

OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE PIONEER



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COVERING OCCC SINCE 1978

OCT. 9, 2015



Getting the job 411: Representatives from local businesses met with students and community members at the OCCC Job Fair Sept. 30, in the general dining area of the Main Building. A health-related job fair took place at the same time in CU3. *Clayton Mitchell/Pioneer*

Survey shows 2014 graduates happy with OCCC experience

Official says college scored 8.97 out of 10 for student satisfaction

KATIE AXTELL
Editor
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Of the 2,055 students who graduated from OCCC in 2014, a little more than half — 50.9 percent — responded to a graduate survey, said Institutional Effectiveness Director Janet Perry. Their answers showed a high level of satisfaction with the college.

The survey asked questions

related to overall satisfaction, continuing education, long-term goals and more.

The 1,047 students who responded gave an overall satisfaction rate on 8.97 on a 10-point scale, according to a report prepared by the Institutional Effectiveness office.

Perry said results show an average 8.79 of a 10-point scale that OCCC had prepared the graduates for continued education.

Of those who continued their education at another school after graduation, the top five majors were business, nursing, education, sociology and psychology, according to the survey.



Decades of research suggest student engagement in the campus environment is critical to student success.”

—JERRY STEWARD
OCCC PRESIDENT

Perry said some students went straight into the workforce. The survey asked if they felt OCCC had prepared them for that transition she said.

The report showed those who

See **SURVEY** page 9

OCCC fall break Oct. 15 through 18

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Students who need to get caught up on class assignments may want to consider coming to the campus during fall break Thursday, Oct. 15, through Saturday, Oct. 17.

All OCCC buildings will stay open with standard operating hours, with the exception of the library and bookstore, said Cam-

pus Police Officer Daniel Piazza.

The library will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday and Friday, and from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, he said.

The bookstore will be open from 7:45 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 15, but is closed Friday, Oct. 16, for inventory.

Registrar Alan Stringfellow said although classes don't meet on those days, most of OCCC's staff will

See **BREAK** page 9

Pathways school doubles enrollment

DARLA KILHOFFER
Online Editor
Onlineeditor@occc.edu

Santa Fe South Pathways Middle College enrollment has more than doubled since last year, serving 185 students this year in comparison to 89 students in 2014. This is due to extensive recruiting, said Pathways Middle College Director Christopher McAdoo.

Pathways Middle College is a high school housed on the third floor of the Main Building. McAdoo said it provides students with the opportunity to enroll in college courses while still taking high school classes — known as concurrent for dual credit enrollment — so students can get a high school diploma and associate degree all in one place.

The school houses 9th through 12th grade.

Students can begin taking college classes as early as the second semester of their sophomore year with approval of the State Higher Education board, McAdoo said. Juniors must have a 3.5 GPA and score 21 on the ACT, and seniors must have a 3.0 GPA and score 19 on the ACT to



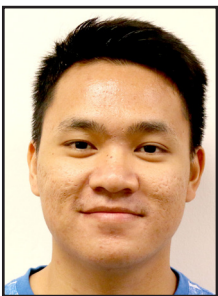
See **PATHWAYS** page 9

EDITORIAL/OPINION

EDITORIAL | In today's fast-paced world, those who rush miss out on the better things in life

Patience is a valuable virtue to have, grasshopper

Lack of patience is a popular subject these days because of the booming development of modern and quickly accessible technology. These inventions are diminishing the time needed to collect information from hours to just seconds.



HUNG
TRAN

Consequently, we've formed the bad habit of expecting all answers and receiving all information immediately. This has resulted in bad behavior such as complaints of having to wait in a long line at the store or rushing around other drivers who are driving within the posted speed limit. I can hear all the honking horns now.

According to the article "How to Have Patience Every Day" by Independent Publishing Professional Ingela Ratledge, a study was conducted in 2012 by Massachusetts University pointing out that approximately 25 percent of website browsers decided to

leave an online clip if the loading is just more than five seconds rather than wait for it to load.

Impatience creates problems for everyone and negatively affects relationships, according to the article "Having Patience Benefits You and Those Around You," at operationmeditation.com.

"Lack of patience will often make you irritable and not a very nice person to be around."

In addition, mistakes are more often made by someone who is impatient because the person is in such a rush to get things done. Therefore, he or she rarely spends enough time collecting information and assessing the situation carefully before making decisions.

Practicing patience is good for people in many ways.

An online article, "The Quality of Patience" written by Consulting Psychologist Shirley Vandersteen, said, "If we pay close enough attention and can quiet our minds, we may even see the past, present, and future all in one moment."

Vandersteen said taking life easy creates inner peace, especially for those who are stressing or fac-

ing big problems.

Furthermore, she said, those people's lives are usually happier and calmer because they know how to keep their minds uncluttered.

Their relationships also are better because others will feel comfortable being around them.

Fortunately, the habit of impatience is changeable. There are some simple tricks to help build patience.

Breathing deeply is the most useful technique when needing to destress and be patient. It helps to immediately slow down the body and mind.

Another method is daily meditation. In 2011, a brain-imaging study conducted by Yale University found that people who meditate frequently are able to control the parts of the brain associated with anxiety.

In today's fast-paced world, patience is an essential and valuable characteristic. It not only makes people happier and eases stress, but it also helps them avoid making a situation worse.

Learning to be patient is the way to go.

—HUNG TRAN
STAFF WRITER

LETTER TO THE EDITOR | At a time when no one on campus is getting a raise, big celebrations are being held

OCCC employee says new president's priorities wrong

To the Editor:

With the placement of new OCCC President Jerry Steward, it seems to me that in just his few short months in office that college funds may be being misused.

One example is the numerous galas to celebrate him coming into his new position of authority.

Multiple mailouts have gone out for presidential events which represent a costly amount of funds. Those are said to be funded by donations from sources that didn't want

to be acknowledged.

Some of the notifications were also sent by way of campus emails but the ones that weren't are engraved invitations that require postage.

Another example is the additional staff it seems the new president needs to be able to do his job.

Since acquiring the new staff members, new positions of authority have also been created which increased the income of the chosen few. They also have redecorated the offices for these people.

Not only does the president make a very large salary, but also it seems that maybe he even gets perks, such as catered dinners at the college for him and his guests before special events in the VPAC — all of which seems to be what he must be entitled to because of the new position.

Meanwhile, his lowly employees go another year without an increase in salary and still have to try to make cuts in the department budgets because of the state's budget shortfall.

Most people think that if the new president was concerned about the future of the college, he would be more eager to try to convince the unnamed donors to put their well-intentioned funds toward the actual survival of the college.

It has been stated in the college's paper about how

President Steward comes from a poor, struggling background.

However, it seems like he has adjusted to the life of the well-off very comfortably — and is not sharing the wealth with the people that do the daily routine.

—NAME WITHHELD BY
REQUEST

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.

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PIONEER

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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.

