



March 3, 2016

# THE GROWLER

Odessa High School, Odessa, Missouri

## OMS implements after school weights program



**OLIVIA STUCKER AND OLIVIA HAWK, seventh-graders, work out with kettle balls in the OMS after-school weight program.**

**By Mikaylee Hobson**

OMS implemented an after school weight program that Mark Thomas, OHS head weight training and football coach, believes will help make better high school athletes.

The program, for seventh-graders, will help teach proper form to new lifters and prepare them for the heavier lifting they can choose to do at the high school in the spring.

Rachel Ritter, OMS art teacher and track coach, is in charge of the program which was developed after Benny Palmer, OMS At-Risk teacher and assistant OHS football coach, approached Ritter with the need. Palmer also helps Thomas supervise the high school weights program.

“Coach Palmer came to me with the idea because of the large numbers, the fact that I already had a fitness program going and I have a background in weight lifting. It all just fell into place,” Ritter said.

The OMS program replaced Ritter’s after school fitness club that was more yoga-based. The new program’s goal is to give students who have no weight room experience the one-on-one attention they need to help improve their high school confidence level.

The high school program typically has over 60 students which can be intimidating for newbies, according to Palmer. Palmer said middle school students coming to the high school with some training helps improve the students’ esteem and confidence.

Palmer said, “She teaches body awareness, basic movements and strategies. When track starts, they will combine with the other group at the high school and hopefully feel more comfortable.”

Weights is held at OMS on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 3 to 3:50 p.m. Students start with warm ups in the art room. The warm up

is based on the high school weight program’s warm-up. Students jog, do push-ups, squats, jumping jacks, lunges and other exercises.

After the warm up, students go to the OMS weight room which is equipped with a squat rack, moveable benches (including an incline bench), two sets of dumbbells, a set of kettlebells, a treadmill and a stationary bike.

Ritter said they have modified the high school workouts for the middle school lifters. The workouts alternate muscle groups with Tuesday’s workout focusing on arms, Wednesday focusing on legs and Thursday mixing arm and leg work.

“The students are focusing on form so they’re ready to go to high school and so they will be less likely to get injured,” Ritter said.

Thomas strongly believes middle school athletes should start weight training in seventh grade.

“This gives them two years to develop prior to high school which speeds up the learning curve significantly,” Thomas said. “This year’s ninth-graders are way ahead of the previous ninth grade classes because they have been working out for two years prior.”

Thomas started including the middle school students in the OHS weight training program two years ago. The program numbers grew so large that the students had to be broken into two groups.

OMS students who work out at the high school are doing four to five exercises per workout with three sets per exercise. Thomas tries to keep the repetitions between eight to 12 for the first

few weeks and keep the weight moderate to light.

“We emphasize developing the proper technique and developing muscular endurance. We want to build an understanding of the importance of their training and how it will help them become better athletes in high school,” Thomas said.

Thomas does not believe in sport-specific training for middle school or high school athletes.

“A middle school or high school athlete’s training needs to be generic in nature with the only specificity towards building better athletes,” Thomas said.

One goal of the on-site OMS weights program was to increase middle school students’ participation.

“It has definitely increased,” Ritter said.

## OHS holds first prom dress swap

**By Sydney Shackles**

Kylin Grubb, OHS senior, held a Prom Dress Swap from 3 to 5 p.m. on February 15 in the OHS commons as a service project for OHS students.

The event allowed graduates and students to donate or loan their previously worn dresses and help others obtain a Prom dress. Borrowing a dress can save hundreds of dollars because Prom dresses can cost over \$400 if purchased from a specialty shop.

Grubb had the inspiration to plan this event because she had previously borrowed dresses for dances herself. She knew about some dress swaps in other towns, and wanted Odessa girls to have the same opportunity.

Grubb worked on planning

this event with the help of Buffie McConville, OHS principal, Ashley Ray, OHS counselor, and Kelsey Smith, OHS Spanish teacher and coach.

“This is a terrific opportunity for students to feel special on Prom night without breaking the bank,” Ray said.

Grubb said one of the challenges she faced was being able to find dresses in a wide variety of styles and sizes and getting the word out to people about the event. Grubb communicated by using flyers, Facebook, and word of mouth.

Grubb collected approximately 80 dresses for the event, and ten girls took dresses home to wear at Prom.

Emily Johnson, senior, helped Grubb create a database with

the owners’ contact information, descriptions of the dresses, and they also collected the borrowers’ contact information. Borrowers signed an agreement to be responsible for any repairs or services and to return the dress after Prom in a timely manner.

“I think it was a good event to have. I know a lot of girls, including myself, don’t have hundreds of dollars to be spending on a dress,” Hannah Gurney, senior, said.

