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EDITORIAL

ANGER MANAGEMENT CALLED FOR

Senior Writer Lauren Daniel says any man who physically assaults a woman deserves to be punished. Read her thoughts inside.

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NEWS

CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT BUGS, GARDENS

Children at OCCC's Child Development Center and Lab School are learning about several topics, including babies, rocks and birds. Turn inside for more.

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SPORTS

INTRAMURAL BADMINTON BEGINS OCT. 28

Sports Assistant Matthew Wright said badminton play will begin Tuesday, Oct. 28. Turn inside for the season schedule and location.

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COMMUNITY

LGBT GROUP CELEBRATES NEW RULING

Members of LIFE respond to the news that same-sex couples can now legally marry in Oklahoma. A celebration is planned. See more.

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PIONEER

OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

OCT. 10, 2014

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COVERING OCCC SINCE 1978

Acting out



ETHAN COOPER/PIONEER

Daraja Rae Stewart, theater major, and Colin Morrow, independent studies major, rehearse for their upcoming performance in Jules Feiffer's "Little Murders." The play will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 10 and 11 in the Bruce Owen Theater. General admission is \$10, while the price for students is \$5. For more information, contact bnoel@occc.edu

No classes but college open for fall break

LAUREN DANIEL

Senior Writer
seniorwriter@occc.edu

Need to recharge your batteries? Everyone will get that chance during fall break from Thursday, Oct. 16, through Sunday, Oct. 19.

Although all campus buildings will be open, there will be no classes on those days, said OCCC Police Chief James Fitzpatrick.

Fitzpatrick said many employees and students come to campus during the long weekend.

"People that work here still come to work and have their jobs to do," he said. "A couple of places adjust their hours a little bit. There's just no classes held during fall break."

Fitzpatrick said because the number of students on campus decreases significantly during the break, many students show up to study or take advantage of the peace and quiet.

"The library is open," he said. "There's still a lot of students that come by and use the services or the labs, and use the library."

He said the Child Development Center and Lab School also will be open, keeping regular hours.

OCCC President Paul Sechrist said students should take time to relax and to study over the

See **BREAK** page 9

OCCC selected for prestigious award

Only 16 colleges nationwide named as Leader College

BRYCE MCELHANEY

Editor
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Last year, OCCC had the largest graduating class in the history of the college.

Because of that and other successes, President Paul Sechrist said, the college has been selected as a Leader College through Achieving the Dream,

Inc., a national initiative organization for 200 higher education institutions.

OCCC is one of only 16 community colleges nationally to be named as a Leader College. Sechrist said.

The goal of the initiative was to implement programs that would increase the number of students who are retained, completed courses and graduated, he said. OCCC has been a member for seven years.

"Part of Achieving the Dream organization was to bring together colleges who were trying

to improve all those numbers, share best practices, and support each other through the work," he said.

One of the most significant areas of improvement at OCCC has been the redesign of developmental math, Sechrist said.

"The percentage of students who complete the course with a passing grade has dramatically increased, allowing more students to go on and pass the college level math class," he said.

However, it's beyond just the math, Sechrist said. Other areas include implementation of the

Success in College and Life and other courses, he said.

"... Students who take (Success in College and Life) in their first semester are retained at higher levels," he said.

"We've also (re)designed a lot of other courses in the way we teach them. We've implemented collaborative teaching models and learning models... where [students] are in groups a lot talking about the curriculum."

OCCC also has improved in helping students with regular

See **OCCC** page 9

OPINION

EDITORIAL | NFL player Ray Rice deserved more punishment than he received

Men need to control their anger

NFL running back Ray Rice has been indefinitely suspended from playing professional football after an incident where he was caught on video abusing his wife.

On Sept. 8, a tape was released by TMZ, an entertainment news site, showing Rice punching Janay Palmer — his fiancée at the time of the incident — in an elevator about seven months ago. Previously, there had only been footage of Rice dragging an unconscious Palmer out of an elevator.



LAUREN DANIEL

After NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell saw the first video, Rice was suspended from the NFL without pay and fined an additional game check. NFL officials claimed to have no knowledge of the physical assault. Obviously, this discovery has sparked a huge uproar in the NFL and in everyday life. While the NFL argues about who knew about the situation and how long they knew, I think the more important matter at hand is what actually happened.

Rice punched Palmer and he apparently did it pretty hard, because she was out cold. Picture a

muscular athlete punching a woman so hard she gets knocked out. If you're anything like me, you probably winced, became angry, or questioned his stupidity and insensitivity.

Rice eventually was charged with one count of third-degree aggravated assault, a felony charge that will be expunged in a year.

Goodell finally admitted the NFL's punishment was not enough and publicly apologized.

"We allowed our standards to fall below where they should be and lost an important opportunity to emphasize our strong stance on a critical issue and the effective programs we have in place," Goodell said in a letter to NFL owners.

It really is incomprehensible that Rice received a punishment so insignificant for a crime that is inexcusable and unjustifiable on so many levels.

I always am dumbfounded by the equality argument that women are the same as men. It's simply not true, especially when it comes down to physicality.

Women are proven to be the weaker of the two sexes when it comes to upper body strength. It's just a fact. Unless you happen to be a female boxer, UFC fighter, or body builder, chances are you can't hold your own against men and even then, your chances are slim.

According to psychologytoday.com, men have up to 50 percent greater upper body strength than



women. Men also tend to be an average of six inches taller than women. Sounds like an unfair fight to me.

I may be old fashioned, or labeled as a conservative, or even a typical Oklahoman, but I believe men should treat women with respect. They should recognize we are the physically weaker sex, and not act like we're a "bro."

If a man ever lays hands on a woman, there is a problem. The circumstances do not matter.

Any man who ever physically assaults a woman deserves to be punished and the situation should not be taken lightly.

Pick on someone your own size.

—LAUREN DANIEL
SENIOR WRITER

LETTER TO THE EDITOR | Exhibit will be on display until Oct. 26

Mabee-Gerrer Museum featuring rare carved ivory

To the Editor:

The Mabee-Gerrer Museum of Art is hosting the exhibition, "From Tusks to Treasures: Ivory from the Milligan-Kirkpatrick Collection," until Oct. 26.

This exhibition illustrates the beauty and intricacy of ivory carving. While most of the carvings in this exhibition are Asian, some are European and a few are of African origin. These carvings include figures, boxes, puzzle balls and even a sword.

The soft, lustrous beauty of ivory has been appreciated since prehistoric times, with some of the world's earliest sculpture crafted from the material. A product derived from teeth, it is most often from tusked animals such as elephants and wild pigs, or marine mammals such as walrus and narwhals. Some other large-toothed animals such as hippos

and camels provide "teeth media" but ivory is most often used in context with tusks.

Elephants provide the majority of ivory used by craftsmen. Unfortunately, there has been growing demand for the material at a time of dwindling elephant populations due to loss of habitat and overhunting in both Africa and Asia. This has forced the international community to severely curtail the harvesting of ivory. It is currently illegal to import ivory into the U.S., or sell it within our borders.

