDH Injury Prevention Service at 405-271-3430 or visit <http://falls.health.ok.gov>.

—OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Opinions expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the PIONEER, the college or the publisher.

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 in room 1F2 on the first floor of the Art and Humanities Building, mailed to 7777 S May Ave., Oklahoma City, Okla. 73159, 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.

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

MOVIE REVIEW | Secondary cast makes comedy palatable

‘We’re the Millers’ good for LOL

After watching “We’re the Millers” recently, I walked out of the theater with mixed feelings.

While the movie portrays numerous laugh-out-loud moments, the story line is predictable.

One has to have an open mind while watching this movie because if the content is taken too literally, it is easily worthy of an eye roll or two.

The movie features some easily recognizable names: Jennifer Aniston, Jason Sudeikis and Emma Roberts.

The plot includes Sudeikis’s character bribing three other people to get together with him to pose as a perfectly normal, cookie-cutter family so they can sneak over the Mexico border to smuggle what they think is a small amount of marijuana to the U.S.

Things take a turn for the worse when the amount turns out to be enough to fill an entire RV and takes them on a journey that is more dangerous and comical than they could imagine.

Despite the well-known main cast, the breakout roles that ultimately make the movie are Will Poulter as happy-go-lucky virgin Kenny and Nick Offerman



and Kathryn Hahn as the “real life Flanders.”

Their characters take the movie in a whole different comedic direction.

Poulter is naturally funny. His mannerisms alone are enough to make you laugh. His innocent, awkward and unique portrayal of Kenny fit the character to a T.

Offerman’s creepiness and Hahn’s quirkiness work out to be a believable and absolutely hilarious combination.

For me, the movie is a success in that it is well cast.

It fails in the fact that it held the main cast back so much that the underdogs took the show.

If you are looking for a light-hearted, simple comedy to make you laugh and don’t care about story line, this movie is great.

But if you want something unique, different and new, don’t waste your time.

Rating: B-

—PARIS BURRIS
EDITOR

CONCERT REVIEW | Heat didn’t deter musicians or concertgoers

Carnival of Madness ‘hell of a ride’

Ladies and gentleman, children of all ages: if you missed the Carnival of Madness tour, you missed out on one hell of a ride. Behind the curtains, I witnessed something I’d never seen before, heard before or felt before — one of the most captivating shows on earth.

The Oklahoma weather was unforgiving as the sun’s intense rays beat down on musicians and fans alike at the fourth annual Carnival of Madness Tour on Sept. 8 at the Oklahoma City Zoo Amphitheater.

But that didn’t stop We As Humans, In This Moment, Papa Roach, Skillet and Shinedown from giving the crowd their all, not even for a second.

Gates opened at 3:30 p.m. with the sun high in the sky as I made my way past the beeping metal detectors. I was greeted by a charming group of carnies and the jingles of the belly dancers who performed on stage later that evening.

We As Human played to the mostly still-waiting-in-the-line-to-get-in crowd but most definitely made sure everyone in the surrounding neighborhood was wide awake, serving as a warning for louder things to come.

In This Moment followed with the ever-so-talented



heavy metal goddess Maria Brink. She stepped up her stage presence since the last time I saw her just a few months ago. She presented a new live show featuring the violently sexy Blood Girls. The band elevated the energy of the set while the masked Blood Girls mirrored Maria’s routine. It was simply breathtaking.

The heavy metal bombshell was a tough act to follow but the charismatic Papa Roach frontman Jacoby, with his high intensity performance, definitely took it up a few notches. Papa Roach maintained a high level of quality from start to finish.

The next band took the stage bringing the crowd to life as Skillet opened with the fan-favorite “Hero.”

They kept the visual aspect of the show intriguing utilizing various strobe and smoke machines. When they performed their hit song “Awake and Alive,” guitarists Corey Cooper and Seth Morrison played high above the stage on elevating hydraulic platforms.

If you’re willing to travel, you can still catch Carnival of Madness. Visit <http://carnivalofmadness.com> for a list of venues.

Rating: A

—LORI VALENTINE
COMMUNITY WRITER



College degree more important than ever before

In recent years, the value of continuing education beyond high school has been questioned — especially in light of increasing tuition and the level of student loan debt that some students experience.

Here is the answer: Yes, the benefits still significantly outweigh the costs in both time and money.

In fact, the importance of going on to college or a vocational school after high school has never been more important to secure a better future for individuals as well as for America as a country.

We all must acknowledge that times have changed. Just a few years ago, a high school graduate could get a very good job — one that paid enough to provide for a family and included health insurance and a retirement plan. Today those good jobs almost always require education beyond high school.

We are fortunate in Oklahoma to have high-quality options — universities, community colleges and technology centers — all affordable choices that can make a significant difference in giving Oklahomans skills and knowledge needed for today’s workforce and to help secure America’s future.

Despite what may be happening in other states, the costs to continue your education beyond high school is less than most other states, and our students’ debt is significantly less than the average in other states. At OCCC, for example, more than 60 percent of our students graduate with no debt at all.

To our students, your choice to continue your education is a life-changing decision. I commend you for not giving up, for rising to meet the challenges of going to college, and for continuing to work hard and press on toward receiving your degree.

The power of education to change an individual, improve one’s earning potential, broaden one’s mind and improve one’s overall quality of life is significant.

Yes, times have changed and education beyond high school is no longer a luxury for the few — it is a necessity for almost everyone — and necessary for America to remain competitive in today’s global economy.

—PAUL SECHRIST
OCCC PRESIDENT

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

RESTAURANT REVIEW | Spazio Ristorante modestly priced with good portions

Nearby Italian eatery nice change of pace

Spazio Ristorante located at 10600 South Penn offers authentic Italian cuisine for a reasonable price.

My friend and I like to go out for an early dinner on Wednesday afternoons. We ran across this restaurant just last week. Our plan had been to go to Panera Bread which is located in the same shopping area, but upon arrival, Spazio Ristorante caught our eye and we decided to check it out.

