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THE GROWLER

Odessa High School, Odessa, Missouri

OHS student performs a Theatre on Ice show



Joy Mangold, OHS junior, is a member of Team Fantasies, a theatre on ice troupe. She plans to try out for an ice skating team in college and continue to skate.

By Kaleigh Snow and Nikole Smith

Many times as children, people have an idea of what they want to do when they grow up. For one OHS student, the dream of becoming a figure skater and performing for a crowd became a reality. Joy Mangold, junior, is a member of Team Fantasies, a theatre on ice troupe.

Mangold first began skating when she was 11-years-old. She said her dream of becoming a skater began when she attended a friend's birthday party and saw people practicing on the ice. That's when she became hooked and decided she wanted to become an ice skater.

As part of Team Fantasies, Mangold will perform an exhibition at a Mavericks game this season and will also perform at an outdoor rink at Summit Ice in the park. The

troupe performs an ice skating dramatization of a poem. First, the poem is read by a narrator. Next, the skaters silently act out the poem on ice. Finally, they finish by skating to a musical piece representing the emotions of the poem, with each member skating a short solo.

"For this show, we have some people playing happiness and some sadness to bring the poem to life," Mangold said.

Mangold also participates in ice dancing. In the past, she has been on a synchronized team and has competed individually. Before joining Team Fantasies, Mangold competed with Team Amoré. However, when the team had coaching changes, she decided to try a new team. Mangold decided to join up with some of her friends, and that is how she found her current team.

To stay in competition form,

Mangold practices two to three times a week on the community ice rink at Silverstein Eye Centers Arena in Independence. She takes private lessons with Dixie Knudson and is also coached by Jenny Schultz once a month. Both coaches are from Heartland Skating Club.

Knudson used to participate in dance on ice and has coached figure skating for years. Schultz has been skating and coaching for years as well and also has dance experience. She is a physical therapist, and Mangold said her knowledge of the human body is helpful to her students. Both coaches have won medals in competition and enjoy sharing their skills with students.

Mangold said ice skating is something that needs to be consistent. She said she has taken a couple of breaks over the years, and it is hard to get back into skating shape.

"You can get kind of rusty," Mangold said.

She also mentioned she enjoys ice skating because she can do it whenever she wants, and it is a form of relaxation for her.

"I feel like it relieves any stress or stuff I go through. I can just skate," Mangold said.

Mangold plans to continue skating after high school and would like to attend Oakland University in Michigan, and try out for the skating team. She wants to be a nurse or a physical therapist because she enjoys learning about anatomy and wants to help others. She would also like to be a skating coach in the future.

"Skating is one of my passions, and I want to help others learn figure skating," Mangold said.

OHS Unified Club members volunteer at local Harvesters



Members of the OHS Unified Club volunteered at Harvesters in Kansas City on December 3 to give back during the holidays. Justin Sapp, junior, Melanie DeMore, SPED teacher, CeCe Zimmerman, freshman, and Ryleagh Frampton, sophomore, sort canned goods.

By Brittany Affolter

OHS Unified Club, an extension of Student Council, served on December 4 at Harvesters in Kansas City to give back to others during the holiday season.

The club's goals for the school are to make kindness normal and for students to choose to include everyone. The club began last year as a Character Strong Team which helped with character education.

According to Lyndsey Roseler, senior club member, the club helps bring unity, meaningful inclusion and lasting friendships. Roseler is also the senior class president and the StuCo communications manager. The club's 22 members are sponsored by Angie Sallee, OHS StuCo sponsor, and Melanie DeMore, OHS special education teacher.

"I like that it (Unified Club) provides leadership and volunteer opportunities for all students," DeMore said. "It also provides my students

with social opportunities."

"Students learned that giving back can be both meaningful and fun," Sallee said. "The trip was a great way to spend Giving Tuesday."

"My group sorted through canned goods and packed vegetables into boxes," Roseler said. "Other groups were in charge of glass and jars. I felt glad that I was giving back to the community and bonding with my fellow club members while doing so."

Roseler said everyone in the club had a positive attitude and worked hard. She also said it is a great service project because it is easy to forget that not everyone is as fortunate.