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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 a major. OCCC staff and faculty must list a 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

MOVIE REVIEW | True story was fine as it was, without embellishment

‘Sniper’ takes too many liberties

Navy SEAL Sniper Chris Kyle’s story portrayed in the movie “American Sniper” is the kind of thing that tugs at many people’s heart strings.

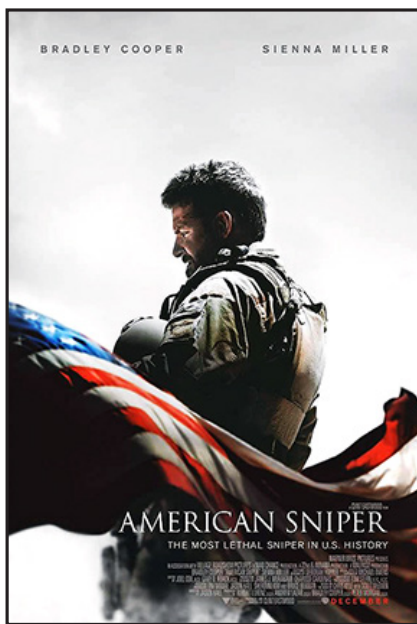
Kyle, the most deadly sniper in U.S. military history, was nicknamed “The Legend.” He was decorated for valor multiple times.

His death at the hands of Eddie Ray Routh, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran who may have been suffering from serious mental illness, turns Kyle’s heroic tale tragic.

The emotional impact is greater because the story is true. Most of the important facts were recounted in Kyle’s memoir and are not really disputed.

With such compelling material to work with, it is puzzling that writer Jason Hall and Director/Producer Clint Eastwood decided to alter many elements for the film.

I found myself wondering midway through if some events actually happened — such as when Kyle showed up on the battlefield with a beard, something Kyle did not have at the time but grew after



he retired.

In fact, some pivotal scenes in the film are fictitious.

In the film, Kyle makes a snap decision to join the military while watching a news report of the 1998 American Embassy bombing, moments after throwing out a cheating girlfriend.

It’s supposed to be a compelling emotional scene, but it never happened.

Kyle had long planned to enlist

after college, and the scene detracts from a more honest story about someone who wanted to serve because of his upbringing.

Just as distracting are the two-dimensional villains the filmmakers pit against Kyle.

A character called “The Butcher” provides dramatic impetus to the early part of the film, but he never existed. He may have been loosely based on an Iraqi Shia warlord named Abu Deraa, but Kyle never encountered him.

A scene where Kyle kills Mustafa, an enemy sniper and the film’s main antagonist, with a nearly impossible shot, also is fabricated from parts of different events.

It seems like a weak attempt by the filmmakers to personalize a faceless enemy.

Kyle’s is a real story about how war affects a soldier and his family, but many elements are added to amplify the legend.

Though, overall, the film is still gripping, it sometimes feels like the hero is shooting at paper targets.

Rating: B+

—AMAR MOLINAS
WEBMASTER

TV SERIES REVIEW | Only a few episodes in, reviewer is hooked on FBI-themed show

Tattoos tell the tale in ‘Blindspot’

Each fall brings back the overrated pumpkin spice lattes, oversized sweaters and original TV shows. And, of course, being the curious-minded individual I am, I was pulled into a new series that premiered mid-September.

This particular show piqued my interest with the first preview I was able to catch. Maybe it’s because I like tattoos or badass women, but “Blindspot” has sure brought me both.

Unraveling the mystery of Jane Doe and all of the new tattoos on her body, and why one FBI agent’s name is inked across her back, are just a few of the big questions presented in the premiere.

In just that episode, one tattoo unlocks a clue to a bombing planned to take place the very same day.

In the next episode, a similar clue is found in a tattoo that helps prevent more killings.

So far, each time a tattoo is revealed or deciphered, it becomes a race against time. And with every chase, Jane unlocks more memories of herself, although she has a hard time piecing them together.

Within the few episodes agents have a hunch as to



who she might be and why she was sent to a specific agent.

“Blindspot” keeps my interest, and gives me a reason to put my son to bed at his bedtime so I can make sure I don’t miss a minute of it. The downfall, just like every TV show, is the love story behind it all.

It hasn’t happened just yet in this one, but the way things are going, I’m almost positive there will be some lovey-dovey mumbo-jumbo going on before long.

Even with the sappy crap, I still want to know who Jane Doe is, why she was sent to the FBI, who tattooed



Find My iPhone app a real lifesaver

I misplace just about everything — anything you can think of that has any importance at all, from my wallet and car keys, to old hand-held video game consoles I used to play when I was younger. Anything I can take out of my house, I can lose.

This is especially true with the most important device in my life: my cell phone.

I can’t recall how many times I’ve totally forgotten where I left my phone.

Fortunately, I’ve never had to buy a new iPhone, thanks to the free Find My iPhone App.

Whoever invented this is an absolute genius.

With the app, you log into your Apple account from another phone or from any computer, to pinpoint exactly where your phone is. The location is shown on a map.

I’ve had to use this at least five times since I started using an iPhone so I can tell you that it is an absolute lifesaver.

Once I accidentally threw my phone in with the garbage which was eventually taken out to the dumpster.

Using the Find My iPhone app, my coworkers and I were able to pinpoint my phone to the exact garbage bag.

There’s a good chance I would never have found my phone without the app.

Users also can elect to have the phone emit a noise, which is really handy when you’re digging through trash.

iPhones come with the app preloaded.

Android users have a similar type of service, so if you own a cell phone, you should be taking full advantage of this service.

It’s easily one of the most important apps you can have.

—IAN MANERA
SPORTS WRITER

her body and erased her memory, who the man is that keeps reappearing, why she has a covered-up, old Navy SEAL tattoo, and why the FBI director hides her own FBI file when she sees the case number on Jane’s body?

Rating: B

—KATIE AXTELL
EDITOR

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

GAME REVIEW | Everything in 2016 version feels 'smooth and seamless'

'NBA 2K' attention to detail earns it an A+

The "NBA 2K" video game series is an institution in sports video games. It's been that way for the past decade ever since it overtook "NBA Live" as the most popular basketball video game on the market.

The series' attention to detail, to every aspect of the NBA landscape, is something that I, being the biggest basketball nerd I know, absolutely love.

There isn't a video game series that competes with "NBA 2K," which could easily lead the basketball sim's creators to become complacent, but with "2K," that will just never be an issue.

"2K16" makes huge strides on the already spectacular gameplay, for starters.

Defenses are much improved, and it takes some actual basketball knowledge and know-how to be an accomplished "2K16" player, which is great. I find myself calling out plays like a young

Phil Jackson.

Everything feels so smooth and seamless too. It's a great experience.

The game also improves on its presentation. Now we see James Harden, with messy strands of hair sticking out of his famous beard, doing his cooking dance on the sidelines.

"2K16" also brings a ton of improvements to the many game modes being offered.

Controlling your favorite team in "myLeague" or "myGM" is more hands-on and in-depth than ever before.

The biggest changes to "2K16" are the changes to its most popular game mode, myPLAYER.

"2K" enlists world-renowned film director Spike Lee to craft the story of your created player.