We were greeted by a nice staff as soon as we walked in. With it being between lunch and dinner, there was only one other couple dining.

We were quickly given our drinks and a basket of bread was brought for us to snack on.

We received our food within 10 to 15 minutes of ordering. Our waiter was nice, making small talk with us and

checking in often to refill our drinks and make sure we were doing OK.

Overall, our spontaneous visit to Spazio was a pleasant experience. The dishes were moderately priced, around \$10 to \$15, a price I feel is to be expected for Italian cuisine.

I ordered the spinach ravioli and a salad while my friend ordered the chicken parmigiana. The portions were the right size for the price we paid.

The atmosphere was very relaxing: dimmed lighting with soft, Dean Martin-type music playing overhead.

The staff was once again friendly as we checked out, making sure we had a pleasant experience and telling us a little about the restaurant after we had asked how long it had been there.

Our entire dining experience took less than 45 minutes, leaving us time to

shop at a small boutique nearby before my friend had to return to school for her evening class.

While it isn't exactly Olive Garden, the restaurant's friendliness and charm makes up for what it lacks. Located less than 10 minutes from campus, I recommend Spazio Ristorante for any student who is tired of fast food and looking for a quick but nice dining experience in between classes or just a quiet night out.

For more information, visit the restaurant's website at www.spazioristorante.com.

Rating: B+

—ERIN PEDEN
ONLINE EDITOR



MUSIC REVIEW | Janelle Monae still producing 'whimsical and woozy' music

'Electric Lady' a career milestone

Recording artist Janelle Monae recently released her second studio album, "The Electric Lady." The release is Monae's first in three years.

In May of 2010, when Monae released her debut entitled "ArchAndroid," it was met with much critical and commercial acclaim.

The album wowed, which made it all the more surprising when Monae seemed to go on an unannounced three-year hiatus before the release of this month's "Electric Lady."

Time has had no ill effect on Monae's music, however. She has once again managed to earn the adoration of critics and fans alike.

Monae has kept some things the same. Her music is as whimsical and woozy as ever. There is something about Monae's music (and look) that is otherworldly while somehow simultaneously classic.

"Electric Lady" is far more honest than "ArchAndroid." It's on the ballads which border on gospel, — but only if the church they originated from were on another planet in the year 3000 — when Monae's lyrics are their most poignant, and their most brilliant.

Monae continues to surprise with her ability to write lyrics that can cut as quickly and sharply as a knife.

Monae's first album was very heavily a study of psychedelic funk and she takes more risks with



"Electric Lady." Songs like "Q.U.E.E.N." seem to harken straight from 1970s discotheques while others — "Give 'Em What They Love," and the title track "Electric Lady" — range from sounding a lot like late '70s Southern rock to '90s R&B.

Monae has done something over the course of her two albums that not too many artists these days do — she has created a strong concept album that is as fun to listen for the sheer creativity of the world built as it is for the quality of the music.

Monae's universe is futuristic and friendly, a virtual haven for "the other" in society. Monae has taken the outsider, the listener, on a journey and the payoff is extremely rewarding.

Electric Lady comes in two versions: a traditional 14-track album and an expanded exclusive 19-track LP. It's easy to see why this album took Monae the better part of three years to make. It's masterful, and maybe even a masterpiece.

Even if it's not her magnum opus (Monae is still too new in her career for her best work to be decided), there's no doubt that "Electric Lady" marks a milestone in her career.

Rating: A

—KATIE THURMAN
SENIOR WRITER

TOP 20 MOVIES

Weekend of Sept. 9 through Sept. 11
www.newyorktimes.com

1. *Insidious*
2. *Malavita Relativity*
3. *Riddick*
4. *Lee Daniels' The Butler*
5. *We're the Millers*
6. *Hombre de Piedra*
7. *Disney's Planes*
8. *One Direction: This is Us*
9. *Elysium*
10. *Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters*
11. *Blue Jasmine*
12. *World's End*
13. *Despicable Me 2*
14. *The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones*
15. *2 Guns*
16. *This Is the End*
17. *The Spectacular Now*
18. *Getaway*
19. *You're Next*
20. *The Wolverine*

TRiO planning for social networking, health

PARIS BURRIS
Editor
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TRiO Student Support Services is offering a variety of events including a bike ride tour through downtown Oklahoma City, and goal planning and healthy living workshops, said TRiO Grant Programs Director Carolyn Chowning.

Chowning said all students can participate.

Students will be able to make a long-term bucket list during a goal-planning workshop at 12:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 24 in CU2.

"That will be pretty exciting," Chowning said. "Sometimes it's pretty clear to talk about, 'Okay, this is the goal that I'm going to make for this semester' or 'This is my goal I'm going to make for the year' or even 'This is my five-year goal' — but we're thinking lifetime goals. In service of that grand idea, we will work on developing little objectives or smaller goals to get toward that."

Students can learn about healthy living at another

TRiO workshop at 12:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 1 in room 1X5 in the Main Building.

"We will talk about all the different ways to improve or to keep up your health while you're a college student," Chowning said.

"We will cover a broad range — sleeping, self management, using the gym and exercise facilities on campus, packing your lunch or making healthy choices at the cafeteria."

Chowning said the workshop leads into something more exciting.

"On Friday, Oct. 4, we're going to get a tour of Oklahoma City on bikes and eat lunch downtown," she said.

Chowning said this will be done through Spokies, Oklahoma City's bike-share program.

"This is something that is in a lot of major metropolitan areas, including Oklahoma City," she said.

"You can either get a pass for one day, which is what we will be doing, or you can get a pass for a year.

"That enables you to swipe and rent out one of the bikes and then you just have to put it back within 30

minutes, but it doesn't have to be back in that specific location. There are lots of little kiosks."

Chowning said TRiO's events are open to all students but federally funded supplies are provided only to TRiO students.

Examples would include vehicle rides, beverages, or anything else that is paid for by federal grants.