“I felt like it was a success. I am glad that it went this well for the first year. I hope others will continue the dress swap, and it will grow each year,” Grubb said.

## OHS teachers practice 'selfie' skills

By Sarah Pierce

Buffie McConville, OHS principal, is all about spirit and creating a positive environment for staff and students. So, she created a scavenger hunt for the teachers to combat the winter doldrums.

The goal was to give the teachers a way to get out of their classrooms and do something fun, as well as promote unity. McConville wasn't sure how the staff would react at first, but she hoped the teachers would enjoy it. Teachers were given specific selfie photographs to take and send to all staff members. As it turned out, the activity was a success with over 80% of teachers completing every task.

The hunt began on Friday, January 22 when McConville emailed her staff the first three tasks to be completed. The incentive for completing each of the five day's tasks was a casual dress day. Each morning an email was sent with three new tasks, some simple and some more difficult.

"Opening email was an

adventure instead of a duty. I learned more about the people I'm sharing a building with in this past week than in the seven years I've been here," Tammy Kleoppel, OHS Substitute Coordinator and Website Coordinator, said.

"It was like scavenging the bones of a dead decaying animal," Mike Shields, OHS Communication Arts (and resident comedian) said. "My favorite part of the scavenger hunt was seeing how excited some of the kids were when they got picked by teachers as inspirational. I think it meant a lot to kids, and to me that was the coolest part. And I look good in selfies."

Some of McConville's favorite tasks included taking selfies with someone who has the same initials as yourself, with someone who inspires you, with someone who is "twinning" with meaning you are dressed alike, and with something that makes music.

"We did learn that we need to work on our selfie skills because our students are way better at them than us," McConville joked about the pictures submitted by herself and her fellow staff members.

McConville plans to have scavenger hunts periodically to keep spirits up, possibly sending out a couple of tasks each month. She believes a positive environment can lead to higher test scores and hopes the increase of spirit in students and teachers helps when April testing comes.



KELSEY SMITH, OHS spanish teacher, poses holding her "good luck" sign with winter athletes in her first hour class.

## Third-graders learn about ecosystems

By Kinly Grubb

The air was crisp and chilly outside the Upper Elementary building, but inside anticipation was building in the third grade classrooms. In Robin Smith's classroom, several students were working on their morning assignment, while others were prancing around chatting about their upcoming fieldtrip.

Smith was rounding up the last of the children wearing black hats as parents joined the class. The final headcount was taken, and students were off to the Anita B. Gorman Discovery Center.

Each third grade class wore different colored baseball caps to help distinguish the classes and allow teachers to organize them into groups more quickly. Jill Langewisch's students wore red hats, and Crissa Cockrum's students wore yellow hats.

After the boisterous 45 minute bus ride, the yellow hats and red hats joined up and headed inside to the auditorium for a run down on

the day ahead.

Then, the kids put on a skit about the ecosystem to help get them thinking about everything that goes into their way of life.

"Everything we do to the plants affects the insects. What we do to the insects affects the birds. What happens to the birds affects other animals," James Worley, Discovery Center employee, said. "It's one big circle, so remember the critters."

The students were given instructions and a schedule. They received tours of three different ecosystems: Prairie, Wetland and Forest. They were prompted to retain as much information about each environment as they could to use in a project later in the day.

"My favorite part was petting the snake," Emily O'Bryan, third-grader in Langewisch's class, said. O'Bryan touched a black rat snake, a prairie native animal, while learning about the prairie habitat.

The students learned quietly, and as soon as there was a pause, they pounced on the opportunity to share their knowledge on the lesson. They learned about food chains and how everything is connected. The chain starts with the sun and goes down a checklist: plants, insects, birds, small animals, medium animals, large animals, back down into decomposers and the cycle restarts.

For the final project, students created posters showing how their assigned ecosystem operates and shared the display with the entire group.

Finally, the groups presented their projects to their classmates. On the bus ride home, it was clear that the students' early-morning energy was depleted.

"It was a good field trip," Smith said. "It's fun for the kids, and we are definitely going back. The lesson fits well into our curriculum."

## STAFF

Hannah Gurney

Editor

Seth Bayless

Makena Dye

Sara Fossett

Kinly Grubb

Mikaylee Hobson

Alec Munson

Eli Munsterman

Sarah Pierce

Sydney Shackles

Sarah Shelton

Jordan Singer

McKenzie Wixon

Bianca Woodward

Writers

Kris Poisal

Journalism Advisor

Don't forget to order your 2015-2016 yearbook from Mrs. Poisal

# Winter Drumline takes OHS guard alumni practice seriously

## OHS guard alumni return as coaches

By Seth Bayless

With two previous championships in tow, this year's Winter Drumline has high hopes for the season ahead.