Your player progresses from high school star, to being recruited and

playing in college, to the pros.

It's really fun to watch your player progress through his basketball life.

However, Lee's contribution also is a drawback.

The script of the story feels like a straight-to-DVD movie that sits in the bargain bin at a Walmart that nobody ever watches. You know those movies.

I found myself laughing aloud at how stupid some of the characters' lines were. This is a small gripe though. It's a basketball sim, at the end of the day.

You aren't buying "2K16" for compelling drama in the storyline of its created player mode.

The complete package of "2K16" is more than enough for this to be a must own for any basketball fan.

Rating: A+

— IAN MANERA
SPORTS WRITER



MUSIC REVIEW | Tulsa native's album 'Brand New' written from experience

Ben Rector brings listeners into his life

Due to a misattributed song on my iPod, I have been under the impression that I disliked Ben Rector's voice. That is, until recently, when I downloaded a Tour De Compadres sample album.

His song "When I'm with You" had such a unique sound that I had to listen to more. That's when I gave the Tulsa native's latest album, "Brand New" a shot.

I've been listening to it for about a week now and am already planning which album to buy next.

Rector is a talented lyricist but even more clever when it comes to song topics.

My favorite on the album is definitely "Crazy," which seems to be my life anthem. It's for all the listeners whose night life is anything but crazy and typically includes cooking at home and renting movies on the weekends.

In "My Favorite Song," Rector compares his girl to a song, referencing various other musicians, such as Johnny Cash and John Bon Jovi. Though a fun addition, I found this track far too cliché.

"The Men That Drive Me Places" is a humble, piano-based tune that compares hard-working men to Rector himself.



He ponders how many blue-collar citizens deserve recognition, yet he is the person crowds pay money to see. The melodies are catchy (some much more than others), but the lyrical perspectives are consistently unique.

"Note to Self" is another clever song where he makes a mental checklist of things to do and things to be, reminding himself to think of others more.

The album has that hometown pop-rock sound and leans slightly toward folk. The best part?

Every song is written from Rector's experiences, not his label's checklist.

As you listen to the album, you feel like you are living Rector's life in the passenger seat.

He catches this perfectly in one of the tracks, when a stranger on an airplane concludes that life looks pretty good from 30,000 feet.

Comparable to Need to Breathe, Dave Barnes and even Jon Foreman, Ben Rector has created a well-written album that I enjoy listening to at any time.

Rating: B+

— DARLA KILHOFFER
ONLINE EDITOR

TOP 20 MOVIES

Weekend of Oct. 2
through Oct. 4

www.newyorktimes.com

1. The Martian
2. Hotel Transylvania
3. Sicario
4. The Intern
5. Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials
6. Black Mass
7. Everest
8. The Visit
9. War Room
10. The Perfect Guy
11. The Walk
12. The Green Inferno
13. Singh Is Bling
14. A Walk in the Woods
15. Grandma
16. Pawn Sacrifice
17. Etiquette for Mistresses
18. Mission: Impossible — Rogue Nation
19. Minions
20. Lost In Hong Kong

Physical Therapist Assistant graduates pass test

RAVEN-LOCKIE DIAZ
News Writing Student

A pass rate of 100 percent is about as good as it gets. That's the percentage of graduates of the Physical Therapist Assistant program who passed their licensure exam on the first try in 2015.

PTA Professor Jennifer Ball, who also serves as program director, said the family-like bond the students form could be one reason 20 of 20 graduates passed the test.

"They are always helping each other and studying together," she said.

The PTA program has a student-run club called the Student Physical Therapist Assistant Organization, which includes only the upper classmen.

"It doesn't seem like an actual club because it is made up of all the students in the class," said President Reese Miller, sophomore PTA major.

Miller said they learn together, they study together, they fundraise together, and they take the national exam together.

"We have to be very comfortable with each other, because we have to be very hands-on," Miller said. "It creates an amazing group dynamic."

October is national Physical Therapy month. To celebrate, the PTA students receive a pizza party from the Occupational Therapy Assistant students.



Miller said the PTA students return the favor during Occupational Therapy month in April. She described them as sister programs.

Physical therapist assistants help those who have health or medical problems to enable the clients to move better or perform daily life activities.

"A PTA helps with anything from flat feet to some people in ICU after being struck by a vehicle," Miller said.

On average a PTA makes \$30,000 to \$60,000 a year, Miller said. She said their hourly rate ranges from \$15 to \$60 an hour depending what field that PTA works in and their level of experience.

PTAs work in several different environments such as outpatient clinics, hospitals, and fitness centers, she said.

Miller said PTA students form a

unique support group.

The program is small, only accepting about 20 applicants per year, she said.

There are 19 students in the graduating class of 2016 and 21 students in the graduating class of 2017.

With its small size comes great accomplishment, Miller said.

"We are all so different, but we all work so well together," she said. "Since the students are diverse and they are able to learn from each other, they have the opportunity to learn new things in different ways."

Miller said the unique part about the PTA program is that students not only get to learn from experienced professionals, but also get the opportunity to teach each other, which gives them the advantage of remembering more of the

topics they need for the exam.

She described the members of the class as a laid-back group of professionals, who are able to converse with ordinary people while also maintaining a professional attitude.

Being in a class with such high standards, SPTAO members are able to meet with other professionals in their field of study, allowing them to network and find jobs after graduating.

"We have such a great track record of passing this exam that clinics in Oklahoma know when you graduate from this program that you are going to be outstanding," Miller said.

For more information about the PTA program, contact Professor Jennifer Ball at 405-682-1611, ext. 7305, or at jball@occc.edu.

Campus police take three theft reports in two days

SPENCER GRANT
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Campus police responded to numerous calls in recent weeks, including three thefts.

At around 11 a.m. Sept. 24, Officer Daniel Piazza was dispatched to OCCC's Capitol Hill Center on SW 25th Street in response to a burglary.

A report shows a Shark hot water blaster, valued at \$4,000, was stolen from the site, currently under construction, between Sept. 23 and Sept. 24.

Later that same day, Officer Jerry Vanwinkle responded to a stolen cell phone report.

Student Herlinda Velasco-Ramirez reported her Samsung Galaxy S5, valued at \$450, had been taken on Sept. 22

after she accidentally left it in a bathroom stall earlier that day at OCCC's Professional Development Institute at 7124 S I-35. The case is still active.

According to a second stolen cell phone report, an app helped a student track his missing cell phone to a home in northwest Oklahoma City but the phone was not recovered.

The iPhone 5S was taken around 4 p.m. Sept. 26 after Student Essa Alhulaymi, 25, left the phone in the Financial Aid area on the first floor of the Main Building. Alhulaymi said he tracked his phone, worth an estimated \$500, to an address in Bethany.

Officer Patrick Martino called the Bethany Police Department and an officer was sent to the address, but the

phone was not recovered.

The Bethany officer said a woman and small children were at the address, none of whom attended OCCC. He said several young children were spotted in an empty field behind the house.

Campus police have video of a possible suspect, according to the report. The case is still open.