For the bike tour, Chowning said students who are part of the TRiO program can leave the TRiO office at 10 a.m. and will return around 4 p.m. Non-TRiO students need to provide their own transportation.

Chowning said these events are designed to help students.

"We do things like this especially because one of the larger determinants of graduation or retention is having a connection on campus, of having somewhere else to go other than from your car to class," she said.

"We do socio-cultural activities like this to be able to provide students with a place to create connections."

For more information, call Chowning at 405-682-1611, ext. 7620, or stop by the TRiO office on the first floor of the Main Building.

Woman arrested in library for multiple outstanding warrants

KATIE THURMAN
Senior Writer
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A call to campus police from the OCCC library resulted in an arrest Sept. 5.

Monica Carlisle, library circulation assistant, told Officer Gordon Nelson books had been returned with the barcodes and property labels removed. The property stamp

on the books also had been partially obscured.

Carlisle directed Nelson to the woman who had returned the books.

Vivian Langston, a visitor on campus, told Nelson she had checked out the books for her daughter.

Nelson issued Langston a notice to leave OCCC, prohibiting her from returning to the campus for six months.

Nelson also discovered the woman had outstanding warrants in Oklahoma City and Cleveland County for assault and battery and unlawful possession of drug paraphernalia.

Langston was placed under arrest and transported to the Cleveland County Jail.

Also on Sept. 5, Officer Tim Harris was called to parking Lot B in response to a student who reported his car had been

struck. Jackson Duncan T. McKinnon reported to officer Harris that while he was in class, a vehicle had struck his Chevrolet Cavalier.

According to a report filed by Harris, there was damage on the driver's side rear fender.

Surveillance video from the area shows a vehicle parked on the driver's side of McKinnon's car was parked there when McKinnon arrived, and was

still there when McKinnon was returned after class.

In the report, Harris said, that indicated the damage to McKinnon's car had occurred somewhere off the OCCC campus.

To contact campus police, call 405-682-1611, ext. 7747. For an emergency, use one of the call boxes located inside and outside on campus or call 405-682-7872.

ONEOK exhibit gives visitors hands-on career, energy information

JESSE HABEL
News Writing Student

Students and staff alike got the chance to tour the ONEOK "Powered by One" exhibit when it made a visit to the OCCC campus Aug. 12. The exhibit consisted of a tractor and semitrailer completely powered by CNG or Compressed Natural Gas.

A ONEOK representative also gave a recruiting presentation to about 50 students in the Engineering Club.

Engineering major James McManus attended.

"There is high demand for engineers in the natural gas industry right now," McManus said.

He added there is a lot more room for career advancement now that the industry is booming and technology is advancing.

The speaker pointed out a large block of engineering jobs for the natural gas industry are about to open, as a wave of current employees begin to reach retirement age, McManus said.

He said the company representative stayed around after the one-hour speech to answer any questions.

James MacDonald, also an engineering major, said

one thing from the speech that stood out to him was how well ONEOK treats its employees. He said ONEOK keeps to the idea that a happy engineer is a good engineer.

ONEOK Community Relations Representative Lynda Mobley said the exhibit was making visits to local colleges to inform students and visitors about career opportunities at ONEOK, as well as tell people what ONEOK is all about.

Mobley said that ONEOK is environmentally aware. She noted that CNG is actually more environmentally friendly than most other current fuel sources, including gasoline.

The benefits of CNG can also be seen at the pump.

"You may be able to fuel up for anywhere from 88 cents to \$1.18 per gallon," Mobley said.

"However a CNG vehicle won't carry you quite as far as an equivalent gasoline powered vehicle.

ONEOK is a fortune 500 company and has been around since 1906.

"Most of its 4,800 employees are based

out of Oklahoma, Texas, and Kansas, with a few locations in more northern states," Mobley said.

The mobile unit featured many interactive displays as well as a few video games, including a game where you try to place different shapes and sizes of pipe in the ground to make a pipeline.

For more information on ONEOK or the natural gas industry, contact Lynda Mobley at 405-551-6774 or lynda.mobley@oneok.com. You can also visit www.oneok.com.



Student Employment & Career Services 

OPTIMAL RESUME

<https://occc.optimalresume.com>

Students' access ID is their OCCC email address; example > john.t.doe@my.occc.edu

Resumes • Cover Letters • Interview Skills

We wanna rock! OCCC rock band ready to roll

ALICIA MENZ

News Writing Student

OCCC has its own rock band and the group is building up an arsenal of sound to unleash this fall.

Preparing for their first performance for this semester on Oct. 24, the band of six members say they are ready and willing to rock hard and inspire the student body to do the same.

The band has held four rehearsals so far in preparation for the show, which will be at 7:30 p.m. in OCCC's Bruce Owen Theater.

So far the band is set to cover hits from some notable bands such as The Offspring, The Cranberries, Red Hot Chili Peppers, AC/DC and many more.

Professor José L. Gabaldon, the band's mentor and instructor, is optimistic this will be the first of many performances this year.

"The theater has been booked so intensely that we haven't any other dates there," Gabaldon said. "There is a chance that we might play a second show outside of OCCC but it is uncertain."

He said about 12 people auditioned this semester, and six were selected. This is the second semester OCCC has made the class available to students.

This semester's band is a blend of experienced musicians, and musicians who are new to performing live. Gabaldon said the goal is to get the performers out of their comfort zones.

"Mainly the whole idea of this ensemble is preparing the kids to play," Gabaldon said. "Some of them have never played in a band. Some of them have stage fright, which is normal. The primary function is getting them the experience to perform live."

The band members talked about their favorite performers.

Guitarist Nathan "Burch" Burchett, 38, is a music major who has been playing for 30 years. He said his favorite band is Van Halen.

"The guitar playing fascinated me," Burchett said.

Vocalist Lori Valentine, 22, is a public relations major who has been singing for 16 years. Her favorite musician is Corey Taylor of Slipknot and Stone Sour.