Jeremy Meyer, director, leads drumline with the help of Jill Endaya, assistant director, and Caleb White, sound engineer. This year's show, "Pressure and Time," includes a theme revolving around natural geological disasters like volcanoes and earthquakes.

Drumline practices three days per week for three hours with the team split up into two groups. Battery works on physical conditioning such as running and cardio because they have to be prepared to carry drums and move during the entire show. Front ensemble focuses on developing advanced musical techniques.

"Practices are fun and challenging. We joke around, but then we can practice and run our reps," Caleb Lewis, sophomore, said.

Instruments included in the show range from marching drums to marimbas, and even electronics synthesizers and samplers are thrown in.

"The players are excellent at putting emotion into their playing, and I believe they

do so better than most other schools," Meyer said.

Meyer's goals for the season include repeating as champions, and possibly even moving up into a higher and more difficult class. However, Meyer also said that winning is not the most important part.

"I want us to be better every year, to play harder music, and to do it with better execution," Meyer said. "We're trying to push each player to understand how their individual part fits into the whole show and to see the bigger picture."

Some competitions are held at Blue Springs South, Kickapoo and Lee's Summit North. Championship competition will be held at Ozark High School.

Participants include: Kirstin Clark, Dawson Curtin, Agnie Garcia, Angie Garcia, Allison Gust, Logan Hagerty, Cortny Mallot, Kalley Mallot, Zach Reynolds, Madelyn Stewart and Caitlin Wisdom on battery; Michael Brown, Andrea Dickmeier, Garret Gosoroski, McKayla Janes, Caleb Lewis, Eli Munsterman, Alyzabeth Munsterman, Dana Ragsdale, Emily Reynolds, Chris Smith, Seth Twilligear and Parker Watson on front ensemble.

By Makena Dye

Odessa Winter Guard's new coaches were introduced January 5, and they hit the ground running to prepare the members for the season and upcoming competitions. Both were former OHS Winter Guard members and were on the World Championship Finals team in 2008 and 2010.

Rebecca Westmoreland is the OHS head coach with assistance from Karley Nance. Kyra Kueck is the OMS head coach with assistance from Danielle Best. Westmoreland has had six years of coaching experience, and Nance has coached for six years. Kueck has had four years of coaching experience.

They came to coach for Odessa on short notice because the previous coaches resigned at semester. The new coaches have always loved their hometown guard and are excited to become a part of the program.

"It was great timing that I was taking a year off coaching to complete my master's degree and could be available

so soon," said Westmoreland.

Westmoreland said she is happy with the positive environment between not only the students and staff but between the students themselves.

The OHS guard members have received positive feedback, from not only judges at different competitions, but from fans as well. Getting this feedback, according to Westmoreland, has played a key role in the students' attitudes making them work harder and push through adversity.

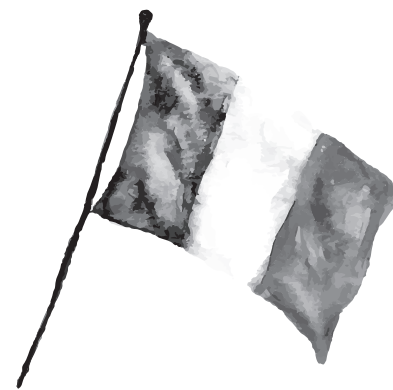
Westmoreland and Kueck both feel confident about their teams, and they believe the students can push through anything since they have proved they can be successful with their shows after only a month of practicing.

Westmoreland said that even though the guard teams got off to a late start, both teams are staying positive about their success and are working twice as hard.

"Success isn't always judged by a score or trophy," Westmoreland said.

The main goal for the season is to help make each team as successful as possible. The coaches look forward to that success because they believe that each student has talent and great potential. In the future, they would like to work towards success on the national level again.

"I hope to medal at championships and to make this season as enjoyable as possible for the kiddos," Kueck said.



**SERC**  
Physical Therapy

*Pigtails Hair Salon*  
301 A. North 2nd St.

Odessa, MO 64076

Open 10am-6pm  
Tuesday-Saturday

Cynthia: 816-776-4660

Michelle: 816-263-1823





**LAUREN DOWELL, senior, works on the script for the OHS One Act, *Steel Magnolias*.**

## OHS senior directs one act

**By Sara Fossett**

Lauren Dowell, OHS senior, is directing the one act play for the Performing Arts Program.

The one act is a 35-minute play that is taken to contest, including the set, and is broken down into parts and performed for judges. As director, Dowell chose *Steel Magnolias* as this year's play.

"I had to take a two hour play and cut it down to a 35 minute play, which was difficult," Dowell said.