On Sept. 25, campus police received a call at 6:48 p.m. regarding a child who reportedly was left alone in the Wellness Center gym.

When Officer Zach Andrews arrived, the child's mother had been located. The mother said she had been in a nearby bathroom changing one child's diaper while the other child played basketball.

In a similar incident, a Path-

ways student was reported to be missing on Sept. 23. Acting Sgt. Jeremy Bohannon took the report from Pathways employee Catherine Klasek.

Klasek said she had been notified by the student's mother that her son didn't arrive home after school. The student was later found to be at a cousin's house. The student's name was redacted from the report.

A medical call on Sept. 29 resulted in one student being transported to an area hospital. Officer Gordon Nelson responded to the call from room 2F2 of the Arts and Humanities Building, regarding a female student, 20, who was having trouble breathing.

When Nelson arrived, the student, whose name has been redacted from the report, was

sitting just outside of the classroom with an inhaler. EMSA arrived around 8:40 a.m. and transported the student to Oklahoma University Medical Center in Oklahoma City.

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

Jazz singer Gibbons performing Oct. 15 at OCCC

BROOKE ALTSTATT
News Writing Student

Up-and-coming London singer Polly Gibbons will bring her earnest, sumptuous and natural jazz sensibility to a performance on campus at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 15, in OCCC Visual and Performing Arts Center theater.

"I was really taken with her charisma and, of course, her talent," said Lemuel Bardeguez, Acting Vice President for Community Development.

Bardeguez said he discovered the soulful singer at a conference last year where Gibbons had a brief showcase.

"[Gibbons] is the kind of singer you close your eyes and you hear her sing," Bardeguez said.

On Wednesday, Oct. 14, Gibbons will conduct a free lecture-demonstration from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the VPAC theater stage.

The master class is open to everyone, said Linda

Bosteels, Performing Arts Series coordinator.

"She (Gibbons) will talk about what she has done to get this far, give tips, and also (explain) how to tell a story through a song," Bosteels said.

Bardeguez said the singer also will coach students on how to find the road to becoming a professional musician.

Gibbons will talk on being a self-represented artist and how to get a record deal.

Gibbons' performance will include original music as well as jazz and blues cabaret standards, Bosteels said.

"She is a jazz singer, so she will be singing all types of blues, jazz and gospel. You would have to show up to find out," she said.

Gibbons' album "Many Faces of Love" will be available for purchase at Thursday's performance.

"Even though it's fall break, we want students to come out," Bardeguez said.

Students are able to receive two free tickets to see Gibbons by showing their student ID at the box office.

General admission tickets are available at <http://tickets.occc.edu> for \$15, by calling 405-682-7579, or by visiting the box office located in the atrium of the VPAC Theater in person.



Student helps lead drive to legalize medical marijuana

DARLA KILHOFFER
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Broadcast major Georgia Wood said everywhere she goes, people thank her for what she does. She said veterans send her photos of their multiple medications, asking her to help them get off of them.

Wood is the Lawton/Oklahoma City Chapter President for Green the Vote, an organization lobbying to legalize medical marijuana via an amendment to the state constitution.

Wood said people have many misconceptions about cannabis.

"It's not killing people," she said. "It's not the taboo that our parents think it is."

"Someone doesn't smoke a joint and go kill their parents, like in the commercials we used to have in the '70s. That doesn't happen."

The organization has 90 days to collect 123,000 signatures, which would place it on the Nov. 8, 2016, ballot, Wood said. She said they are shooting for 180,000, a number that doesn't seem far out of reach.

For Wood, the issue hits close to home.

After having half her pancreas removed three years ago to rid her body of cancerous tumors, she was in tremendous pain. Doctors kept prescribing pain medications, but Wood said she got fed up with that after about a year.

"I don't like the feeling of pain medi-

cine, the way it's addicting," she said.

"One starts helping, another stops helping, you have to get two or three and then you're taking 20 a day."

"Then you're taking your whole medicine bottle in one day. I went through that. I prayed to die because I hurt so bad."

Wood said everyone should have the choice to decide what medication they use.

"When given the choice between cannabis and pharmaceuticals, I would pick cannabis every time," she said.

"Why is it legal to take prescription drugs that can kill you and alcohol that can kill you, when marijuana is not going to do near the damage to your body and it will help you?" she asked.

Wood said, in three weeks, the Comanche County/Lawton chapter grew from 46 members to more than 600 members. Nationally, Green the Vote organization has about 5,000 members, Wood said.

Still, she said, there are many who are afraid to publicly support the drive.



“When given the choice between cannabis and pharmaceuticals, I would pick cannabis every time.”

—GEORGIA WOOD

OCCC STUDENT AND OKLAHOMA CITY GREEN THE VOTE PRESIDENT

like heroin and cocaine.”

Wood said a petition the organization drafted establishes a statewide tax for medical marijuana.

The guidelines the group is pushing for are outlined in the petition. Those are:

- Those who have a prescription for medical marijuana could legally possess up to 16 ounces of dried marijuana and 15 plants.

- It also grants the Oklahoma State Department of Health the authority to regulate medical marijuana as an herbal drug, she said.

- The OSDH would track medical marijuana sales and inspect processing plants to ensure they comply with state-established regulations, the petition states.

- Retail applicants must be 21 years or older and pay a \$1,500 fee to apply for a license to sell medical marijuana.

- Any marijuana plant containing 3 percent or less tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) — which is responsible for marijuana's psychological effects — would be considered industrial hemp and excluded from the definition of marijuana.

For more information, to read the petition or to find out how to get involved, visit www.greenthevote.com.

More information also can be found on the Comanche County/Lawton Green the Vote community on Facebook.

Accounting major Madison Buckley said she feels there are pros and cons to marijuana being legalized for medical use.

"Yes, because it would generate a lot of money for the government," she said.

However, Buckley said, she believes marijuana is dangerous to mess around with and those who have a prescription for it may be tempted to sell it illegally.

"I know people who drive when they're stoned and it's so dangerous," she said. "Hallucinations are something you shouldn't mess with."

"Medically, it's fine, for cancer and stuff. But there are temptations there."

Film and video production major Connor Ferguson said marijuana should be legal across the board, but said those selling it medicinally should be required to obtain a license.

"It all should be legal," he said. "It's been proven that it does less damage to you than alcohol."

"It's ... a plant rather than a man-made drug. Yeah, it's got adverse side effects but they're not too severe, not

Students succeed through Career Transitions

LENORA LAVICTOIRE

Community Writer

communitywriter@occc.edu

Nestled in an unassuming corner on the second floor of the Main Building is a program that is helping 19 struggling students achieve their goals this semester — Career Transitions.

Career Transitions Director Lisa Brown said she helps her students be in the best possible position for employment after finishing their degrees or certificates. She said all of them are recommended to the program by the Department of Human Services.

Brown said her students must qualify for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families to receive the support of the program. She said the students are mostly first-generation college students, and are enthusiastic about breaking into the educational world.