Sallee said it is impressive that weekly volunteers at Harvesters complete the equivalent amount of work that would be performed by 100 employees. She also said volunteering with groups at Harvesters helps build a sense of camaraderie while fulfilling an important purpose.

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Elizabeth Fagre provides needed services to OHS

By Emma Austin and Anna Bradley

Elizabeth Fagre, new OHS special education process coordinator, recently moved back to the area and enjoys being in one spot after living in multiple locations due to her husband's pipeline job.

Fagre, who was hired in October, provides contracted services in her area of specialty as needed on an hourly basis. She assists with the workload for the current Process Coordinator, Tracy Shelly, who is an employee of the district.

"We've moved eleven times in the past five years," Fagre said. "I love that I can get back to what I truly enjoy doing, helping kids, and still have the flexibility to be with my family when they need me."

Providing services on a contractual basis allows Fagre to have more freedom versus being a full-time employee of the school district.

"As a new mom, it's been an amazing way for me to transition back to my career," Fagre said.

Now that they have young children, they decided they wanted to stay in one location to provide stability for their growing family. Her father having health issues was also a factor in their decision because she wanted to be able to help out as needed. So, they made the decision to move back to Higginsville where she grew up.

Fagre enjoys being a process coordinator but said as a kindergartener, she dreamed of being a clown; however, her first grade teacher, Mrs. Ver-ecke, helped her focus on becoming a teacher.

"I wanted to spend my life making people laugh," Fagre said. "This was before I realized that many people are afraid of clowns," she joked. "As an adult, I know life can be hard for everyone at times, but I hope to always leave people in a better mood and better place than before. I believe we have the power to change the world by our words and our actions, so I strive to make the world a better place with mine."

Fagre said she narrowed down her teaching focus to special education when she was 16, after watching her friend's brother struggle in school. She decided at that point she wanted to help other kids.

"I had a really close friend, and her little brother was autistic," Fagre said. "Seeing him go through the struggles in high school, I was like, 'man, I want to do that and really make a difference for kids who just need extra help.'"

Fagre is happy with her career choice and said she enjoys working with teachers to help provide resources and help them take care of the needs of their students. She said the most difficult part of her job is making sure she has fully evaluated students and un-

derstands their needs so she can design an educational plan that is best for them.

"I love being able to continue to work with and fight for what's best for kids," Fagre said.

Shelly said Fagre is one of the most compassionate people she has ever met. She said Fagre's kindness, knowledge of the special education process laws, assessment of students to determine eligibility and her ability to differentiate instruction for students is exemplary.

"She has jumped in feet first," Shelly said. "She is willing to assist in our special education department wherever we need her from evaluating and observing students, attending meetings, writing reports, reviewing special education documents and supporting teachers in their paperwork process."

Fagre grew up with two brothers who were 15 and 16 years older, so she said she had 12 nieces and nephews who were like siblings to her. She grew up and went to school in Higginsville and then headed to college.

She began taking classes at Evangel in Springfield, pursuing a double major in elementary education and special education. However, she was offered a long-term substitute teaching job close to Columbia before she finished college. The sub job turned into a full-time contracted position, so she



Elizabeth Fagre, OHS Special Education Process Coordinator, is new to OHS. She and her husband, Michael, have three children: a son, Gabriel, who is seven; and two daughters, Davalyn, who is two, and Isabel, who is six months.

finished her degree by taking night classes at Columbia College, graduating with a bachelor's degree in general studies with a minor in education and psychology. She completed her masters in education administration through William Woods.

Fagre was a teacher for seven years prior to becoming a process coordinator. She taught north of Columbia in Hallsville as a middle school English language arts (ELA) teacher for three and a half years. Next, she taught ELA at Belton High School. Then,

she went to Fort Osage Middle School and taught "Read 180," an ELA class for students who were at-risk, reading below grade-level or students who just needed more help to perform at grade level.

She and her high school sweetheart, Michael, have three children: a son, Gabriel, who is seven; and two daughters, Davalyn, who is two, and Isabel, who is six months. In addition to spending time with her children, Fagre enjoys being outside and staying active. She loves to go boating, camping and fishing as a family.