"He's amazing," she said. "He's in two professional bands with platinum albums, he is an award winning

author, and he has a comic series."

Another vocalist, Ramon Harper-Alonso, 25, also is majoring in music. His favorite band is Led Zeppelin, saying he likes their skill and creativity.

Harper-Alonso said he has been singing 15 years.

Bass player Diamond Middleton, 21, said he plans to major in bass performance at ACM@UCO. His favorite band is Kings of Leon.

"I'm inspired by the bass player Jared Followill," Middleton said. "He learned how to play bass in a matter of days in order to go on tour."

Middleton has been playing for 12 years.

Drummer Jeremy Koehn, 19, also is a music major who has been playing for 10 years. His favorite band is Memphis May Fire.

"I've played a show with them," he said. "I like to see how much they've grown."

Guitarist Tyler Allen, 20, said he hasn't decided on a major yet. His favorite band is Slipknot.

"I can really relate to their lyrics," he said. Allen has been playing for three years.

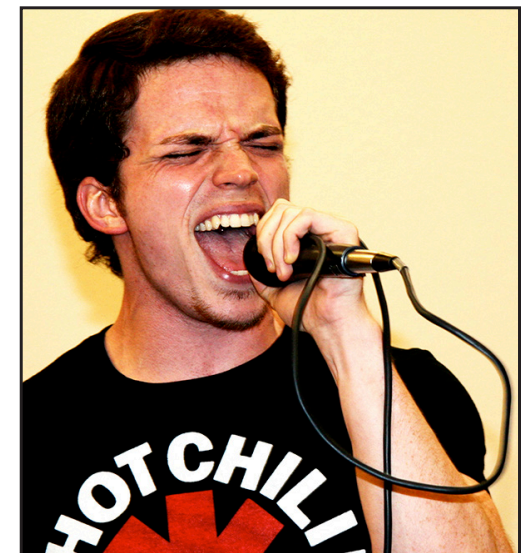
For more information about the rock band, email Gabaldon at jgabaldon@occc.edu.



LORI VALENTINE
VOCALS



JEREMY KOEHN
DRUMS



RAMON HARPER-ALONSO
VOCALS



TYLER ALLEN
GUITAR



NATHAN "BURCH" BURCHETT
GUITAR



DIAMOND MIDDLETON
BASS

it's a small world

Vietnamese student prefers Oklahoma's slower pace

KATIE THURMAN
Senior Writer
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From Saigon, Vietnam to Los Angeles — to Dallas and then Oklahoma City; information technology major Vinh Hoang is well-versed in traveling. It might seem surprising that his journey from major metropolitan areas has led him here, to OCCC.

But Hoang, 23, said he's right where he wants to be.

Hoang is living in Oklahoma and attending OCCC through the help of a study abroad program. He said striving to learn more was what pushed him to join the program.

"I wanted to improve my English skills and learn to really talk to Americans," he said.

Hoang said he began studying English when he was in high school. He said the World Languages Center is helping him improve his English even more.

Hoang describes himself as having come from a "happy family" in his hometown of Saigon, Vietnam.

He is one of four children. He has a brother and sister who are older and another brother who

is younger. His father owns a business and his mother stays at home.

Hoang said he doesn't have any pets but would like to change that soon. He said he'd like to get a dog — preferably a Husky — to keep him company.

Oklahoma might seem like a strange place for someone studying abroad to choose to live but Hoang said he had his reasons for making the move.

"I moved to Oklahoma to live with friends," he said.

Hoang has four roommates, all of whom he met while still living in Vietnam. And to Hoang, Oklahoma is not without its pros and cons.

The pace of life in Oklahoma is more suitable to him, he said.

"It's more calm than other cities I've lived in."

He said places like Los Angeles and Dallas were too crowded and busy for his taste. Hoang's only complaint about the Sooner state?

"The weather in Oklahoma is crazy. It changes a lot."

While this is his first semester at OCCC, Hoang has already discovered many things about the school that he likes.

"I think [the professors at

OCCC] are good. They're very friendly, nice, and very helpful, and they always answer all the questions I have to ask them.

"And the library is very comfortable." Hoang said he enjoys using the computer lab in the library and also likes that he can check out books to read.

While he's just starting out at OCCC, Hoang already has plans for the future.

"I want to finish the [English as a Second Language] class and go to college. I want to finish my degree and then get a job [in the U.S.] or go back to my country," he said.

If Hoang is still living in Oklahoma when it comes time for him to go to four-year college, he wants to attend the University of Oklahoma.

Hoang said there are many challenges to living abroad. Chief among them, he said, is always having to take care of himself.

"Sometimes I feel homesick a little bit," Hoang said, but is quick to find the positive. "But living by myself means I can do whatever I want."

In his free time, Hoang enjoys listening to music.

"I like pop music," he said, and added that his favorite



KATIE THURMAN/PIONEER

Vinh Hoang

singer is Bruno Mars.

Hoang said in his down time, he also enjoys researching technology information and keeping up with current technological trends.

He said he enjoys learning about computers and cell phones, and added that he's a huge fan of the iPhone. Hoang also is a fan of horror films and playing soccer.



Vietnam

Capital: Hanoi

Population: 88.78 million (2012)

GDP: 141.7 billion USD (2012)

Size: 127,244 sq. miles (329,560 km²)

Official Language: Vietnamese

Currency: Vietnamese dong

Government: Communist state, Socialist state, Single-party state

Religion: The predominant religion in Vietnam is Buddhism

Festivals: www.vietnamtourism.com/e_pages/tourist/festival

Details: Vietnam, officially the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, is the easternmost country on the Indochina Peninsula in Southeast Asia.



SPORTS

The long ride

English major Shamra Tracy rides a stationary bike in a campus spin class.

The class meets twice a week from 4 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. on Monday and Wednesday in room 1C1B in the Wellness Center area.