Students in tough situations are referred to the program, Brown said. She said she tells her students they are more likely to succeed due to the assistance of Career Transitions.

“We are a plus, not a minus,” Brown said. “We try to empower them with confidence and let them know that the key is education to change [their] world.”

“Everyone is excited about OCCC.”

Brown said the two-year program runs year round. She said while other students are sleeping in during winter and summer breaks, Career Transitions stu-

“We try to empower students with confidence and let them know that the key is education to change [their] world.”

—LISA BROWN

CAREER TRANSITIONS DIRECTOR

the program’s staff employment coach, retention coach and transition coach, help students see the journey as well as the big picture at the end.

“We try to address the total student,” she said.

Between classes and training, Brown said, first-year students devote a required 35 hours completing coursework.

In their second year, students are required to complete an internship with a private or nonprofit employer for 20 hours each week.

Students are assigned to internships related to their field of study and future employment, Brown said.

They also put in time learning to dress for success. Brown said.

She said she stresses to her students to always dress professionally, regardless of an interview.

“You are always interviewing,” Brown said. “You never know who you are going to meet in the hall.”

Career Transitions partners with Suited for Success, a non-profit organization that helps

dents are busy preparing for their up-and coming careers.

They spend their breaks learning job readiness, time management, ethics in the workplace, and participating in interpersonal relationship training, Brown said.

“That is the one complaint I hear from my students,” she said.

Brown said she, along with

women entering the workforce look professional for interviews.

However, the amount of clothing they can receive from the nonprofit is limited so they have a clothes closet for their students located in their office and are currently seeking donations of good quality professional clothing.

Miranda Favela graduated from the program in 2012. She said she studied automotive technology and was assigned to an internship at Auto Zone, where she began working before she graduated. She said she still works there today.

Favela said she believes she would not have finished college without the structure of the Career Transitions program.

“I am very thankful for the people who have worked there before my time and after,” Favela said.

“The people who work there really do care about the type of girls that come through the program.”

Favela said having the support of the Career Transitions staff and peers made her feel comforted.

“It is good to have a place you can go and know that there are people in similar situations as you and there is someone to guide you and help you through,” she said of the program’s staff.

“In life and in school, and with children, it is always a struggle to keep that balance, and they kind of helped us all to keep that balance.”

For more information on the Career Transitions program, contact Lisa Brown at 405-682-7896 or at lbrown@occc.edu.

Dressing for success important

LENORA LAVICTOIRE

Community Writer

communitywriter@occc.edu

“People are going to make a decision about you in probably the first 30 seconds or minute they meet you,” said Department Chair of Business and Finance, Professor Anita Williams. “It is extremely important that you look prepared...”

When it comes to looking for employment, Williams said, employers are looking to hire people who will represent their companies well.

She said looking as if you’ve taken time to prepare goes a long way in landing a job.

However, she acknowledged, dressing for success is not always affordable.

Williams said there are a few options for finding business clothes that won’t strain

a pocketbook or wallet.

She said women can turn to Suited for Success, an Oklahoma City non-profit organization that helps women find professional clothing at an affordable price.

Suited for Success has a sale from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. the first Friday of every month, and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. the third Saturday of every month at 4149 Highline Blvd., Suite 370, in Oklahoma City, according to their website www.suitedforsuccessokc.com.

Women can buy a suit for \$5, dresses and jackets for \$4, slacks, skirts, blouses and tops for \$3, and shoes for \$1.

“Our mission at Suited for Success is to help women achieve self-sufficiency by providing professional clothing and career development services,” the website reads.

“Our services, available to clients at no charge, empower women to find and keep jobs that provide them with economic independence.”

Williams said both men and women should look at local thrift stores, consignment shops, or garage sales for affordable professional clothes.

Accounting major Daniel Ebrottie said he wears professional attire every day.

He said it helps him meet people.

“It gives me more confidence,” he said.

For more information about Suited for Success, call 405-521-1089 or visit www.suitedforsuccessokc.com.

For more information on the Career Transitions clothes closet, contact Employment Coach Julie Johnson at julie.johnson@occc.edu.



Student Daniel Ebrottie said he wears professional attire every day. He said it helps him meet people. “It gives me more confidence,” he said. *Lenora LaVictoire/Pioneer*

SPORTS

Free throw:

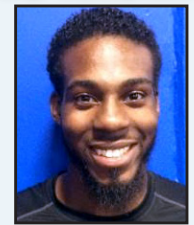
Freshman Jabarie Scottford shoots for the hoop at the OCCC Wellness Center. Originally from Mississippi, Scottford said he came to Oklahoma for a “new start” and plans to play Intramural basketball at OCCC.

Students with a valid OCCC ID can use the gym as well as the weight room and take fitness classes for free. Balls are available for check-out at the Wellness Center desk. For more information, call 405-682-7860, or visit www.occc.edu/rf/index.html.

Melissa Sue Lopez/
Pioneer

**GETTING TO KNOW:**

**RONNELL
JEFFERS**
**SPORTS
ATTENDANT
SINCE 2013**



Q: What is your job description?

A: “I’ve been a Sports Attendant here for three years. I help out with the Intramural sports and I monitor the gym.”

Q: What do you like most about working at OCCC?

A: “I like it because it’s fun and it’s easy. You can come in and work out, that’s convenient. It’s great since I’ve been taking classes here.”

Q: What are some of your hobbies?

A: “I major in physical therapy here. Outside of here, I just play basketball when I can. I don’t really do much else. I work out, too.”

Q: Are you currently involved in any sports or have you ever been?

A: “I’ve played basketball my whole life. I play that all the time. I played football and ran track in middle school.”

Q: What are your favorite teams?

A: “I watch basketball and football. I watch a lot of college sports, too. I love the NBA. My favorite basketball team is the Oklahoma City Thunder and my favorite NBA player of all time is Allen Iverson.”

Q: Do you believe that people should keep up a healthy lifestyle?

A: “Yeah, I think so. It’s important that you should keep up with a healthy lifestyle because you live longer, and you can have more energy for other things.”

Theatrical Dance fun for all students

IAN MANERA

Sports Writer

sportswriter@occc.edu

Theatrical Dance class is being offered this semester for any student with a desire to get fit and have fun doing it, said Theatrical Dance instructor Elizabeth Hobi.

The class is a lot different from some of the other fitness classes offered, she said.

“People have the idea that they have to go to some fitness class to be a healthy person,” Hobi said. “You should do things that you enjoy that bump your metabolism, work your core, get your heart rate up. It doesn’t have to be where you go to a boot camp.”

Hobi said while the class does delve into different types of dancing, all of them are performance-based.

“Theatrical dancing is dance that is for the stage,” she said. “It’s not dancing in your living room or social dancing. It’s not therapeutic dance.

“We have everything from ballet to jazz to modern dance.”

Hobi said her class is currently preparing for its first show of the semester at 8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 10, at the Bruce Owen Theater here at OCCC.

Admission is free.

“The show has contemporary jazz, lyrical ballet and Broadway jazz,” she said.

