



January 28, 2015

THE GROWLER

Odessa High School, Odessa, Missouri

OUE Theater Troupe Performs a Classic

By Sarah Pierce

Students' hands were sweating, and their hearts were racing; however, this was not because of test anxiety. The OHS library was filled with 63 OUE students buzzing with laughter and excitement on the evenings of December 9 and December 12 as they prepared to take the stage.

The OUE Theater Troupe performed A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens. Theater Troupe is a new after school club started to give students a chance to be creative and perform for an audience of family and friends.

The staff chose A Christmas Carol because it had many parts allowing more students to participate.

Zane Palmer and Aaliyah Logan, fifth grade members, agreed that Theater Troupe was a great experience.

"It's pretty awesome how we're in elementary school, and we get to perform in the high school auditorium," Palmer said.

On opening night, Lori Jiron, fifth grade teacher and Theater Troupe sponsor, said, "They were really excited to have their makeup on and to put on their costumes."

Lynne Oakes, OUE art teacher,

was in charge of costumes, and she painted the props and other set items. Caroline Peek, OHS freshman, was the make-up artist. The lighting and sound was organized by Jason Rathert, OHS Industrial Technology teacher, and Emily Johnson and Ryder Jiron, OHS seniors. Zachary and Heather Meler, OHS science teachers, painted the backdrop that was used for the set.

L. Jiron said that the biggest challenge was working with a large group of young actors and keeping them focused during practices. However, she noted that all the preparation paid



OUE THEATER TROUPE members pose for a picture before performing A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens in the OHS auditorium.

off when the OUE Theater Troupe produced two successful performances for the audience

to enjoy and set the stage for Theater Troupe in the years to come.

OHS Sends Record Number of Students to the Office

OHS celebrated the first "Send a Kid to the Office Day" on January 8. Each teacher sent one or more students to the office each hour to be recognized for something positive, with 237 students visiting throughout the day.

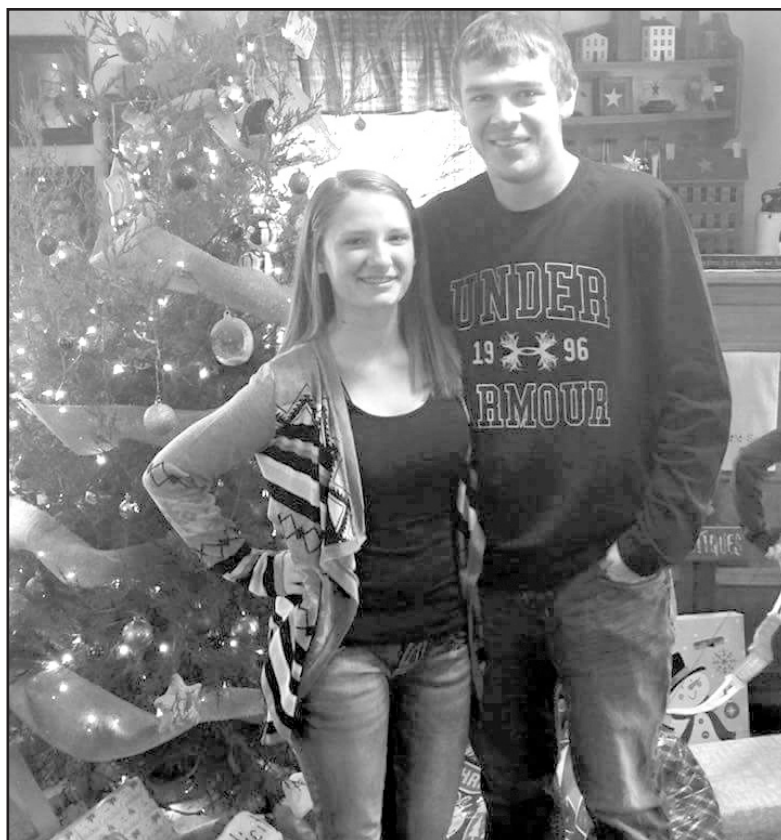
"I wanted to kick off the second semester by recognizing our students who are working hard and doing the right thing," said Buffie McConville, principal.