Protections are also extended to marine sources of ivory. Exceptions are new items made from fossil ivory (collected from extinct mammoth and mastodon), and certain works of art created by native Eskimos using marine ivory.

The Milligan-Kirkpatrick Collection at the Mabee-

Gerrer Museum of Art was formed in the early 20th century and includes objects created before worldwide regulations were put in place.

"This is a very exciting exhibition because it shows a rare and unique art form that will no longer be created," said Dane Pollei, Art Director.

The Mabee-Gerrer Museum of Art is located at 1900 W. MacArthur St. in Shawnee. The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays and from 1 to 4 p.m. on Sundays. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors age 65 or older, \$3 for students and children ages 6 to 17, and free for children age 5 and younger. Visit www.mgmoa.org for more information.

—DELAYNNA TRIM
CURATOR OF COLLECTIONS

OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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The **PIONEER** is a student publication of Oklahoma City Community College through the Division of Arts. It is published weekly during the 16-week fall and spring semesters and the eight-week summer session.

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 no more 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 <http://pioneer.occc.edu>.

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

PRODUCT REVIEW | Quaker instant oatmeal adds surprise to breakfast

Start the morning with dino eggs

I was brought up being taught that breakfast food is sacred.

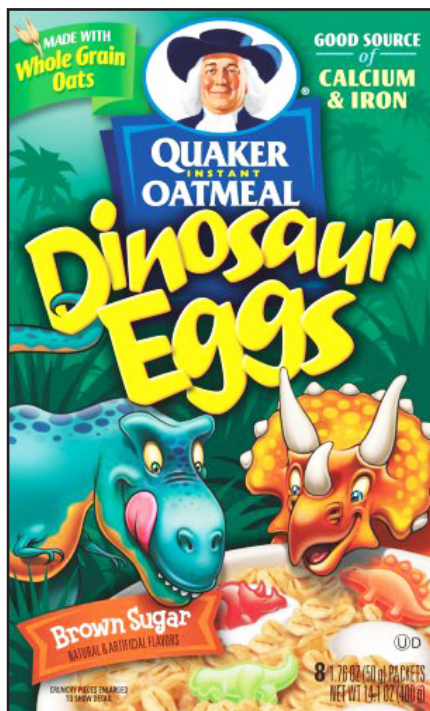
Never mind syrupy McGriddles and powdered eggs — as a kid, when the smell of bacon and chorizo came wafting in from the kitchen, I knew mom meant business.

When I'm unable to access mom's home cooking, however, I have to improvise.

Sometimes I opt for poorly scrambled eggs and wobbly bacon — apparently, I didn't inherit mom's ability to cook well — but most times I settle for a quick fix.

Recently, I've been obsessing over Quaker Instant Oatmeal Dinosaur Eggs, a breakfast food capable of satisfying your taste buds while also prompting a nostalgic childhood rush.

As a Quaker Oatmeal lifetime consumer — when mom wasn't in



the mood to cook, at least Mr. Q would feed me — I can attest to the brand's capability to produce

the tasty goop that is oatmeal.

Quaker Instant Oatmeal Dinosaur Eggs are more than just tasty goop, however — it's tasty goop with an added surprise.

Included are egg-shaped candies that "hatch" into dinosaur shapes when your oatmeal heats up. After emptying the packaged oatmeal contents into your container of choice, simply add milk, pop it in the microwave and presto — your tasty goop now features sugary dinosaurs to add some excitement to your oatmeal.

With the same amount of calories as Quaker's traditional oatmeal mix, Quaker Instant Oatmeal Dinosaur Eggs is a great way to get your morning going.

Rating: B

—SIALI SIAOSI
ONLINE EDITOR

BUSINESS REVIEW | Elisa Light is the only certified esthetician in the state

Nearby massage business all natural

Feeling tension build up in my neck, I realized the only way this was really going to go away was by getting a massage.

I decided to go to a woman named Elisa Light, who was referred to me by a friend.

When I arrived, I was expecting to see an office. To my surprise, it happened to be her house. It was only about five minutes away from OCCC.

Inside, she has an area where she does everything from massages, to facials to waxing.

One of the things I noticed as I was getting on her massage table was that she uses Doterra, a brand of essential oils. Elisa said she likes to use all-natural products.

One of the products I really liked that she used was Blue — an essential oil cream that feels and smells like Icy Hot.

It was great for relaxing the muscles in my neck.

Some of the massages she does

specifically are cold stone massages for migraines, warm bamboo massages (which I had for my neck and it was amazing) and pregnancy massages.

In her personal spa, prices range from \$10 to \$60, which is reasonably priced considering she works with you one-on-one.

Elisa Light is the only nationally certified esthetician in Oklahoma according to her Facebook page. She also is nationally certified in massage and is a certified sugaring instructor certified from Sugar Streak — an alternate to traditional waxing.

Light said sugaring is a good alternative to waxing because the

paste only holds the hair and not the skin like ordinary wax.

After about a 30-minute massage, my neck had never felt better (and I realized knots are not the most comfortable things to get taken care of). So if you just need some relaxation or to get dolled up for a day with the girls, just give Light a call to schedule an appointment at 405-206-7253.

She is available Monday through Friday. She also can be found on Facebook under Your SkinDiva or contact her through her website at www.yourkindiva.com.

Rating: A

—CANDICE A. SCHAFER
COMMUNITY WRITER



Free app gives users sweet deals

Have an undying love for Dunkin' Donuts coffee and donuts? College students could never gain the freshman 15 without some donut love. Even better, there's an app for that with special deals.

If you're anything like me, you enjoy a scrumptious donut at any moment's notice, so using the Dunkin' Donuts app is ideal when you're on the go.

"The nearest Dunkin' store is only a tap away. Our app can locate the nearest Dunkin' location for you.

"So wherever you are, you can grab some Dunkin'. Even if it is the next state over," according to dunkindonuts.com.

Obviously, if there isn't a Dunkin' Donuts in your state, you should just go to Krispy Kreme, but it's comforting to think there's an app out there dedicated to finding the nearest Dunkin' Donut shops and then, helping users navigate to that store via the quickest route.

But hold on. We haven't even gotten to the cream inside.

The app also sprinkles on some special deals and discounts with the purchase of a personal Dunkin' Donuts card, so you'll be stuffing your face with delicious donuts and spilling coffee on your lap in no time.

The card, plus the app, makes it convenient to pay quickly in the purchasing process.

The donut clerk, or as I call him, the "derk," will just swipe your phone's displayed barcode and you're on your way.

The card and app also make it easy to keep track of your Dunkin' Donuts points, which can give the user a sweet frosting of discounts.

I couldn't find any holes in this app.

The Dunkin' Donuts app is the key to every donuts-craving heart. It's on the app stores for iPhones, Windows phones and Androids for free.