“The show is mostly dancing to string music like guitars and violins. We named the show String Theories. We’re also bringing in music students to play the guitar.”

Hobi said she makes sure participating students are cast in roles that fit their experience levels.

“When I cast something, I know who can do what,” she said. “I have some people that are dancing pretty prominently and some people aren’t. It all works out. There are students [who] have been dancing for much of their lives, and they’ll be featured in the show.”

Hobi said that while having that prior dance experience helps in her class, anyone can join.

“There are people that have come in with no experience at all and have done fine and felt comfortable,” she said. “If someone comes in and has no training, they’ll be fine.”

Hobi said, to take part in the class, all students have to do is show up at the group fitness room on the first floor of the Main Building with appropriate workout attire, and take part in the class from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Monday and Wednesday.

“If students are looking for a class that can give them physically activity and personal expression, this is the perfect one,” she said. Fitness classes are free to students with a valid ID.

For more information about any of the classes offered on campus at OCCC, contact Recreation and Fitness at 405-682-7860 or go to www.occc.edu/rf/index.html.

HAVE SPORTS NEWS?

Email sportswriter@occc.edu or call 405-682-1611, ext. 7676, to get your sports news in the Pioneer

Break: Campus to remain open during upcoming fall break

Continued from page 1

be on campus during the break and campus offices will remain open.

"We are not off," he said. "We are here to serve students if they have any questions, concerns and issues."

Stringfellow said students

may want to consider enrolling for the spring semester during the break.

He said the Recruitment, Admissions and Registration office will remain open during normal operating hours during fall break.

Those are from 11:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday and from 8

a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday according to their website at www.occc.edu/admissions.

Those needing to catch up on tests can do so during the break as well, Stringfellow said.

The Testing Center will be open from 10 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Thursday, with no admittance after 8:30 p.m., and from

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday with no admittance after 4 p.m.

Off-campus buildings also will remain open as usual.

The Capitol Hill Center will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday and Friday.

The FACE Center will be open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.,

Thursday and Friday.

The Professional Development Institute will be open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday and Friday.

For more information about OCCC's fall break building and office hours, visit www.occc.edu/aboutus/hours.html, or call 405-682-7522.

Pathways: Campus high school offers concurrent classes

Continued from page 1

take concurrent classes.

McAdoo said the program was expected to close two years ago due to a lack of interest and funding. However, he said, Santa Fe South Charter Schools partnered with OCCC and now Pathways is thriving.

"There is interest," he said. "You just have to let people know that it exists."

"My kids — if they work their tails off — can get their associate degree before they get their high school diploma — for free."

The program is the only one of its kind in Oklahoma, McAdoo said. Any high school students can apply he said.

A lottery drawing then is held to choose who will attend Pathways.

Pathways students take a class with McAdoo in the morning, then take college courses the rest of the day. He said in January the program will have 40 full-time concurrent students.

Because Pathways is similar to other high schools, McAdoo said, students are getting the full high school experience.

"We offer all the sports that a traditional high school offers," he said. "We offer them through Santa Fe South Charter Schools."

"I have students that are in college that play basketball. We offer prom, dances, homecomings — we offer all of that."

McAdoo said the only difference with Pathways students is they are experiencing high school while also experiencing college.

He said, by making that decision, Pathways students are saving a tre-

mendous amount of money on higher education.

"They get their undergraduate half paid for or for free and they start work two years earlier."

McAdoo said he believes Pathways students have more scholarship opportunities beyond their associate degree because they have proven they can succeed at college work.

Pathways student Elizabeth Salgato is a sophomore in high school and will start college classes next semester. She said she chose to apply to Pathways because it is an opportunity to jumpstart her future.

So far, she said, she is learning to be more mature and more responsible.

"It's a whole different atmosphere," Salgato said. "It is different than middle school but it's also different from high

school . . .

"Even though I'm not in college classes yet, just being on the campus and around everyone else has been a real eye-opener to what's really going on."

Pathways student Brandalyn Porter plans to major in art.

She said she applied to Pathways to get ahead of everyone else in the public schools. Porter recommends others apply to Pathways because it helps parents make college more affordable.

She encourages high school students to begin preparing for college classes early.

"Definitely work on your study habits," she said. "Of course, be ready for challenges. Definitely know how to write essays."

For more information, contact the Pathways office at 405-682-7840.

Survey: Graduate satisfaction survey returned, calculated

Continued from page 1

applied for a job after graduation reported satisfaction of 8.78 on a 10-point scale that they were prepared for the job.

Full-time employed graduates made up 70.2 percent of the respondents, while 23.5 percent are employed part-time according to the responses.

When it came to meeting goals, the report shows 96.3 percent of respondents said they met their intended goals.

OCCC President Jerry Steward said he gives much of the credit of the graduates' success to areas within OCCC.

He said he credits the high ratings to OCCC's academic labs, scholarship services, financial aid and academic

advising.

"Decades of research suggest student engagement in the campus environment is critical to student success," Steward said.

"We offer a range of co-curricular activities that engage students outside the classroom."

"Some examples are service learning, educational lectures, student organizations and leadership programs . . .

"We try to use technology effectively to offer students services so they can connect at home — for example, live chat advisement and tutoring."

Steward said the positive results from the survey give him a sense of confidence in OCCC.

"It shows that our faculty and staff really care about our

students, and that's something we must continue to foster and grow," he said. "I'm going to do everything I can to see that feeling continues."

Perry said the process of sending out and receiving the survey covers months of communication attempts. She said her office tries everything they can to get such a good response from the graduates.

"Approximately six months after the fall graduates graduate we [mail] out a survey to both the summer and fall graduates," she said.

"... They'll receive a cover letter, the survey plus a return envelope. We ask them to return it and we tell them upfront we'll be contacting them again."

Perry said student workers then spend two to three

months calling at different times of the day to remind the graduates to fill out and return the survey.

She said the next step is to have an outside company call for a response from any graduates who haven't yet responded.

Perry said the report also showed an increase in responses from last year's 49.8 percent response rate.

"I'm amazed and impressed that it's over 50 percent," Perry said. "When I first came here it was 17 percent. Many people believe that 30 percent is gold, so at 50 percent I'm thrilled."

For more information, call 405-682-1611, ext. 7213, or email jcperry@occc.edu. See the survey at www.occc.edu/planning-research/survey/html.

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For 30 ways to help the environment, write Earth Share,
3400 International Drive, NW, Suite 2K (AD4),
Washington, DC 20008.



Earth Share

CAMPUS COMMUNITY



Critical thinkers welcome: OCCC Students ask questions to members of the Secular Students Alliance, and Agnostics, Atheists, and Freethinkers Club on National Ask an Atheist Day on Sept. 29. The Agnostics, Atheists, and Freethinkers Club donated a can of food for every question asked and also accepted donations to raise money for cans of food. *Clayton Mitchell/Pioneer*

Student mentors help fellow students

LENORA LAVICTOIRE

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DARLA KILHOFFER

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When she first started meeting freshman Weyman Slaten for mentoring sessions, OCCC Student Mentor Derek Scarcella said she was having a hard time finding motivation to get her own school work done.