Students signed a log and received a candy treat for being good students. McConville, Brad Briscoe, assistant principal, and secretaries, Lynda Mallott and Lisa Dowell, cheered for students and rang bells to recognize their accomplishments.

"It was fun because student would come in worried and then start smiling," said Mallott.

McConville plans to make this an annual event.

OHS Couple Makes Plans for Valentine's Day



MAKENZI WADDELL, SOPHMORE AND TRACE BROWN, JUNIOR, enjoy Christmas Break. The couple has been dating since April.

By Bianca Woodward

Most high school students don't have their lives planned out, but in past years, it was almost expected for high school sweethearts to get married and live happily ever after.

Now, however, less than two percent of marriages are high school couples, according to Professor's House author Stef Daniel.

One OHS couple hopes to become part of that small percentage. Makenzi Waddell, sophomore, and Trace Brown, junior, are dating, and Brown gave Waddell a promise ring over Christmas vacation.

Brown plans on taking over his family's concrete business and becoming a construction company entrepreneur. Waddell plans on going to UCM to get her bachelor's degree and become a social worker. The couple is looking forward to the future, whatever that might hold.

Although they have known each

other for their entire lives, they only started dating on April 20, 2015, after a friend encouraged them.

On their first date, they watched I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry. Their favorite dates include going out to eat Mexican food, watching movies or even going mudding.

One time, they had gone out on Trace's four-wheeler, and they didn't realize how muddy it really was.

Their plans for Valentine's Day include going out to eat and then going to Trace's house to watch The Walking Dead.

They enjoy many of the same foods, riding four-wheelers together and cooking together.

"He teaches me about trucks, and I teach him about horses," Makenzi said.

"They're always together, and they are one of the most genuinely happy couples. If anyone stays together, I think it will be them," Brooke Barker, sophomore, said.

New Year's Resolutions Doomed to Fail



JESSICA WADE, OHS MARKETING TEACHER, makes a New Year's resolution and plans to keep it with the help of her husband, Jason, and children, Collin and Addison.

By Makena Dye

Most New Year's resolutions fail! In fact, only eight percent of people are successful at keeping their resolutions, according to Forbes Magazine. However, Jessica Wade, OHS Marketing teacher, is hoping to increase her chances of being successful.

In fact, Wade has not typically made New Year's resolutions in past years, but she decided to begin two years ago after being inspired by a sermon. David Vailes, youth pastor at First Baptist Church, Odessa, based his sermon on a popular book which he read titled, *One Word That Will Change Your Life-Expanded Edition* by Jon Gordon, Dan Britton and Jimmy Page which was published in 2013.

The authors' point was to help

people simplify their lives and businesses by focusing on just one word for the year which will be their "driving force" for the entire year. The authors' goal is to help people become their best and to live a life of impact.

In fact, the idea has caught on. Many schools, businesses, churches, sporting teams, etc. have participated in selecting one word for the New Year. A few one word examples include attitude, scholarship, patience, success, focus and positivity.

"Instead of focusing on one change in your life, like exercising more," Wade said, "you take one word to focus on and then use that word as a basis for your whole life."

It can be demoralizing to set a single goal that may not be

achieved, so Wade decided to give this approach a try. The word she selected for 2016 is obedience because she felt like it was a natural progression from trust, which was her word choice for 2015.

Wade said that she had success with her word choice of trust for 2015.

"It definitely helped me to have a focus, and since it was one word, I could apply it to all areas of my life," Wade said. "I think it was good because when things came up or didn't go as planned, I would remind myself that I had chosen to trust."

Wade found the one word resolution to be achievable. "It helped me let go and listen more."