—BRYCE McELHANEY
EDITOR

Have an app review idea you'd like to see published in the Pioneer? Email Editor Bryce McElhaney at editor@occc.edu, call 405-682-1611, ext. 7675, or drop by the Pioneer office located in AH 1F2.

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

FROM THE VAULT MOVIE REVIEW | Film full of frightening paranoia

‘Body Snatchers’ 1978 style, a worthy sequel

It feels like the only movies released nowadays are either sequels, reboots or remakes. And for every good remake, there are at least 20 awful ones.

A few examples of movies better than the originals are “The Thing” (1982), “The Fly” (1986), and “Airplane!” (1980).

But the difference between those movies and the science fiction thriller “Invasion of the Body Snatchers” is its predecessor wasn’t bad.

Directed by Philip Kaufman (“The Right Stuff”), this film is the 1978 remake of the 1956 original version.

The story is about a small group of people who discover humans are being replaced by aliens appearing to be perfect copies of the persons replicated.

Lacking any human emotions, the aliens attempt to take over the planet and install a tightly organized conformist society.

The film’s all-star cast includes Donald Sutherland, Brooke Adams, Veronica Cartwright, Jeff Goldblum

and Leonard Nimoy.

The level of paranoia in this movie is genuinely scary.

The subtle messages are executed well too.

Sutherland’s broken windshield and numerous distorted mirrors indicate the characters are unable to see a clear image of themselves and the people they surround.

The fear of losing their self-fulfillment lifestyle also goes along with the 1970s culture.

This is a movie I wouldn’t mind being remade every 30 years or so. Unfortunately, the 2007 movie “The Invasion” didn’t hold up well, so we have to wait another 20 years.

But at the rate remakes of reboots of sequels are being made these days, a new version of “Body Snatchers” could be released next year for all I know.

“Invasion of the Body Snatchers” is a bleak film with one of the most impressive endings I’ve seen in a while.

In regard to its ending, the chilling sound Sutherland



makes is nothing short of pure horror awesomeness.

Rating: B

—ETHAN COOPER
PHOTOGRAPHER

RESTAURANT REVIEW | Lin’s buffet needs self-serve soda fountain

You had just the one job, waitress

If I had to make a list of what I consider the easiest jobs on earth, buffet waiter would have to be close to the top. What could be easier?

For a waiter at a restaurant, the job is a marathon of nightmares. They have to make sure everyone has enough napkins, plenty of salt, clean silverware and a perfectly pink steak. If not, they enjoy being screamed at by customers.

A waiter at a buffet restaurant has to fill up drinks. The customer does literally everything else.

At a recent visit to Lin’s Buffet, my waitress had some trouble with the advanced science of refillingism.

As I plowed through my sesame chicken, sweet and sour chicken, teriyaki chicken, lemon chicken, and general Tso’s chicken, my mouth dried into a freakish King Tut pout.

I would glance at my glass, horrified, as the level of Dr Pepper drained throughout my meal. I knew that if I did not get a refill soon, my barren wasteland of a mouth would be denied irrigation.

Before I knew it, I had finished all of my General Tso’s chicken, and my tongue burned and cracked. I looked hopefully at my cup. Nothing was in it but ice, coldly mocking my pain.

Panic set in. I pleaded to any god who would listen to my cries. My girlfriend told me to stop whining. I told her to stop whining. I didn’t mean to burn her like that, but I was in agony.



After an eternity of renouncing the day I was born, I opened my eyes. There stood my waitress. She looked at my glass, and asked, “More Dr. Pepper?”

I left, knowing I would never get revenge on that woman. Why? Because when I paid my bill at the entrance, I had to tip her before I ever met her. I tipped well, since I imagined she would be great.

Lin’s Buffet isn’t bad. It’s the same stuff you can get at any Mongolian chicken nugget factory. It has a nice atmosphere, but they forgot to replace their waiters with a self-serve soda fountain.

Lin’s Buffet is located at 6220 SW 3rd St. in Oklahoma City.

Rating: C

—JAKE MCMAHON
VIDEOGRAPHER

TOP 20 MOVIES

Weekend of Oct. 3 through Oct. 5
www.newyorktimes.com

1. *Gone Girl*
2. *Annabelle*
3. *The Equalizer*
4. *The Boxtrolls*
5. *The Maze Runner*
6. *Left Behind*
7. *This Is Where I Leave You*
8. *Dolphin Tale 2*
9. *Guardians of the Galaxy*
10. *No Good Deed*
11. *A Walk Among the Tombstones*
12. *Bang Bang*
13. *The Good Lie*
14. *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*
15. *Let’s Be Cops*
16. *The Skeleton Twins*
17. *Haider*
18. *My Old Lady*
19. *If I Stay*
20. *The Hundred-Foot Journey*

Renowned author to speak on Vietnam War book

ANDREW BISHOP

News Writing Student

Author Tim O'Brien will come to OCCC to share views on his book "The Things They Carried" which deals with soldiers during and after the Vietnam War.

O'Brien's presentation is scheduled for 12:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 21, in the VPAC theater.

"The Things They Carried" was picked by the OCCC Library to be the featured book for the OCCC Reads program.

The library is offering free copies to anyone who wants to read the book and join the conversation, said Reference Librarian Tricia Sweany.

She said she concurred with a quote from the New York Times referring to the book:

"A marvel of storytelling... a vital, important book -- a book that matters not only to the reader interested in Vietnam, but to anyone interested in the craft of writing as well."

Unlike books that have been featured in the past, "The Things They Carried" focuses on a wide audience, Sweany said.

"(It is) tailored to fit the students' interests in the

form of highlighting different themes," Sweany said.

The book portrays a fictional point of view about the Vietnam War.

O'Brien's main goal was to provide his readers with a range of different issues that were experienced during a time of war in the late 1960s, Sweany said.

The book itself was up for adoption in prior years to be a featured book but never seemed to break through until this year, Sweany said.

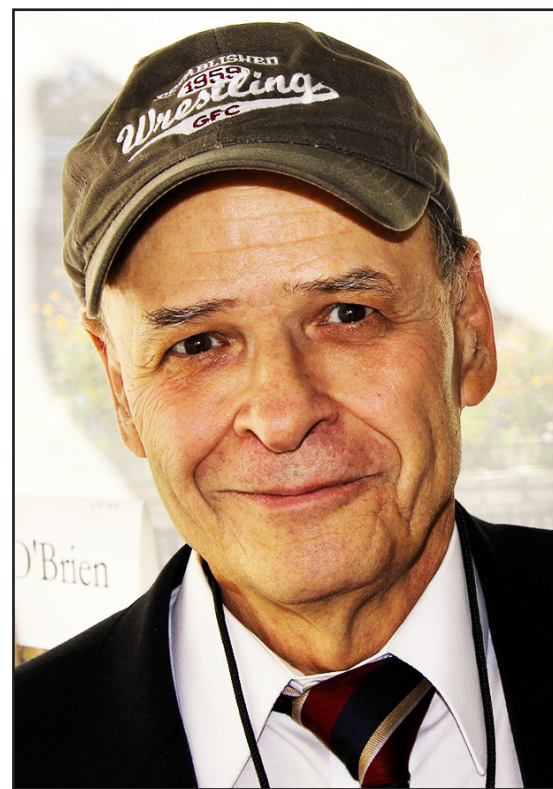
This choice was based on its wide spectrum of themes that can be used for multiple subjects, she said.