One act began practicing for contest January 6, and they practice after school on Wednesdays and Fridays from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

One act competed on February 15 in Theatre and Debate events taking fourth place. Districts will be March 4, 5 and 8 with Odessa competing on March 4.

In the last eight years, OHS has placed third in districts and has gone to state three times.

In the past, several students have directed the one act as their Senior Projects, but Dowell is not one of those students.

Sarah Renfrow, OHS Drama and Public Speaking teacher, said she asked Dowell to be the director because she was impressed with Dowell since she joined Speech and Debate last year.

Along with casting the play, Dowell also helped design and build the set.

"She decides what they're going to do at rehearsal, what costumes they are going to wear, and who is running the lights and backstage. She's putting on a show," Renfrow said.

Renfrow said Dowell has had to overcome many difficulties trying to juggle cheerleading, school and directing the one act.

"Sometimes after cheering at basketball games, I come in and paint the set," Dowell said. "My dad, Micheal Dowell, has been a big help on the crew. I couldn't have done it without him."

Hannahmayer Doster, junior, playing the role of Clariee, has been a part of one act for the past three years.

"She's doing a good job, and she knows what she's doing," said Doster.

Cast members: Doster, Alexa Gust, Ellie Port, Mackenzie Scott, Regan Smith and Hope Turner.

Crew members: Erika Cowan, Hannah Gurney and Madi Wulfekotter, backstage; Ryann Blacketer, sound; Emily Johnson, lights; Chancey Lewis, set; and Caroline Peek, make-up.

## Elementary students enjoy annual assembly

**By Alec Munson**

Second-graders at McQuerry piled into the gymnasium on February 9 for the annual Randy Nadler assembly. This year's assembly focused on his trip to Italy.

For the past 42 years, Nadler has traveled to a foreign country and has documented his trips for a special assembly he puts on for students ranging from second to eighth grades at 180 schools per year.

"The payment for these trips are deducted from my income tax, and I'm paid for each assembly. I present to 180 schools, and so I use the

payment for the trips," Nadler said about how he is able to make these trips work out financially.

Nadler said there were two things he enjoyed most about these trips. "The first is getting to teach. The teacher in me comes out when I get to present this stuff to the kids. Next is getting to experience parts of the world that you read about."

Nadler's trip started when he flew to Rome, Italy. While in Rome, he got to see major landmarks such as the Colosseum, Forum and Pantheon. After spending a

couple of days in Rome, he traveled to Florence, Italy, the City of Art.

In Florence, Nadler was able to see Michelangelo's famous Statue of David. However, due to photography restrictions, he wasn't able capture any pictures of the statue. After his stop in Florence, he travelled to Venice. While in Venice, he rode in the world-famous gondolas. Nadler's last stop was to the island of Sicily.

Nadler said that he is thankful for the opportunity to take these trips.

## OPAA sponsors Valentine's Day coloring contest

**By Sarah Shelton**

McQuerry students participated in a Valentine's Day Coloring Contest sponsored by OPAA Food Management during the last week in January. Coloring sheets were due February 4, and they were judged on February 5. Winners received a party for their entire class with OPAA providing valentine cupcakes and milk.

Winners were Brodie Zeller from Samantha Burroughs' kindergarten class, Elaina Kolie from Jacqueline Vochatzer's first grade class, and Brooke Miller from Jeffery Wood's second grade class.

Coloring sheets were judged by Chris Smith, McQuerry Kitchen Manager, Sheryl Geary and Denise Vanlanker, McQuerry cooks.

The coloring contest was a

new initiative for the 2015-16 school year, but each year, OPAA hosts a promotional event at each school to help try to increase participation in the lunch program as well as make lunch a little more exciting for the students.

"Kids get excited to compete against each other, and they have fun doing it," Bonnie Timmerberg, Director of Nutritional Services for OPAA, said.

Timmerberg said that when OPAA increases the number of students eating school lunch, it means more money for the school.

"OPAA's here to work for the school district, so our job is to increase participation," Timmerberg said.

Timmerberg has been working for the school district

for thirty-three years. OPAA's new guidelines, called US School Challenge, include serving all-wheat foods using less sodium. She said the most challenging part of her job this year is getting students to eat using those new guidelines. Under the new guidelines, students must take one-half cup fruits or one-half cup vegetables, and following these guidelines introduces students to foods they might not normally choose to take.

"What I enjoy most about my job is the people I work with, the kids and the creativeness that I get to put into Staff Specials and lunch activities," Timmerberg said. "I also enjoy modernizing the kitchens and planning new lines of service, like the Grab and Go, Breakfast Cart and Condiment Bar."

**JJ's Down Home Cafe**  
816-633-7227  
Open 6 a.m.-2 p.m.