Dodgeball for the American Heart Association

By Mikaylee Hobson

OHS held a dodgeball tournament during school on December 16 to raise money for the American Heart Association.

The dodgeball tournament took the place of the previous Hoops for Heart. Nineteen teams of approximately eight students per team participated with participants totalling around 150 students. They raised approximately \$3,200 for the American Heart Association.

The goal of the change was to get more students involved, and the dodgeball tournament worked because more people participated than in previous years.

"In previous years, students just did a fundraiser. They didn't really get to do anything," Chris Herring, OMS Physical Education teacher, said.

Teams were called down to the gym to play at separate times throughout the day.

Liberty Hobson, sixth grader, said, "I liked dodgeball a lot more because you got to pick your group and play with friends from other grades."

The winning student team was made up of the following eighth graders: Maddy Lewis, Alyssa Morris, Lincoln Fisher, Nevaeh Begeman, Carter Westerhold, Colby Wilson, Cade Adams and

Luke Malizzi.

As part of the fundraiser, on December 18 the winning student team got to play the winning teacher team. The winning teacher team was made up of the following: Rachel Ritter, Travis Huseman, Chris Doering, Chad Bufford, Nic King, Amanda Pierce and Don Aulbert. The teachers were victorious in the dodgeball tournament, but the American Heart Association was the true winner.

"Playing the teacher team was more of an incentive for the students to play," Herring said.

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3-3

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10-0

OMS Girls A Team
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Gittinger Leads OMS Boys Basketball A Team Coach Smith Counts Quarters

By Alec Munson

OMS boys' basketball team is currently 7-4 with the team's only losses coming against Harrisonville, Grain Valley (twice) and Warrensburg.

The team defeated Wellington-Napoleon, Excelsior Springs, Pleasant Hill and Oak Grove in regular play, as well as Sherwood, Butler and Drexel in tournament play.

Nic King, head coach and sixth grade Math and English teacher, said some of the team's focuses in practice are improving their speed of the game, care of

the ball and overall perfection.

"Dawson Gittinger is an A team leader who leads by example and is a hard-working player," King said.

"I like to have fun and bond with my teammates," said Gittinger.

King stated that one team strength was good previous knowledge of the game. "Other strengths of this team are they are fast, big and play good defense," said King.

King noted that the team's biggest weakness is outside shooting.

The team's toughest opponent so far was Grain Valley. "They are bigger, faster, stronger and have good ball pressure," King said.

With six games left in the season, King said he wants his team to continue to improve. He also mentioned that this team is one of the most advanced and skilled teams he has coached.

King's goals for the remainder of the season include continuing to help players learn the game and to help each player continue to grow individually.

By Kinly Grubb

Odessa Lady Dawgs' JV basketball team is working hard to compensate for low numbers this season with the JV and C teams sharing players. The JV team is currently 3-2.

JV defeated Van Horn 41-31 and Adrian 21-14. They lost to Wellington 52-23 and Clinton 40-31.

Randy Florence, or Flo as the girls call him, is the new C team coach, and several of his players describe his coaching style as refreshing. Florence is the Lieutenant Jail Administrator of the Lafayette County Jail. His daughter, Victoria, graduated from Wellington-Napoleon High School and recently transferred to Missouri Valley College to play basketball.

"Coach Florence helps me understand the game and sees me as the leader I know I can be," Aubrey Beard, sophomore, said. "He explains what he's thinking, so I'm never left in the dark."

"Beard's strengths consist of lane shots (free throw line area), post defense and aggressive post ups on the offensive end," Brylee Duncan, freshman, said. "Beard

is great at blocking shots, but sometimes those blocks lead to fouls."

Kloe Hilbrenner, sophomore, joined the team late and played her first game at Van Horn after her required 14 practices were completed. Hilbrenner, Beard, and Shelby Palmer, junior, are the go-to upperclassmen on the JV team, according to Florence. Players were recruited after the season had begun to help increase numbers.