Sweany said O'Brien will travel to OCCC to elaborate on his work, as well as to open it up for discussion with a question-and-answer session after his lecture.

O'Brien is known nationally for his portfolio of work, receiving writing awards since the 1970s. Kim Jameson, dean of English and Humanities, played an integral part in recruiting O'Brien to speak, Sweany said.

The library will be holding a discussion of the book at noon, Wednesday, Oct. 29, in College Union room 3. Three professors from three different subject areas will offer three different vantage points of the war,

For more information, contact Jameson at kjameson@occc.edu.



Tim O'Brien

'Whad'Ya Know?' quiz show coming to campus

BY DUSTYN RAPPE

News Writing Student

Michael Feldman's live radio show "Whad'Ya Know?" is set to take the stage of OCCC's Visual and Performing Arts Center at 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 25.

"Whad'Ya Know?" is a quiz show that has been broadcast since 1985. The show centers on comedy, trivia, audience participation, and a little bit of actual news.

"[Michael Feldman] has

lots of audience interaction ... so people will come on stage and participate," said Lemuel Bardeguez, director of Cultural Programs. "There will be guest appearances and there's music."

All \$45 tickets are already sold out, Bardeguez said, but there are still \$35 and \$25 tickets available.

"Whad'Ya Know?" show manager Chris Majchrzak compared the show to late night talk shows. Callers phone in from different places around the country to star on the show

and participate in the quizzes, Majchrzak said. This creates an interesting aspect of the show.

KGOU General Manager Karen Holp said she is a big fan, "I think it is one of the funniest, most intelligent public radio programs there is," she said.

Holp remarked that she has been a listener to "Whad'Ya Know?" since she became general manager in 1988.

"I think that it is a show that does appeal to younger folks because it's not dry," Holp said.

"I mean ... some people think that radio programs are dry and boring, ... Michael's show is just fun."

The last time KGOU brought Michael Feldman's "Whad'Ya Know?" to Oklahoma was in 1993.

"We brought [the show] ... to Norman back in April of 1993 and the house sold out," Holp said. "We're looking for a big crowd to enjoy the show."

Tickets can be bought at OCCC's Online Box Office or in the actual box office in the

Visual and Performing Arts Center or by calling 405-682-7579.

Because "Whad'Ya Know?" is a live show, audience members are encouraged to arrive at least 30 minutes early.

The show will run from 10 a.m. to noon.

Until the Oct. 25, you can listen to Michael Feldman's "Whad'Ya Know?" radio show from 10 a.m. to noon Saturdays on Oklahoma City's KGOU public radio station at 105.7 FM or on KROU at 106.3 FM.

Jazz group to lay down some Thelonious Monk, Snarky Puppy

AFTON GARCIA

News Writing Student

The Student Jazz Ensemble will have its first concert of the fall semester at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 15, in the Bruce Owen Theater.

Music by composer Thelonious Monk and the jazz group Snarky Puppy will be performed.

Music Professor Michael Boyle directs the group. He said he is proud of his students' success and their passion for music.

"Our student jazz group sounds like

a pro jazz group."

Boyle said he gives the students challenging pieces each semester and they nail it every time.

"This semester we are pushing the envelope," he said.

"I've picked some crazy stuff. We will see how it turns out."

Zach Lebo, Jared Bross and Stanley Hall are returning to the group this semester.



trumpet and trombone for the performance.

Bross graduated with a music degree from OCCC and is now working on his business degree. He plays the guitar.

Lebo is one of the bass players this

Hall is an OCCC student who has been a part of the group for about two years. Hall plays the tenor and alto saxophone.

Hall said there also might be a

semester.

"Boyle plays with us sometimes but for this show we have a student pianist," Lebo said.

Boyle said Monk's music can be challenging because he breaks the traditional rules of harmony and rhythm.

The Snarky Puppy piece is called "Gone Under."

"I don't like to choose favorites," Lebo said, "but 'Gone Under' would probably be the group favorite from the show."

Admission is free. For more information, contact Boyle at mboyle@occc.edu or by phone at 405-682-1611 ext. 7245.

Kids get their hands dirty while learning



ABOVE: Brolie, 1, plays with a baby doll outside.

RIGHT: Harrison, 2, plays outside on the playground before lunch.

PHOTOS BY
LAUREN DANIEL

BELOW: Over the summer a class planted a garden for use in classes. The garden has corn, collard greens, mustard greens, radishes, carrots and pumpkins.



LAUREN DANIEL
Senior Writer
seniorwriter@occc.edu

What do water, gardens, rocks, animals, bugs and babies have in common? A lot if you're a student at OCCC's Child Development Center and Lab School.

The center offers eight different classes for infants through preschool.

Each of the classes has a project approach, where the subjects they study are inspired by the interests of the children. Hands-on learning helps them learn said Preschool Lead Teacher Constance Pidgeon.

WATER STUDY

Pidgeon's class, made up of 3- and 4-year-olds, has been studying the water cycle. Over the summer, the class planted a garden, she said, so learning about the water cycle seemed like the next logical step, she said.

"We were watering the garden so much, we kind of transitioned from the garden into the water cycle ...," Pidgeon said.

Lucy, 3, said she enjoys getting to water the garden and learn about water.

"We turn the water on and we get sweaty a lot and I get sweaty a lot."

While the main focus of Pidgeon's class is the water cycle, she said the garden still plays an important role.

"It gives them a chance to appreciate nature and to be a part of it and help caring for the Earth," she said.

The garden has corn, collard greens, mustard greens, radishes, carrots and pumpkins. Pidgeon said she hopes to turn the garden into a way to reach out to the entire school and even the surrounding community.

"What's really cool is when we produce something like the cucumbers and we take them from right outside the door and we bring them in and peel them and eat them right then."

GARDEN STUDY

Infant/toddler Assistant Teacher Sarah McElvaney's class is helping that goal become reality. Her class is currently

learning about the garden.

Partnering with the preschool class has been a great experience, she said.

"We go out to the garden and take care of it. The kids pull out weeds and stuff."

McElvaney said at the infant and toddler age, children learn by doing hands-on activities, and the garden gives them the opportunity to get their hands dirty.

"The kids like stuff like that," she said. "They love sensory activities when they get to dig in the dirt and plant seeds, and pull out weeds."

ROCK STUDY

Lisa Jones, Preschool teacher, said her class will take a field trip around the building to learn more about their current project — rocks.