However, she said, as they continued their sessions, she found herself inspired by the very person she was meant to encourage.

"I just thought 'If Weyman's got the guts to be here, then I do too,'" Scarcella said.

Scarcella is one of 10 trained mentors who meet with other students as part of OCCC's Student2Student mentor program.

Slaten said, thus far, the program has been very helpful and he foresees asking for even more assistance in the weeks to come.

"If it hadn't been for Derek I would not know how to do a lot of electronic things," he said.

"It's been very beneficial. ... I have lots more questions.

"As I get to a different roadblock I



know where to go, I know who to ask."

Mentor Kylee Lewis said mentors help students with lots of things, including time management.

"Study habits, getting connected with resources on campus, if they have trouble with social skills and getting integrated on campus, we can help with that," she said.

Lewis said mentoring is very rewarding because she gets to help a student complete the semester.

She said asking another student for help is easier than asking a faculty member for help.

"Meeting with a peer is less intimidating because we're on the same level," she said.

Student Life Coordinator Travis Ruddle said there are currently about 50 student mentees and he

anticipates there being even more in the future.

With about five mentees to each mentor, Ruddle said, he does not worry about the mentors being too overloaded.

"It will balance out throughout the semester," he said.

"Some will only come once, others will need counseling throughout the whole semester."

Stephen Morrow, Service and Engagement Faculty Liaison, said after mentoring other students for 30 hours or more, mentors are eligible to receive a six-credit-hour tuition fee waiver for the following semester.

"We have a mentor lab space where students may drop in to maybe meet with a mentor or request a mentor," Morrow said.

"From my perspective as a faculty member, I just think it's magic when our mentors sit down with another student," Morrow said.

"It really can be life-changing for both of them."

To request a mentor, visit occc.edu/sl. For more information, contact Morrow at smorrow@occc.edu.

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

Coffee and Religion discussion open to all

Service and Engagement Faculty Liaison Professor Stephen Morrow and English Professor Jon Inglett will discuss religion from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 20, in CU3. The interactive presentation is designed to promote cultural awareness, inclusion and respect. For more information, email Morrow at smorrow@occc.edu.

African Wax gallery to close soon

Students, faculty, staff and the public can see a free exhibit consisting of 69 examples of African Wax prints and details about each print, as well as nine fully dressed mannequins from 1 to 5 p.m. through Friday, Oct. 16, in the Inasmuch Foundation Gallery located in the VPAC. For more information, call the Inasmuch Foundation Gallery at 405-682-1611, ext. 2581, during gallery hours, or email culturalprograms@occc.edu.

Club to host 'Socrates Cafe' discussion

The AAF Club holds "Socrates Cafe" every Tuesday from 1:15 to 2:15 p.m. and from 6 to 7 p.m. Wednesdays in Room 2N7 in the Main Building. The AAF aims to provide a safe environment to engage in skepticism and critical thinking about secular issues. For more information, contact the AAF at aaf@my.occc.edu.

Christians on Campus host ministry series

Christians on Campus are hosting the Solid Ground Ministry Series where they study the gospel of John from 5 to 6 p.m. each Monday in Room 3P0 in the Main Building. For more information, email christiansoncampus@my.occc.edu.

Everyone encouraged to register to vote

Students, faculty, and staff can register to vote Tuesday, Oct. 13, and Wednesday, Oct. 14, at a table in the College Union. According to the Oklahoma State Election Board, there are 393,776 registered voters in Oklahoma County with the U.S. Census Bureau estimating the county's population to be 766,215 in 2014 and growing. This means that more than half of Oklahoma County residents are not registered to vote. For more information, or to receive a voter registration form, visit the Student Life Office on the first floor of the Main Building.

No class for fall break Oct. 15 through 17

Some OCCC buildings will remain open but no classes will be held during OCCC's fall break Thursday, Friday, and Saturday Oct. 15, 16, and 17. For more information on which buildings will be open, contact Facilities Management at 405-682-7554 or visit www.occc.edu/aboutus/hours.html.

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.

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: Bed liner and camper shell that will fit a full-size truck. Good condition. \$100 for both. Text 405-818-0083 for more information or photos.

FURNITURE

FOR SALE: 19" CRT television in fair condition. Great

for a gaming TV or in a child's room. \$25. Text 405-818-0083 for more details.

MISCELLANEOUS

LOOKING FOR A NEW ROOMMATE? Look no further. Call Tony 405-822-2496.

FREE: Your ad here. Students can place non-business classified ads for free. No more than 7 lines. Submit your ad to adman@occc.edu with your name, student ID and valid phone number.

CLASSIFIED BUSINESS AD: \$8 per 7 lines. Find out how to advertise affordably. 405-682-1611, ext. 7674.

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for ONLY \$32 a week!

—get your advertisement message to 5,000 prospective customers with a business-card size ad—

Call 405-682-1611, ext. 7307, or e-mail: adman@occc.edu


Nothing Will Ever Be the Same.

Smoking gave me throat cancer at 39. Now I breathe through a hole in my throat and need this machine to speak.

—Rosaldo Martinez

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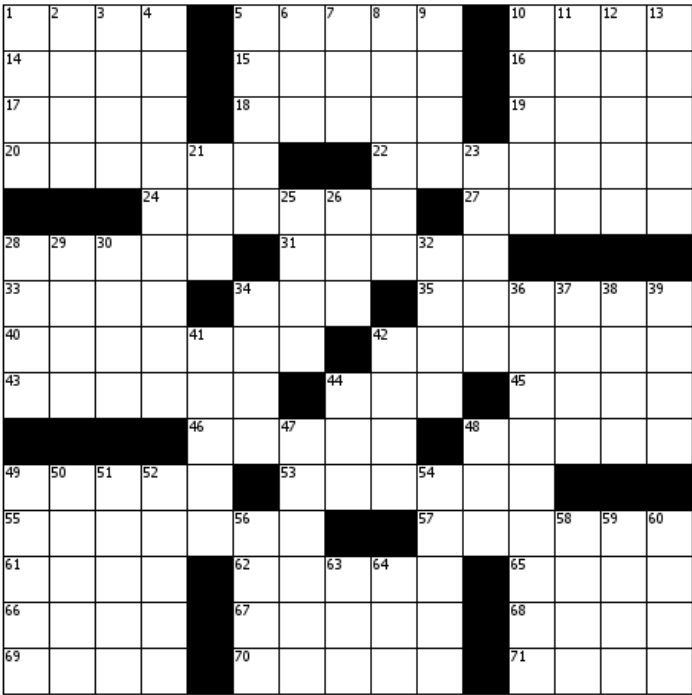
WEEKLY CROSSWORD