In addition to spin classes, OCCC offers several other group fitness classes and programs: ABS Express, Total Body Workout, Theatrical Dance, Cardio Kickboxing, Combo Aerobics, Yoga, Zumba and personalized workouts.

Students with a valid ID can purchase a group fitness pass for \$35 which will allow them to take several classes for one price. For more information, visit www.occc.edu/rf/wellness-classes

GRANT VANWINKLE/
PIONEER



SPORTS | Sessions available to those age 6 and up

Intro to karate class trains in self-defense

GRANT VANWINKLE
Sports Writer
sportswriter@occc.edu

Students interested in self defense and discipline are encouraged to sign up for the college's Intro to Karate class said Recreation and Fitness Director Roxanna Butler.

Butler said there will be two sessions — the first session starts Oct. 5 and goes through Oct. 26. The second session starts Nov. 2 and runs until Nov. 23.

"The class costs \$80 for the four-week course," she said.

Butler said the cost includes a uniform, known as a gi.

The class will meet from 1 to 2 p.m. on Saturdays in the Wellness Center's

group fitness room, located on the first floor of the Main Building.

Butler said the class is age 6 and up. "The class will have a wide range of people," she said.

Sports and Recreation Specialist Eric Watson said James Ray will teach the class.

Ray started training in martial arts in the fall of 1975 and has been teaching students for more than 20 years.

Watson said Ray has five black belts in various martial arts — Kong Soo Do, Hapkido, Taekwondo, Unarmed Combat, and Jiu-Jitsu. He also has been inducted into several martial arts hall of fame.

Butler said students can sign up for the class multiple times.

"The instructor will keep working individually with the students no matter how many times they have taken the class," she said.

"They also will be able to move up and obtain higher belts.

"The students will have the option to get a belt."

According to the Recreation and Fitness fall catalog, Intro to Karate is designed to introduce students to the basics of karate and self defense.

"This class is also a good way to relieve stress, get and stay in shape, and learn valuable self-defense skills," the catalog reads.

For more information or to enroll, call 405-682-7860 or visit www.occc.edu/news/2013/recandfitfallprograms13.

UPCOMING INTRAMURALS EVENTS

• **OCCC's club soccer** is forming now for team play which will take place over the next three months. Students interested in playing for the OCCC soccer club should contact Coach K.B. Yeboah at 405-255-7735.

• **Through Sept. 25:**

Sign up for intramural flag football at www.imleagues.com/OCCC.

• **Sept. 20: Coed Volleyball:**

Registration due with payment for fall coed volleyball recreational league for men and women 18 and up. League play begins Sept. 23. Games are at 6:30 p.m. each Monday. League fees are \$230 per team with a roster limit of 12. Payment can be made in the Recreation and Fitness office on the first floor of the Main Building or by calling 405-682-7860. Cash, check, credit or debit cards accepted.

• **Sept. 23 - Oct. 21:**

Ultimate Frisbee season. Games will be played Monday afternoons from 3 to 7 p.m. Free to students and faculty. For more information, call 405-682-7860.

• **Sept. 28:**

Fall junior high girls volleyball league starts for girls sixth to eighth grade. The \$55 fee covers cost of jersey. A birth certificate is required at registration. League play is from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturdays. For more information, call 405-682-7860.

• **Oct. 5:**

Fall youth basketball starts. It is for ages 4 to 8, cost is \$45 per player and that includes cost for jersey. There will only be one practice a week and there are no organized teams. For more information, call 405-682-7860.

• **Oct. 28:**

Nitroball, a combination of basketball and volleyball, starts. Game days are Monday afternoons from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The teams will be a coed 4v4. For more information, call 405-682-7860.

All event news is due Monday by 5 p.m. for inclusion in the next issue. Email your news to sportswriter@occc.edu.

Exam: OCCC proud of its successful nursing program

Continued from page 1

testing programs which also help students prepare for state board exams.

The large staff includes 20 full-time and 48 part-time professors.

"We have many of our faculty that actually started in an associate degree program ... and have been true career ladder students," Myers said. "Some of the teachers even went through the program here at OCCC."

The emphasis of the program is on direct patient care, Myers said. Upon graduation, students can step right into a job taking care of patients.

Their skills sets are perfected by the time they graduate.

"Our students are every bit as prepared, if not more prepared, than the baccalaureate students for direct patient care," Myers said.

Although the starting salary is the same for both an associate degree registered nurse and a bachelor's degree

registered nurse, students are encouraged to continue their education after receiving their associate degree.

"We tell our students from day one, this is not the end of your journey, this is the beginning," Myers said.

Many local hospitals will give tuition assistance to associate degree nurses who want to get their bachelor's.

Many degree programs are completely online, so they can be finished while working full time as a nurse, Myers said.

"I think that the associate degree affords students really the best of both worlds," she said.

"The problem with our program is that it is very competitive. It is difficult to get in," Myers said. "The program usually takes three years to complete, because of the wait to get accepted."

There are typically around 200 to 235 applicants for the fall, and 155 to 195 for the spring, Myers said.

In both sessions there are only 72

spots available.

The acceptance rate for fall is 30 to 36 percent, and the acceptance rate for spring is 37 to 46 percent.

She said students usually use this time to take care of their general education classes.

Taylor McNeill, who hopes to enter the nursing program, has attended OCCC for one year.

She said she plans on applying for the program in the spring.

Like many other students, she has been working hard so she will be fully prepared when applications are due.

"I've taken all my classes and tried to make good grades in all of them," McNeill said.

She said she chose to attend OCCC instead of a university because it is cheaper and she believes the program will give her the knowledge to become a successful nurse.

"I feel like they know what they're doing," McNeill said, noting how well

OCCC nursing graduates have scored on the state board exam.

As the program directors encourage, McNeill plans to get a job after graduation, and then continue her education at a university to finish up her bachelor's degree.

Myers said, last fall, the program implemented a change in curriculum to be better correlated with the issues going on in health care now: reform, safety, and quality.

The national nursing board exams also have changed. Myers predicts there will be a drop for the national average of about 10 percent.