She said having resources that are nearby like the garden, or even the environment around the building, is a cheap, easy way to give the kids a field site study, which is a crucial part of project learning.

"We'll talk about what questions they have about rocks..." she said.

"We will call (in) an expert — a geology teacher from the main campus — to come in and answer their questions ..."

Jones said the field trip is just one part of all the different activities planned.

In the classroom, she said, the children studied rocks under magnifying glasses, painted pictures of rocks and even painted using rocks.

Liam, 3, said he liked the activities he got to do in class.

"I was painting rocks and drawing about rocks," he said.

Jones said after the children showed interest in a geode she brought to class, she knew rocks would be a great thing for them to study.

"We do go in-depth enough for them to understand what mountains are. They're rocks, they're made of rock. That the Earth is one big rock," she said.

"It's something very relative to their life. They love to play with rocks."

BUG STUDY

At age 3 and 4, anything that crawls, flies, or buzzes is a big deal, said Preschool Assistant Teacher Ursula Hudson. She said after observing the kids' fascination with bugs on the playground, she decided studying bugs would captivate their interest.

"They just really, really enjoy holding them and looking at them, because we find them on the playground all the time," she said.

"They'll pick them up and put them in their hand and let them crawl all over."

The class recently watched the life cycle of a butterfly and released them outside on the playground. They will soon do the same with ladybugs.

"Once they hatch and they're big enough to go... they get to see the whole process of them coming out of the egg, and eating, and growing, and then they're adults and they can leave," Hudson said.

Mia, 4, was asked what her favorite bugs are.

"Ladybugs, because they have red and black dots," she said.

Preschool classes use hands-on approach



Kendall, 3, Jillian, 3, and Lucy, 3, look at the corn and scarecrow in their garden.



Trayshawn, 3, and Evelyn, 3, find rocks outside on the playground.

Hudson said the children do a number of other bug-centered activities such as reading books, making habitats and painting pictures.

BIRD STUDY

Toddler class teacher Carrie Sitz said much like bugs, birds fly, and appear in numerous quantities on the playground.

Her class will often be caught looking out the window at the birds perched in the trees, Sitz said.

Because the children are young, and not as verbal, she said, finding something that interests all of them can sometimes be a challenge. Sitz relies on pointing and facial expressions to show what they need to learn.

"... They're always looking out the windows and seeing the birds," she said.

The children in the toddler class are talking about the different types of birds, different colors of birds, and watching birds.

"[We're] going to make bird feeders," she said. "We painted with feathers and we've painted with gummy worms. We're (also) going to bring some worms into the room in a container and let them observe the worms."



PHOTOS BY LAUREN DANIEL

Sarah, Elijah and Addison learn about brushes along with teacher Kendra Miller. The preschool lead teacher said her class has written stories about brushes and painted pictures of the various types.

The children also made birds out of handprints to display on a bulletin board outside of their classroom.

ANIMALS STUDY

Ask toddlers what sound an animal makes and they can probably tell you, said Toddler Lead Teacher Amanda Widener, whose class is learning about animals.

"We have several that just talk about cows constantly, or they'll go find a book and bring it to us and say 'cow, cow, cow' or 'horse,' or whatever," she said.

The class will focus on farm animals first, then sea animals, and will finish the project unit with zoo animals.

Widener said the parents are given questions to review with their student for each type of animal. In the classroom, the kids will get to wash animals, read books, and even do some art-related activities.

"We'll talk about what kind of animals eat apples, because we're trying to do kind of a fall theme too, so a mini apple project, as well.

"Then we'll go into zoo animals in the classroom, and end it with a visit to the zoo on Saturday or something like that," she said.

BABIES STUDY

Babies are the theme for one infant/toddler class, said Lead Teacher Heather Pierce.

"We've been studying babies, because one of [the moms] had a baby in July.

"Whenever she was pregnant, we started talking and they were really interested in baby dolls and what's going to happen when the baby gets here," Pierce said.

She said the children have been learning about feeding, rocking, and dressing babies.

Reading books about new babies and hands-on experience also has been a part of the learning process.

"We have a high chair in our classroom," she said. "I put wipe boxes and spoons and old formula containers and bottles ... in the dramatic play area."

To wrap up the project, Pierce said, she will make a board that includes baby pictures of each child so they can see how they have changed.

BRUSHES STUDY

Art is a major part of a child's life during their developmental years, said Kendra Miller, preschool lead teacher.

She said after she observed the children carrying different types of brushes around the classroom and even using them while playing with Play-doh, she decided to do a unit project over brushes.

Miller said to get the process started, she had the children write stories about the various brushes and paint a picture to go along with it. She said the kids stay interested because it's something they want to learn about.

"We do the project approach [where] you ... figure out what the kids know about it, what they want to learn about it," Miller said. "Then we'll have some visitors come in and talk to us about brushing our teeth and have an artist that will come in and paint a picture for us."

By the end of the unit, the children will be able to tell about the different types of brushes and their functions.

For more information about the Child Development Center and Lab School, call 405-682-7838 or visit www.occc.edu/childdev.

SPORTS

EVENT
NEWS

Flag Football



ETHAN COOPER/PIONEER

Film and Video Production major Quinton Mountain and Pre Allied Health major Dante Wartley play a game of flag football in OCCC's Activity Field. Intramural Flag Football meets Wednesdays from 3:30 to 7:30 p.m. and is free for all students, faculty and staff. To register, visit IMleagues.com/occc. For more information, contact Intramural Sports Assistant Matthew Wright at matthew.j.wright@occc.edu or call 405-682-1611, ext. 7684.

SPORTS | The intramural sport begins Tuesday, Oct. 28

Badminton season set to take flight

JORGE KRZYZANIAK

Sports Writer

sportswriter@occc.edu

Around campus there have been no previous reports of airborne shuttlecocks, but that is all about to change, Sports Assistant Matthew Wright said.

Intramural badminton is set to begin on Tuesday, Oct. 28, Wright said. And the world's fastest racket sport, according to bbc.com, will see its season here played out in the gymnasium until Tuesday, Nov. 18.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines badminton as "a game in which a light feathered object (called a shuttlecock, bird or birdie) is hit over a net by players using light rackets."

Badminton is said to be the world's second most popular sport by BBC news, falling behind only soccer in terms of participation.

Wright said he intends to keep this season lighthearted and leave some decisions up to the participants.

"We'll see what people want when they sign up," he said.

Wright said, the deadline for intramural badminton registration is Monday, Oct. 27. OCCC's students, faculty and staff may register for free at IMleagues.com.

"I've never even played badminton myself," Wright said.

He said he's adapted the rules of other school's badminton tournaments for OCCC's intramurals.

He said badminton matches are decided in the best of three games, each played to 21 points. A point is scored on every serve and players must win by at least two points to complete a game, Wright said.

He said participants are encouraged to bring their own rackets but some will be available for checkout at the wellness center if needed. Shuttlecocks, otherwise known as birdies, will be provided for games, said Wright.