Across

- 1. Walked upon
- 5. Decrease
- 10. Pear type
- 14. Tortoise's opponent
- 15. Zodiac sign
- 16. October birthstone
- 17. Face shape
- 18. Ancient Peruvians
- 19. Depend
- 20. Narrate
- 22. Spoke
- 24. Kidnapper's request
- 27. Remove
- 28. Recommend
- 31. Not fancy
- 33. Flat
- 34. Heel
- 35. Spanish title
- 40. Atom part
- 42. Came in
- 43. Decree
- 44. Rested
- 45. Heredity unit
- 46. Cozy retreats
- 48. Mails
- 49. Informal speech
- 53. Shoelace hole
- 55. Boring
- 57. Beginning
- 61. Shakespeare's river
- 62. The Devil
- 65. Staff member
- 66. Richard ____ of "Pretty Woman"
- 67. Overact
- 68. Horse's gait
- 69. Glimpses
- 70. Underground drain
- 71. Building extensions

Down

- 1. Norse god
- 2. Talk irrationally
- 3. Spoken
- 4. Designer Oscar ____ (3 wds.)
- 5. E.T., e.g.
- 6. Storage box
- 7. CBS rival
- 8. Serious injury
- 9. Toward the sunrise
- 10. Termite, e.g.
- 11. "Phantom of the ____"
- 12. Shoppers' delights
- 13. "Bonnie and ____"
- 21. Paving material
- 23. Principle
- 25. Reach across
- 26. Aged
- 28. Casino city
- 29. Always
- 30. "Family ____"
- 32. Contradictive contraction
- 34. Pine ____
- 36. Bargain
- 37. Metallic rocks
- 38. Landlord's income
- 39. Summer coolers
- 41. Beatle beatkeeper
- 42. Lighten
- 44. Pig's home
- 47. Flavorful seed
- 48. Miles ____ hour
- 49. Fawn's fathers
- 50. Embankment
- 51. Idolize
- 52. Dressed to the ____
- 54. Hermit
- 56. Employs
- 58. Female
- 59. Golden calf, e.g.
- 60. New Jersey team
- 63. Pull behind
- 64. Chowd down



Don't Text And Drive

Drivers who use cellphones are 4 times more likely to get into crashes that could be fatal

Using a cellphone while driving delays a drivers reactions as much as having a B.A.C. level of 0.08

"Don't Drive while inTEXTicated. Driving while inTEXTicated kills."

Nursing program director named dean

LENORA LAVICTOIRE
News Writing Student

OCCC's Division of Health Professions has a new dean.

Deborah Myers is stepping up from directing one of OCCC's largest programs, nursing, to the task of overseeing a division that holds six health-related programs.

Myers' challenge includes leading not only nursing, but also programs in emergency medical sciences, physical therapist assistant, occupational therapy assistant, speech-language pathology assistant, and surgical technology.

The six programs come with their program directors and five staff members, 24 full-time faculty, 81 part-time faculty and the 730 students enrolled in Health Professions this fall, Myers said.

The nursing program counts about 200 registered nursing graduates each year, whose pass rate on the licensure exam has generally exceeded both the state and national averages, according to the Oklahoma

Board of Nursing.

When commended for the accomplishments of the nursing program under her leadership, Myers credits the success to the professors and their longevity in the program.

"The nursing program is successful because of the faculty," Myers said. "There is a great wealth of knowledge with that faculty."

Myers said she had been the OCCC nursing program director for the last four years. After graduating with her master's degree in nursing from the University of Oklahoma, Myers came to OCCC in 1998 for an adjunct position.

She joined the full-time faculty in 2003, and has since been steadily rising in rank through the nursing program. After serving as a professor of nursing, she was named assistant, then associate, nursing program director.

Since her appointment as dean in early August, Myers said she has devoted her time to learning about the five other health profession programs

less familiar to her and meeting with their directors.

"I'm very fortunate in that I have six program directors that are exceptional and they do great work with their programs," Myers said.

Each program has its own external accreditations, and Myers has to understand each profession's curriculum in full.

"Really (I have to learn) everything from the application process for their program all the way through to graduation and job placement," Myers said.

Myers is replacing Tom Kraft, whom she describes as an "icon for OCCC." He had been at OCCC for 36 years, serving off and on as health professions dean and director of the occupational therapy assistant program.

Terri Walker, associate program director of nursing, will serve as acting director until the hiring process is finished, Myers said. The applicant process closed Sept. 9.

Walker complimented Myers' work and commended her promotion.



Clayton Mitchell/Pioneer

Deborah Myers

"I think she'll be very good in the role," Walker said. "I've worked with her many years and she is a good manager and good director...I think she'll be an excellent dean."

Once hired, the new nursing director will have a hefty load managing the department's 19 full-time staff, 41 adjunct professors, and 419 students.

Walker, in the interim period, will be working to maintain the nursing program's

high pass rate on the national NCLEX-RN licensure exam.

Last year OCCC's 189 graduates passed the exam at a rate of 89.40 percent, above the national average of 81.79 percent and above the state average of 83.55 percent, according to the Oklahoma Board of Nursing.

For more information about the Health Professions division, contact Myers at dkmyers@occc.edu or 405-682-1611, ext. 7138.

Students invited to join Japanese culture club

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Students who have a strong interest in Japanese culture, swordfighting and cosplay — performance art in which participants called cosplayers wear costumes and fashion accessories to represent a specific character — can sign up to participate in live history events with Clan Genji.

The clan is an offshoot of the Society for Creative Anachronism, or SCA, a non-profit worldwide organization whose goal is to recreate history through live events.

"Clan Genji mainly focuses on the Sengoku Jidai, or the Samurai age, as people call it," said clan member Jerry Spaulding, who also goes by Minamoto Arashinaga.

Spaulding has been in the Medieval re-enactment scene for almost 30 years, he said, and was previously in a Genji clan in Colorado before moving to Oklahoma six months ago.

The entire U.S. is divided up into little principalities with many sub chapters, he said.

Spaulding said the club practices full-body contact fights, with weapons including bamboo swords and

axes and beyond.

"We give people loaner equipment at first if they're serious about it but don't have their own," he said.

The club is willing to help new members forge their own weaponry and costumes, or point them in the direction of someone else who can, Spaulding said.

He said the weapons are made with a material called rotan, which is kind of like bamboo.

Despite its focus on conflict, Spaulding said, the club pays attention to safety hazards and always makes sure to run safety checks before fights.

"We check the eye slits on helmets to make sure something couldn't reach through and poke your eye, that sort of thing," he said.

Spaulding said thanks to those safety checks, the most serious injury ever sustained within the club was a fractured bone.

Spaulding said the SCA was started in 1965 in Berkley, California, by a group of college students who had a costume party.

The party was so popular, they took to the streets of the UC Berkley campus "to protest normality," he said.

Spaulding said www.sca.org is home to lots of video



content of some of the larger scale things the club does.

"The war of Estrella, for instance, had about 20,000 people participating in it. It was massive," he said.

"People should join if they're into cosplaying, larping (live action role-playing) or anything like that and just have a positive mindset about it."

He said the best way to join the clan is to check out www.sca.org for general information, and to contact him.

Spaulding can be reached at 405-999-5714, or at arashinaga@aol.com. Clan Genji can also be reached on Facebook under the Genji Tea House group.