Kelsey Smith, the JV coach, has to juggle players between the teams. Each athlete is limited to six quarters each night. So, Smith must not just worry about game strategy, but she also has to manage the athletes' quarters of play.

"Due to low reporting numbers, we have to have all JV and C team players at the same location. We have a lot of room for improvement, and the toughest part of the season is yet to come," Smith said.

"The numbers are low, but the kids are trying hard to make the best of the season and to make it a productive one," Florence said.

OHS JV Boys Basketball Team Plays Hard



WILL FOX, FRESHMAN, drains a three during a home C Team basketball game.

By Eli Munsterman

OHS JV boys' basketball team is 0-7 after some hard-fought, close games.

"The team is playing hard and getting better every day, so I hope wins will follow," Chris Herring, OMS Physical Education teacher and coach, said.

Specifically, the team is working on simulating game situations to improve the players' confidence in actual games. They are also working

on drills to improve the team's fundamentals.

Although Herring is new to coaching basketball at the high school level, this is not his first coaching job. Herring was assistant coach for OMS basketball and OHS football last year.

"I love being around sports, and teaching student athletes fundamentals and technique is challenging and rewarding at the same time," Herring said about his second year of coaching. "Coaching may get frustrating, but when you see one of your players get it right and have success, it becomes rewarding."

"Luke Tripp is a leader and a key player for our team because he is big and plays big; we go to him a lot," Cale Neville, sophomore, said.

Herring said that he wants to continue to develop his team members into varsity players and win as many conference games as possible.

"Everyone is trying as hard as they can to move up to the next level and play varsity basketball," Neville, said.

"All the challenges that come up, make coaching fun and interesting," said Herring.

Team members are: Isaiah Asher, John Asher, Jerran Falke and Tripp, juniors; Ben Atwood, Robbie Conchola, Neville and Matthew Woodward, sophomores; and Jonas Bennett, Will Fox and Hunter Garrison, freshmen.

OHS JV Wrestling Team Remains Undefeated

By McKenzie Wixon

OHS varsity wrestling team is 5-2, and Kirk Gross, OHS Health teacher and head coach, is impressed with the wrestling teams this year and believes they have great potential.

"It's not a question of if we're going to state, but what place we'll get when we get there," said Gross about the varsity team.

Gross said that the JV team contributes greatly to the varsity team's success because they practice with the varsity players and move up to varsity when they have successful wrestle-offs.

This year, Gross and Adam West, OHS history teacher and assistant coach, hope to create a more family-like atmosphere where members hold each other accountable and can trust each other.

Wrestling practices usually last between one and two hours and include more than just wrestling.

The team also participates in team bonding such as frisbee, trust exercises and even an overnigher.

Max Bake, sophomore, said, "We are closer together this year and rely on each other more. I enjoy the team bonding because we are competitive and try to beat one another, so it is fun."

The coaches not only want their players to excel on the mat but in the classroom and society as well. In fact, one of Gross's favorite sayings to his team is "if you name it, claim it" meaning always try your best.

Gross has many goals to help his team achieve success and become well-rounded citizens including participating in service projects. They hope to help with Habitat for Humanity in rebuilding a home.

"You have to be a good kid and live your life right for good things to happen," said Gross.

Gross also is encouraging his team will maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA. In the near future, Gross even hopes to start a student-lead bible study group. The coaches plan to push the wrestlers to be the best people they can be.

"Wrestling doesn't begin until your comfort zone ends," Gross said.

JV team members are: Sam Brown and Brandon Spiers, sophomores; Michael Broshears, Gage Jensen, Braedon Palmer, Shannon Ritchie, Austin Thomas, Austin Van Buren, Carter Wade, Brenden Wood, Devon Woodward and Austin Yates, freshmen.

The following members share time with varsity: David Brown and Caleb Hopkins, juniors; Max Bake, Clint Donovan, Clayton Hazelrigg and Vincent Monarca, sophomores.