Rules, details and registration for badminton and all OCCC's intramural sports are available at IMleagues.com.

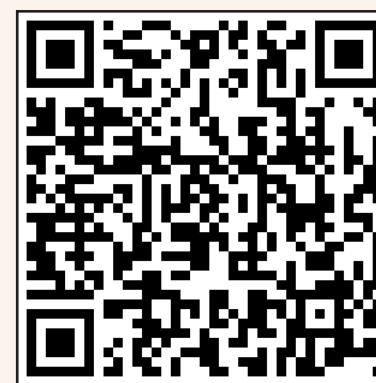
For more information visit OCCC's recreation and fitness office or contact Matthew Wright at matthew.j.wright1422@occc.edu.

Fall 2014:

- Students with a valid OCCC ID can use the Aquatic Center free of charge. The Aquatic Center features two pools, and an 18½-ft deep diving well with 1- and 3-meter spring boards and 5-, 7- and 10-meter platforms. For more information, visit www.occc.edu/RF.

- OCCC Group Fitness classes are offered at a variety of fitness levels and are spaced conveniently throughout the afternoon and late evening hours. Discounted group fitness passes are available. See more at www.occc.edu/rf/cr-group-fitness.

- The Recreation & Fitness Center is open to students, faculty, staff and community members. The center features a 15,000-square-foot gym with two basketball courts and one recreational volleyball court, a cardio room with three treadmills, two cross trainers and two recumbent bikes as well as a weight room featuring a complete circuit of Cybex equipment and free weights. Students with a valid OCCC ID can use the facilities free of charge. For more information, visit www.occc.edu/RF or call 405-682-7860.



Scan the QR code with your smart phone to be directed to a list of OCCC Intramural events, complete with the most current updates.

(Free QR code reader apps can be found online or in app stores on smart phones. Follow the directions for the app you download.)

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

Stolen car, needle sticks reported to cops

LAUREN DANIEL
Senior Writer
seniorwriter@occc.edu

One OCCC student is without wheels after his car was stolen from parking lot C at around 12:40 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 25.

According to the report, Tyler Halbert, 18, said he arrived on campus around 9 a.m. in his 1997 red Honda Civic with white aftermarket wheels and red lug nuts. When he returned from class, the car was gone.

After reviewing security footage, Campus Police Officer Tim Harris was able to see two males, possibly Hispanic, arrive on campus in a four-door Honda Accord at 11:16 a.m.

According to the report, one of the men got out of his vehicle, entered the victim's, and exited the parking

lot at 11:23 driving Halbert's car. The other suspect departed campus as well, taking a different route.

No broken glass was spotted at the scene.

Halbert said he had recently purchased the vehicle and had not changed the title or registration.

The case is still active. Additional information is available in a supplemental report that was requested but not provided.

Three separate reports were filed Monday, Sept. 22, and Thursday, Sept. 25, where nursing students were stuck by needles.

At around 9 a.m. Sept. 22, nursing major Amber Idlett reported having stuck her thumb with a needle during classroom activities. She refused medical attention.

Later that day, at about 12:09 p.m. Sept. 22, a 29-year-old female nursing student also was doing practical activities in Health Professions Room 146 when, she

reported, a needle flew out of its packaging, grazing the cornea of her right eye. She said she did not want medical attention. No further action was taken.

On Sept. 25, a nursing student reported that she stuck one of her fingers with a needle while practicing on a mannequin. She also refused medical attention.

Some information was redacted from the reports under the direction of Marketing and Public Relations Director Cordell Jordan who said names are redacted "according to OCCCPD Standard Operating Procedures involving information released and information withheld."

To obtain a copy of the procedure, email cjordan@occc.edu.

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.

OCCC: College recognized as Achieving the Dream leader

Continued from page 1

obstacles, like transportation issues, child care and basic needs.

"We knew that some of our students struggle with child care, [so] we implemented student scheduled child care," he said.

Overall, Sechrist said, the improvements have made OCCC even better.

"It's not just about getting into college," he said. "It's about what happens once you get here and making sure that you stay long enough to get a degree.

"Our graduation rates have far out-paced our enrollment growth. We feel like we're doing a lot of the right things."

Sechrist said this is the first time OCCC has applied as a Leader College.

"I feel like it's a great validation of our hard work and our successes, so it's nice to have the national recognition to validate what we have been doing at the college and the



results that we've seen," he said.

Sechrist said he and other officials felt OCCC had a good chance since the school has a good record.

"Once you've demonstrated some success, then you have the opportunity to apply to the organization to receive this designation," he said.

"We applied last spring and then a group of former college presidents in a team evaluate

all the applications."

The criteria was:

- Was there real success?
- Was it sustained?
- Was it up to scale?
- Is there support among the faculty and staff and the leadership?
- Sustains growth over time.

To apply, Sechrist said, OCCC's data is evaluated which includes surveying the culture of the faculty and staff.

"[It] determines if they support moving the institution toward higher levels of success for the students," he said.

Sechrist said Achieving the

Dream confirms OCCC is on the right track.

The Achieving the Dream website states the mission of the group: "One hundred coaches and advisers, 15 state policy teams, and numerous investors and partners working throughout 34 states and the District of Columbia are helping nearly four million community college students have a better chance of realizing greater economic opportunity and achieving their dreams."

For more information, visit <http://achievingthedream.org/about-us>.

Break: President encourages students to enjoy fall vacation

Continued from page 1

fall break, especially with the middle of the semester rapidly approaching.

"I would say if you're caught up with all of your assignments and all of your homework, hey, rest and relax for a nice, long weekend. But if you're behind or if you're nervous about how things are going, you might want to take the opportunity to

catch up. From my experiences when I was in college, either a spring break or a fall break, I tried to do a little bit of both.

"Maybe try to find some time to spend with family or friends, but it was also a great time to get caught up on homework and studies, too," he said.

For more information, visit www.occc.edu/academicaffairs/pdf/Academic-Calendar-2013-2014.pdf.

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FALL BREAK BUILDING HOURS	Biology Science Center	Physical Sciences Center
	Oct. 16: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.	Oct. 16: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
	Oct. 17: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.	Oct. 17: 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
	Oct. 18: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.	Oct. 18: 8:30 a.m. to noon
Library:	Student Computer Center (Library 3rd Floor)	Student Services
Oct. 16: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.	Oct. 16: 8 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.	Will close at 5 p.m. Oct. 17
Oct. 17: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.	Oct. 17: 8 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.	
Oct. 18: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.	Oct. 18: 9 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.	Speech Lab
Bookstore		Oct. 16, 17, 18: Closed
Oct. 16: 7:45 a.m. to 6 p.m.		
Oct. 17, 18: Closed	Test Center	
Math Lab	Oct. 16: 8 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.	For more information about possible closings or business hours, call 405-682-1611 or visit the OCCC website at www.occc.edu .
Oct. 16: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.	Oct. 17: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.	
Oct. 17: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.	Oct. 18: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.	
Oct. 18: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.		