"We know that we will have a drop in our pass rate for the year 2013, as will everyone, not only in the state, but in the nation," Myers said. "We're going to be real happy if we stay in the 90s," Myers said of next year's pass rate.

For more information, contact Myers at 405-682-1611, ext. 7138, or visit www.occc.edu/health/nursing.

Transfer: Expert says students need to start process now

Continued from page 1

Campbell said. "By the time I knew, the deadlines had just passed."

Campbell said students should start the transfer process early.

"It's something that you want to look into as soon as you think that you're going to be transferring — even if it's a year or two ..."

Campbell said students also should go on college tours before transferring to become familiar with the campus.

"OU is huge compared to OCCC. ... It's really important to take the tours they offer."

Students also should get a planner to keep up with deadlines and assignments, ask questions early and seek help from academic advisers, she said.

Betsey Henson, elementary education major, also transferred to OU from OCCC with an associate degree in science.

Henson said transferring is easier with an associate degree. "Since I had an associate degree, all my classes were able to transfer with ease."

Robert Estes is an electrical

engineering major at the University of Central Oklahoma.

Estes said he started looking into universities before he started the transfer process.

"As I refined my intended major, I also refined the best schools for that major so it was just an ongoing process."

"I started the actual transfer process at the beginning of my last semester at OCCC along with the application for graduation, FAFSA for UCO, etc."

Estes said he chose UCO for several reasons.

"The main reasons I chose UCO was for the location, the cost compared to OU and OSU, recommendations from friends that currently go there, and the fact that they offered a better program for my degree."

Estes said he knew where to begin through friends and advisers.

"Most of the information I got from OCCC's website or from my faculty adviser," he said. "Other bits of information came from fellow classmates or previous knowledge gained from my time there or from classes like Success in College and Life."

Estes said his advice for

students is to not be afraid to ask for help.

"If you don't understand something like homework or who to talk to about graduation, [ask] around. Someone will know and point you in the right direction."

"Don't waste hours trying to do it yourself if you are confused. Ask questions and lots of them."

Transfer and Academic Advising Coordinator Javier Puebla said OCCC's goal is to help students get ready for future endeavors by tailoring their associate degree to best fit their goals.

"If that's to transfer to a four-year institution to get a bachelor's and perhaps pursue a career that is going to require a master's or even a doctorate ... the better they know where they're going to end up, the better we can [help]."

Puebla said students need to be careful not to take courses that won't count toward their bachelor's degree wherever they transfer.

"All hours will transfer but the applicability to the degree they choose at another institution is another issue," he said.

Students who want to ensure they are taking the right classes can go online and access transfer guides, Puebla said.

He said that will save time later and keep students from taking classes that may not be needed.

Puebla said often, students think a class will transfer because the class name is similar at the receiving institution but that isn't always the case.

"... Students should go to the transfer guide for that specific school, enter their subject and course number into their database and see what [the class] is called or if it is listed at OCCC," he said.

"If it's not listed, it is simply not offered."

"But if a student wants to get 100 percent accurate information for that semester or perhaps the following, they can contact the department for that class at that four-year school."

Puebla said students also can speak to an academic adviser for advice. Students should take the transfer process step by step, he said.

The first step is to talk to a family member, friend or adviser to figure out what they

want to pursue.

He said it's best to speak with someone in the field the student is planning to pursue "to figure out what kind of educational background they need to pursue that specific type of career or job."

Once that's done, he said, students can set up a personalized plan.

"Do some research and investigate into which schools offer those programs and which ones would put them in the best place to be competitive once they get to the job market."

And, most important, he said, be aware of all deadlines.

"A lot of times, especially for specific professional programs, deadlines are a year or at least a semester ahead before they even transfer."

"If they wait until the last minute, they'll miss out on that deadline."

To access OU's transfer guide, visit www.enroll.ou.edu/the-book/ted. To access the UCO's transfer guide, visit central.uco.edu/prod/bzsktedb.p_uco_disp_tran_guide.

For more information, call Puebla at 405-682-7535, or email javier.puebla@occc.edu.

CAMPUS COMMUNITY

Eat your fruits and veggies



LORI VALENTINE/PIONEER

Student Occupational Therapy Assistants historian Megan Barnett, treasurer Nicole Whitley and co-president Paul Mitchell promote healthy habits at their second annual healthy bake sale Sept. 10. The club raised \$217.89. "A lot of people really enjoyed the fact that we offered healthier choices at our bake sale," Mitchell said.

COMMUNITY | All students welcome to join Muslim Student Association

Muslims hope to dispel stereotypes

LORI VALENTINE

Community Writer
communitywriter@occc.edu

Educating students about Islam is just one goal of the Muslim Student Association, said MSA President Sebgat Noori. He said the club is open to Muslim and non-Muslim students alike.

"Our purpose is to raise awareness of Islam and to learn more about each other," he said. "We promise that all students will feel welcome and love being a part of our club."

Club member Jessica Macias said those in the group make connections with students from many different background and cultures.

"MSA brings people from various countries together to combine as one, like a big family," Macias said.

"I like the fact that I get to be around people from different cultures and learn more about cultural differences."

Noori said members of MSA are representatives of OCCC and the surrounding community.

"This is a community club," he said. "We are building a community. We are the voice of this campus."

Club member Amina Elvaz said she feels the club will be beneficial to OCCC.

"The club will help get rid of those stereotypes

people have gained from the media."

Elvaz said being a member of the MSA club gives her something to look forward during the week and offers a retreat from class and homework.

"MSA is just a group for the Muslims and all non-Muslims to get together and learn about religion," she said.

"This club is made to show other people what Islam is about."

Elvaz said the club is looking forward to incorporating fun events such as movie nights and game nights, and volunteer opportunities.

Elvas said she considers the friendly group of students in the club as a big family.

"I think you gain amazing experience from our meetings."

Meetings are from noon to 1 p.m. every other Thursday in the library.