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First-graders Study "Christmas Around the World"

By Jordan Singer

First-graders got into the Christmas Spirit by learning about how Christmas is celebrated in other countries.

"Christmas Around the World," was a fun unit where students learned important skills according to Christi Furney, first grade teacher.

During the unit, first-graders made a paper suitcase to hold the following items: maps of other countries, flag cutouts, a passport and other information about how Christmas is celebrated around the world.

"I enjoyed gluing the flags into our passport for each country we went to," said Tristen Worts, first-grader.

Christmas Around the World wasn't just for learning about Christmas. It also taught students how to read maps, cardinal directions and relative location.

As the students learned

about Sweden, Italy, England, Germany, Mexico and France they learned there are similarities and differences in how the countries celebrate compared to each other and to the United States.

Students learned that Jul, the Swedish Christmas holiday, is celebrated throughout December until January 13.

Students learned that in Italy celebrations start after midnight mass. In the true Italian style, gifts are exchanged on January 6, the Day of Epiphany. Babbo Natale, the Father Christmas, brings gifts on Christmas Eve.

Students discovered that Christmas isn't that different in England. Mince pies are left in place of cookies and milk, but children believe in Father Christmas, just like children believe in Santa Claus in America.

In Germany, Heiliger Abend is the last day of Advent on

December 24. The end of Advent is the start of the Christmas Season, and many people spend the day decorating Christmas trees.

December 12 to January 6, Mexico celebrates Christmas. From December 16 to Christmas Eve, kids perform Posada to celebrate the story of Mary and Joseph looking for somewhere to stay.

The students enjoyed making creative projects during the unit as well. They made a wreath and a Christmas tree to celebrate for Germany. For Sweden, they made a St. Lucia crown. They made a Noel door hanger for France and a Poinsettia for Mexico.

"The funniest thing that we learned was that in France, children leave their shoes by the fireplace instead of stockings," said Furney.

Choirs Prepare for Contest

By Sara Fossett

OHS choirs are preparing for the upcoming District Large Ensemble Contest on March 11 at LSE Middle School in Boonville. The choirs rehearse every day during class as well as a couple of evenings during the season to prepare.

The Pre-Contest Concert on March 7 helps students prepare for solo and small ensemble contest which follows on March 18. Chamber and Concert Choirs

will be performing in the large ensemble contest. OHS will be taking 27 solos and 9 ensembles to the solo and small ensemble contest. Soloists and small ensembles practice before school, during BEST and after school. A few students take individual lessons as well.

One challenge facing both Chamber and Concert Choirs is to learn the pronunciation of the songs written in a foreign language which is more difficult

than just learning new music; however, preparation helps the students feel more comfortable when competing.

"The most difficult part about preparing for contest is not letting your nerves affect the piece of music," Aubrey Banhart, senior Chamber Choir member, said.

"I believe both choirs will do a fantastic job. The songs I have chosen fit the ensembles really well," Harry Hamblin, OHS



ISAIAH ASHER, JUNIOR, was honored on "Send a Kid to the Office Day" at OHS on January 8. Buffie McConville, principal, congratulates him.

Choir Director, said.

The choirs will sing an array of songs at their Spring Concert. Chamber Choir will perform "Weep, O Mine Eyes," "Animal Crackers: Set 1," "A Hymn to God the Father," and "The Ship That Sails," along with their two contest pieces, "And God Shall Wipe Away All Tears" and "La, La, La, Je Ne L'ose Dire."

Concert Choir will be performing "Oceans and Stars," "Tres Canciones de los elementos," and their two concert pieces, "Gracious Spirit, Dwell With Me" and "Niska Banja" will be performed with Chamber Choir members.

Women's Choir does not compete, but they will perform "Clap Your Hands and Sing!," "Rock Me To Sleep," and "The Water Is Wide" along with the other choirs at the Spring Concert on April 25.



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