CAMPUS COMMUNITY

Free time



ETHAN COOPER/PIONEER

Film and Television major Sam Pemberton enjoys his free time at OCCC's cafe. "I'm watching 'Parks and Recreation,'" Pemberton said. The cafe is located on the first floor of the Main Building and offers many areas for students to relax and enjoy coffee.

COMMUNITY | OCCC immersion experience affordable learning experience

Spain trip leaves students wanting more

VANESSA MARTINEZ
News Writing Student

For a little less than \$3,000 each, 13 OCCC students spent two weeks in Spain at the end of the spring semester, improving their Spanish language skills. They were joined by students from Northeastern Oklahoma State University in Tahlequah.

Ginnett Rollins, Modern Languages director at OCCC, said the best part for the students was trying to communicate in Spanish.

"The immersion experience of actually going and trying to communicate in Spanish was one of the most important things the students got to experience," she said.

Rollins accompanied the students on their trip. From May 17 through June 1, the students traveled to Madrid, Cordoba, and southern Spain.

OCCC student Lizette Gonzalez said she considers herself fluent in Spanish, but said she found some vocabulary differences in her Spanish travels.

"Sometimes we did bump into each other because some words didn't mean the same thing," she said.

The thing she said stuck out most to her were the regional flavors of the language within Spain itself.

"Every time we kept on moving south, their accents kept on changing," she said.



Gonzalez says she paid for her trip through installment payments.

Christian Alyea, Oklahoma Study Abroad director, organized the trip and accompanied the students as well.

Gonzalez said Alyea was lenient but mindful of when the payments were due. She said a lot of her funding was donated through her GoFundMe account.

Rollins said the trip included a three-credit-hour Spanish class, which students could take for credit or audit.

Gonzalez said the three-credit-hour class called for a reasonable workload.

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

Love and war film to screen Oct. 13 at OCCC

"A Soldier's Sweetheart," a film of love and war, will play in CU2 and 3 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday, Oct. 13. For more information, contact Student Life at 405-682-7523.

'Miss Representation' to play on campus Oct. 14

"Miss Representation," a film about understanding the role of women, their influence in America and challenges the media's limited portrayal of what it means to be a powerful woman, will be presented from 11 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 14, in CU2 and CU3. For more information, contact Student Life at 405-682-7523.

1960s Art and Rock presentation set for Oct. 15

Political science professor Sharon Vaughn will present on the topic of 1960s Art and Rock from noon until 1 p.m. Oct. 15 in CU3. For more information, contact Student Life at 405-682-7523.

Get Monk-ti-fied at OCCC jazz concert Oct. 15

See OCCC's jazz ensemble play songs from composer Thelonious Monk at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 15, in the Bruce Owen Theater. Admission is free. For more information, call 405-682-1611 ext. 7100.

'Things They Carried' author O'Brien to speak

Tim O'Brien, the author of the book "The Things They Carried," will speak on campus at 12:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 21, in the Bruce Owen Theater. O'Brien's book on the Vietnam War has been selected as the book for this year's OCCC Reads. Free copies are available in the library. Contact English and Humanities Dean Kim Jameson at 405-682-1611, ext. 7653, or at kjameson@occc.edu.

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

She recommends students take advantage of OCCC's study-abroad trips because they're some of the most cost-friendly in Oklahoma.

Paris Burris, who has since graduated from OCCC, also went to Spain.

"Cadiz was my favorite place," Burris said. "We went to the beach, and it was beautiful and relaxing."

Burris said it was nice to see a different culture, to be out and about and active.

"The most shocking thing to me was the food," she said. "In Spain they eat ham with everything, and the way they make it is completely different than in America."

Burris also recommends the Oklahoma Study Abroad program to those who don't mind being active and on the go.

"It's affordable and educational," she said. "The good thing about this trip is, it made me not only want to spend two weeks abroad, but a whole semester."

This coming spring, a travel destination for modern language students is expected to be Paris, France. For more information on that trip, contact Rollins at grollins@occc.edu.

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.

AUTOMOTIVE

FOR SALE: 1994 White Saturn model SC1. Body type CP, 169,000 miles. Asking \$800. Call 405.212.6027 for more information.

FURNITURE

FOR SALE: 40" CRT television in excellent condition. Big screen makes it great for a gaming TV. \$30. Text 405-818-0083.

MISCELLANEOUS

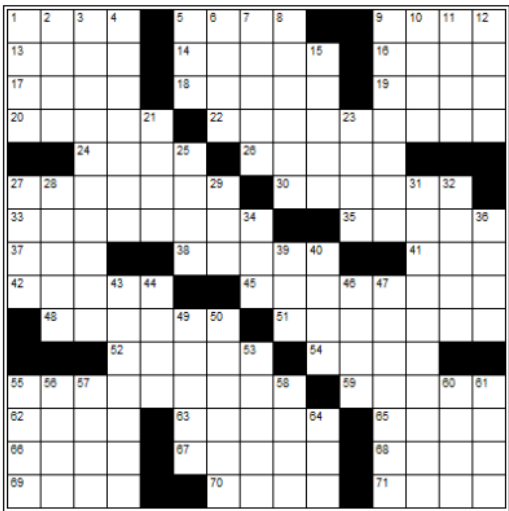
LOOKING FOR ROOM TO RENT: Close to campus. Male roommates only. Call Nahtali-Noel Nhongho at 832-738-2527 or email nahtali-noel-e-nhongho@my.occc.edu.

LOOKING FOR ROOM TO RENT: Male, 23, student looking to rent a room close to campus for no more than \$250-\$300 a month through fall semester. Email john.white336@my.occc.edu.

ROOM FOR RENT: I have a 3-bedroom house and would like to rent a room to someone responsible and honest. The house is located about 15 minutes from the college. Call Wilma at 405-923-4199. If no answer, leave message.