"Everybody and anybody is welcome to come," Elvas said.

Salous said the University of Oklahoma and University of Central Oklahoma both have active MSA clubs.

"We are thinking about collaborating with the MSA at OU for an upcoming event," he said.

For more information about joining this or any other OCCC club or organization, visit www.occc.edu/studentlife/clubs or call 405-682-7821.

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

Kyle Dillingham and Horseshoe Road, Sept. 24

The first show of OCCC's Performing Arts Series is at 7 p.m. Tuesday Sept. 24, in the Bruce Owen Theater. Tickets are \$10 for students and \$20 for the general public. To purchase tickets, visit www.occc.edu/tickets or call 405-682-7579.

College Poets & Writers club meeting

OCCC's only writing club meets each week from 12:30 to 1:20 p.m. on Wednesdays in room AH 2E1. If you are interested in a club for writers of all sorts — poets, novelists, screen writers, song writers, technical writers, and more — we're the club for you. We provide a healthy environment for writers to grow and express themselves, and to be around other writers. For more information, contact club President Maria F. Rivera at CPW@my.occc.edu.

Computer tech recruiter to speak Sept. 24

The next Cyber Club meeting will feature guest speaker Jermaine Jackson, infrastructure recruiter for a national Information Technology placement firm called TekSystem. Jackson will offer advice to students on how to land a job (or internship) in the computer industry. The group will meet at 12:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 24, in room 401 in the library. Everyone is invited. For more information, contact Cyber Club Vice President Shannon Beckman at cyberclub@my.occc.edu.

Students invited to prepare for Job Fair

Student Employment and Career services is offering a workshop over job fair success tips on Thursday, Sept. 26 from noon to 12:30 p.m. in their office, MB 1G7. The workshop will provide a variety of tips to greatly improve job fair strategies. Topics will be resumes, professional dress, and recruiter approach and conversation.

Brush up on writing skills at the Comm Lab

Practice finding topics, writing dialogue, and adding feeling and description to your writing with help from OCCC's Comm Lab. 'Telling Your Story', a workshop on narrative writing, will be from 4:30-5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 24, in VPAC Room 146.

OU professors to speak to Cyber Club Oct. 10

Two information technology professors from the University of Oklahoma will speak to the Cyber Club at 12:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 10, in room 402 in the library. Professor Zane W. Gray, manager of data and telecommunications, and Chris Mallow, information security analyst-incident response and forensics, will talk to students about the programs at OU. They also will advise students on how to prepare to transfer. For more information, contact Cyber Club Vice President Shannon Beckman at cyberclub@my.occc.edu.

All Highlights are due Monday by noon for inclusion in the next issue. Email your event to communitywriter@occc.edu or visit the Pioneer office located in 1F2 AH.

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. Fridays prior to the next publication date. For more information, call the Ad Manager at 405-682-1611, ext. 7674, or e-mail adman@occc.edu.

FURNITURE

FOR SALE: Two 40" CRT televisions. EC. \$20 each. 405-818-0083.

FOR SALE: ProFormXP 550S treadmill. iFit compatible, heart-rate sensors, LCD display shows calories burned and more. Like new. \$400. For more details and pictures, text 405-818-0083.

FOR SALE: Queen-size black heavy headboard and footboard bed frame. Good condition. \$75. 405-602-6499 or 405-568-5996.

MISCELLANEOUS

FOR SALE: Women's professional clothing, sizes 18W, to 22W. The lot includes 3 dresses, 2 2-piece dresses, and 9 skirt suits. All 23 pieces for \$100. Text 405-245-7319 for pics or more info.

FOR SALE: Little Tykes playhouse, \$100; Little Tykes wagon \$30; Little Tykes pool with water fountain, \$60; Little Tykes picnic table, \$30. Text 405-818-0083 for pictures.

FOR SALE: New size 26 jeans — never been worn. Brands include Vans, Levi's and Zumiez. \$10 per pair. Retail for \$40 each. Text 405-818-0083 for pictures.

FOR SALE: Hayden Christensen autographed "Star Wars" photo — in plastic protector with Certificate of Authenticity. \$40. Text 405-818-0083 for picture.

FOR SALE: HP office jet all-in-one printer. New color and B&W cartridges. Power cord. Works great. \$50. 405-602-6499 or 405-568-5996.

FOR SALE: Golden oak corner TV cabinet. Gold trim, glass door on power storage section. Gently used. \$75. 405-602-6499 or 405-568-5996.

FOR SALE: Netgear N300 wireless router. Great for setting up home worksites. Used for only one month. Comes with power cord and ethernet card. \$35. 405-602-6499 or 405-568-5996.

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SE&S

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Alumni enter AL+last 5 digits of Social Security number

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THIS WEEK'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE

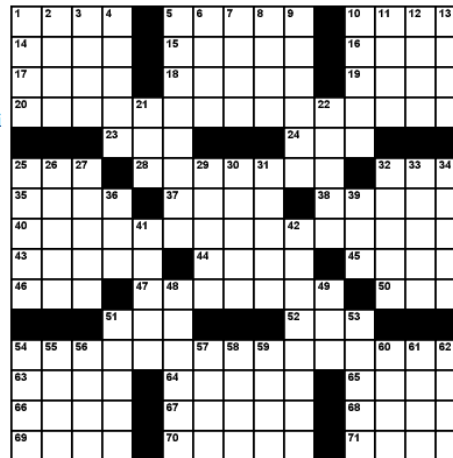
'Ignorance Is This' Crossword by Dave Fisher