ACROSS

- 1. Murres
- 5. Assistant
- 9. Male offspring
- 13. Lease
- 14. It delivers babies?
- 16. Notion
- 17. Magma
- 18. A tart fruit
- 19. Untidyness
- 20. Thrall
- 22. Winners
- 24. Go on horseback
- 26. Satan
- 27. A part of a broadcast serial
- 30. Angel
- 33. Prisons
- 35. Districts
- 37. Gist
- 38. Nigerian monetary unit
- 41. Regret
- 42. Panache
- 45. A lofty peak
- 48. A type of organic compound
- 51. Noblewoman
- 52. Amount of hair
- 54. Alert
- 55. Estranged
- 59. Name of a book
- 62. Residence hall
- 63. Daddies
- 65. Conceited
- 66. Let go
- 67. Remains
- 68. Matured
- 69. Dispatched
- 70. If not
- 71. Not more



DOWN

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Website addresses | 21. Biblical kingdom | 44. Ripped |
| 2. Genuine | 23. Former Italian currency | 46. Tidy |
| 3. Constant | 25. Biblical garden | 47. Not departure |
| 4. Recurrence | 27. Feudal worker | 49. Some tides |
| 5. American Sign Language | 28. Gutsiness | 50. What's left behind |
| 6. Bit of gossip | 29. Historic period | 53. Flower part |
| 7. Vaulted | 31. Portion | 55. Contributes |
| 8. Wears away | 32. Drags | 56. Old stories |
| 9. Alike | 34. Take in slowly | 57. Weightlifters pump this |
| 10. Poems | 36. Views | 58. Not nights |
| 11. Where a bird lives | 39. Tear | 60. Untruths |
| 12. Back talk | 40. Again | 61. Terminates |
| 15. Scoundrel | 43. Try | 64. South southeast |

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WCD WIC Program

New at OCCC Family and Community Education (FACE) Center
9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday, North Hall
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(income guidelines apply)

Currently on another WIC program?
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'Godfather' director Coppola to speak at OCCC Oct. 20

LANDON BUETTNER
News Writing Student

Academy Award winning director Francis Ford Coppola will speak at 7 p.m. Monday, Oct. 20, in the VPAC theater at OCCC.

He will be reviewing scenes from his movies, such as "The Godfather," "The Outsiders," "American Graffiti," "The Cotton Club" and "Apocalypse Now," said Gray Frederickson, OCCC's artist-in-residence in the Film and Video program.

Hosting the evening with Coppola will be Frederickson, the Academy Award winning producer of "The Godfather," who has worked with Coppola on many movies.

Frederickson said he and Coppola have known each other since the early 1970s, when Frederickson was Coppola's producer for the masterpiece, "The Godfather," released in 1972.

"He's a wonderful guy and extremely fascinating," Frederickson said. "He has a wealth of knowledge from his experience over the years."

Coppola is an American film director, producer and screenwriter who has won Oscars, Golden Globes and countless other awards for his work, according to the website Internet Movie Database.

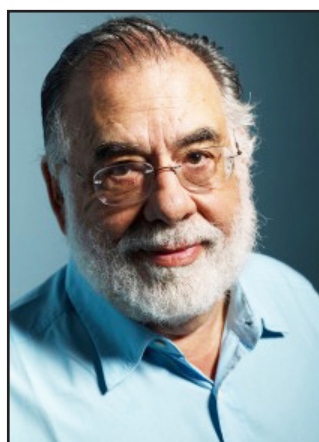
Students expressed excitement over this rare chance to see Coppola.

"I'm going to get there early to try and meet him," said Jackson McKinnon, psychology major. "The 'Godfather' movies and 'Apocalypse Now' are my favorite movies."

Mechanical Engineering major Kelleigh Pfeil agreed.

"Getting to see this famous director live is going to be awesome," she said.

The two movie-makers, Coppola and Frederickson, will be on stage talking about their lives, careers and the future of the film industry. Frederickson said the audience will get a rare glimpse behind the scenes of filmmaking.



Francis Ford Coppola



OCCC Artist-in-Residence Gray Frederickson and Academy Award-winning Director Francis Ford Coppola at the 1975 Academy Awards accepting the Oscar for "Godfather II" which won Best Picture that year. Frederickson was co-producer of the film. Coppola will visit OCCC Monday, Oct. 20.

Coppola will hold a free master class for Film and Video students from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Oct. 20, on stage in the VPAC theater. Frederickson said everyone is welcome to come to the master class and sit in the audience while Coppola advises the majors.

At press time, about 700 tickets had been sold, said Courtney Decker, Box Office assistant. Tickets in the upper orchestra and balcony are available for \$35. For more information, call the ticket office at 405-682-7576.

Oklahoma same-sex marriage decision applauded by club

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COMING OUT CELEBRATION
Noon to 2:30 p.m.
Monday, Oct. 13
Near OCCC Coffee Shop

On Monday, Oct. 6, couples across the state rushed to the courthouse after Oklahoma's ban on same-sex marriage was lifted following the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to deny appeals processed by five states including Indiana, Utah, Virginia and Wisconsin.

Lisa Shaw, political science major and president of OCCC's gay-straight alliance Leading Individuals for Equality (LIFE), said she was shopping at Sam's Club when she heard the news.

"I just felt overwhelming relief, quite honestly."

Shaw, a born and raised Oklahoman, said she supports the U.S. Supreme Court decision to deny the appeals.

"There's no controversy behind these cases," she said. "Each one of the districts voted down the same-sex marriage ban, so it wasn't really necessary for the Supreme Court to hear these cases."

Shaw said it will be interesting to see what decisions are made in the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals — which includes Texas and other southern states.

"That's a conservative circuit — Texas, Mississippi and Louisiana — so there's potential for the cases to gain momentum for a case to be heard in the Supreme Court," she said.

Gov. Mary Fallin said the Supreme Court's decision "ignored the right of Oklahomans and Americans in every state to write their own laws and govern themselves as they see fit" in a statement released on Oct. 6.

In response, Shaw said, Oklahoma should instead follow suit when it comes to social issues.

"We really need to support the national direction for equality," she said. "To think that we would live in a state where acceptance and equality for every citizen is not considered — especially when it's garnering overwhelming national support, generational support

and support from our friends and loved ones — is a disturbing statement from our governor."

LIFE Vice President Mathew Borum agrees.

He said while same-sex legalization in Oklahoma is exciting, there's still more progress to be made.

"I'm extremely glad that this happened," he said. "I think this is a major step in a long line of things that need to be done."

"But we still have things to worry about, such as employment discrimination."

"This is only one step in the journey — but it's a major step."

Shaw said the Supreme Court's decision comes at the perfect time as October is LGBT History Month and National Coming Out Day is celebrated on Saturday, Oct. 11.

In honor of the national holiday, she said, LIFE is hosting a "Coming Out Celebration" from noon to 2:30 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 13, north of the OCCC Coffee Shop.

LIFE members will be cutting cake and providing information for LGBT resources at the event, she said.

National Coming Out Day isn't just

about coming out as a gay individual, Shaw said — it's about being honest about anything a person fears.

"I think that those fears are pretty prevalent across every individual facing a coming out process — whether you're coming out as gay and lesbian, whether you're coming out as wanting to be a police officer or being a theater major," she said.

"[Coming out] means visibility and strength. In a time where there are many equality battles that are being fought, it is important to reiterate that."

"So, just because we have reached a certain level of equality, doesn't mean that these milestones and these dates aren't just as important."

Shaw said being an LGBT Oklahoman is an ongoing challenge.

"There will be individuals struggling to come out today, tomorrow, next month and next year," she said. "But there is strength in numbers — knowing that others have come out can strengthen your resolve as well."

For more information about the National Coming Out Day celebration, or LIFE, contact Shaw at 410-350-4380.

For more about same-sex marriage, visit www.freedomtomarry.org/states.