Across

1. Volume with a lot of volume
5. Up to snuff
10. Student's org.
14. Designer Cassini
15. Followers of Muhammad ibn Ismail ad-Darazi
16. Kinks hit
17. Columbus caravel
18. Strauss material
19. Sign
20. Does this mean I'm ignorant or...
23. Reagan's 'Star Wars' project, for short
24. Relative of 17 across
25. No spring chicken
28. Marches
32. Tie a knot
35. What the 'fat lady' sings
37. Susan on "Coupling"
38. La Sorbonne, e.g.
40. ... that I don't read this guy's books or...
43. ___ voice (conscience)
44. Just a drop
45. Knows what's up
46. Make lace
47. Takes in
50. ___ Spiegel
51. Collection
52. Shaq's shoe width
54. ... that I don't buy this guy's booze?
63. Sound of displeasure
64. Shocking
65. Having the resources
66. Eric of Monty Python fame
67. In reserve
68. Lawsuit
69. Word with swap or track
70. Leveled
71. Sherpa's specialty

Down

1. 'Flakey' tiger



2. Hodgepodge
3. Dish list
4. Euphemistic expletives
5. How to make glycerin explosive
6. Weight allowance
7. Type of rock
8. B ___ Baby
9. Item oft lost in the couch
10. Onetime sprint record-holder, for short
11. Luigi's capital city
12. Guinness
13. It has a turret
21. Takes too much LSD
22. More prudent
25. Smoking, e.g.
26. Place for spectacles
27. A well-known one is green
29. Ditch plants
30. Emcee's concern
31. Capital of Senegal

32. It needs dressing
33. Lift up
34. Furnishings
36. Downed
39. Pigeon patter
41. Caper
42. Firmly inserted
48. Waco campus
49. Last word in "America the Beautiful"
51. Not a liability
53. Pass a bill
54. Notion
55. Make like Waldo
56. ___ of Man
57. Poet and feminist of the Americas (1895-1965), Lee
58. Calif. neighbor
59. Courteous
60. Girder
61. Ultimatum word
62. Vichyssoise ingredient

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editor@occc.edu

Let your voice be heard!

College employee by day, rock star by night

ERIN PEDEN

Online Editor

onlineeditor@occc.edu

Music is part of our everyday lives in some form or another but few get to experience it the way Randy Cassimus does.

By day he is OCCC's Alumni Relations and Community Development Coordinator, a position he has held since last fall. Whenever opportunity presents itself, Cassimus becomes a Hi-Def Howler.

Founded in 1998 by Cassimus and two others, the Hi-Def Howlers are a four-piece cover band that performs at various locations and events around the state. Cassimus, guitarist and vocalist for the band, said he has been playing guitar for 30 years.

"I learned to play about the time I was graduating high school," Cassimus said.

"I played in a couple of bands when I was in college in Florida."

Cassimus formed the Hi-Def Howlers 15 years ago when he and a couple of co-workers decided they wanted an outlet for their musical abilities.

"All of us worked in the television business at News Channel 9," Cassimus said. "We were all musicians and just looking for something to do."

Cassimus said the band had a unique approach when coming up with a name.

"It's kind of an unusual name," he said. "We decided we wanted to have a name with something that had to do with television because we were all in the business and 'hi-def' is what is referred to as 'HD' these days," he said.

"It also had to have something to do with monkeys — don't ask why," Cassimus said with a laugh. "So we came up with howlers for howler monkeys."

Despite membership changes over the years, Cassimus said the lineup has remained the same for the last eight years.

Members of the band include lead guitarist and vocalist Greg Singleton, bass player and vocalist Craig Alleman, and drummer Monty Pratt.

"We all have day jobs, we all have day gigs," Cassimus said. "We're not all thinking we're going to go out and make it somewhere; we just really enjoy performing and sharing good music with our friends."

"We all share the spotlight."

Although the band's speciality is covers, Cassimus said there is a unique quality to their band you will not find elsewhere.

"What makes us a little bit different than a lot of the bands out there is just the really wide variety of stuff we play. We cover seven decades worth of stuff," Cassimus said.

"We play everything from 1950s Chuck Berry and Johnny Rivers through '60s and '70s classic rock, a lot of '80s — what used to be known at the time as college rock: REM, Tom Petty, Elvis Costello — a lot of '90s: Weezer, Green Day, all the way up to stuff that's out right now. It's very multi-generational."

"If we're playing something you don't like, hang around a couple of songs and there will probably be something that you do."

Cassimus said the Hi-Def Howlers have won several awards.

"We are three-time Oklahoma Gazette Woody Award winners," he said. "We won their readers' poll in both 2003 and 2004 as Favorite Local Band and we won in 2011 as Best Cover Band."

"We also won second place in the 2010 Oklahoma Magazine Best OKC Band category."

Cassimus said the band currently performs about one gig a month.

"Our most recent gig we played for 1,500 people at the Devon Summer Twilight



COURTESY OF RANDY CASSIMUS

Alumni Relations and Community Development Coordinator Randy Cassimus amps up the crowd at a show with the other three members of his band, the Hi-Def Howlers.

concert series out on the lawn a couple weeks ago," Cassimus said. "We enjoy playing wherever. It doesn't matter if it's 1,500 people or 15 — we enjoy playing for whoever is there to listen."

Cassimus also performs as a solo artist acoustically outside of the Hi-Def Howlers.

"I'm a music guy. I always have been," Cassimus said. "Being able to play, being able to perform and watching people out there enjoying it, that's the thing I enjoy the most."

Cassimus cites Tom Petty, Bruce Springsteen, Neil Young, Bob Dylan, and the Beatles as some of his musical influences.

"Those were who I listened to as a kid," Cassimus said. "I like Neil Young because I love how he has always been able to be both an incredible folkie singer-songwriter and an incredible blistering rocker."

Cassimus gives this advice to those wishing to pursue performing:

"Take lessons and get proficient in whatever you're trying to do," he said. "Have fun and don't be afraid."

Fifteen years strong, the Hi-Def Howlers have no intention of slowing down anytime soon.

"I love [the band] like brothers and we have fun together. We've been doing it for a long time," Cassimus said.

"I think the fun we have on stage translates to the audience."

"If we're having fun, they'll have fun and that's how we like to approach it, regardless of how many people might be out there."

To keep up with Hi-Def Howler events, visit hi-def-howlers.com or "like" them on Facebook.