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FBI agents visit OHS cybersecurity and coding classes



Liberty Hobson, OHS sophomore journalism student, enjoyed trying on the FBI gear as she prepared to interview the agents who spoke to Chad Meyer's Cybersecurity and Coding classes.

By Amelia Burch and Liberty Hobson

Two FBI agents entered the OHS commons carrying heavy

vests, extra ammunition clips, and other specialized gear. The agents came to OHS to present cybersecurity topics to Chad Meyer's cybersecurity and coding classes. Cyber crimes are the third most common crimes occurring in the world, and the agents only expect that to grow. As a result, the agents said jobs in fighting cyber crimes will expand, too. This could provide possible job opportunities in the future for OHS students who are interested in pursuing further computer training.

The agents were able to provide a link between what students are learning in class and career opportunities that are available in the FBI. Agents said there are several ways to enter the FBI. A ten-week internship is available for undergrad and graduate students. The FBI internship application process, from start to finish, can take the dura-

tion of the school year to complete. Agents said that having a background in computer science is a great way to be a competitive job applicant for the FBI because of the need within the FBI for that knowledge.

"Some of the things we've done in class, they talked about," Meyer said, "and I think that was really interesting for the students to have that put in perspective for them."

The agents said the FBI Cyber Program began in 2002, while the FBI was formed back in 1908.

"Cyber is kind of new to us," one agent said.

The agents said Ransomware is one cybercrime they have been seeing more frequently. Ransomware is a software designed to block access to a computer system or computer files. People often don't even know they are a target until it's too late.

"You have to have a defensive

posture," the agent said. "This is a global problem, not just a problem in the U.S."

Business Email Compromise (BEC) scamming is another growing problem. BEC scammers can scam an individual through social media, dating apps and banking apps, to name a few. By scamming personal information in this way, a person's identity can be stolen.

"Your birthday and where you were born are two pieces of information that a criminal can use to assist in stealing your identity," the agent said.

"You have to be wary," another agent said. "No one is going to call or email you and ask important information like your social security number. That's always going to be a scam."

Another way that people scam is when a criminal will change a similar looking letter or number in an email address, so when a person has

something important to send, the criminal receives it and not the person who was supposed to get the information.

Spear phishing is yet another technique criminals use to find a person's personal information. It's digital fishing targeted to a specific person, so the criminal can get into bank, medical and other records.

These cyber crimes are investigated by special agents, computer scientists and intelligence analysts. According to the agents, these expanding fields are great opportunities for employment.

"I want to go into cybersecurity because it's an easy way for me to protect my friends and family," Sierra Beal, OHS senior said.

Beal who is enrolled in Meyer's Cybersecurity and App Design classes plans to go to college to earn a computer science degree.

Dena Tate's fifth grade class decorates New Haven Living Center for Christmas



Hailey Perrow, front and Lazett Aviles, back, fifth-graders in Dena Tate's class, decorate New Haven Living Center as part of a class service project.

By Makenzie Harget and Cali Meierarend

Fifth-graders in Dena Tate's class at Odessa Upper Elementary went to New Haven Living Center on November 25 to decorate for Christmas. The community service fit into

their building-wide focus of being kind. Students came up with the idea of going to the center, which provides long-term needs,

Students separated into groups and worked together on crafts like candy cane reindeer, handprint reindeer, Christmas wreaths and chains.

"The kids worked really hard to get the project completed by December 1," Tate said. "They wanted the residents to be ready to start marking off the days until Christmas on the Santa we made."

They made a big Santa Claus with dates on the beard, so everyday the residents could cross off a number to continue the countdown.

Tate said all of the students helped, and there were no complaints. She said the students seemed to enjoy doing something kind for others.

"They really learned to work together and reach out to help

other people," Tate said. "They learned that some older people don't have families like they do, and they looked forward to seeing them and speaking with some of them."

"Old people are cool," Grant Collins, fifth-grader, said.

Tate said that her class learned to be more grown up and to think of others while working on this project. She also said the residents at the center appreciated their decorations.

"It was a lot of fun, and it really helped brighten the building up," Tate said.

"I am so proud of the work Mrs. Tate's class did for our local nursing home," Buffle McConville, OUE principal, said. "The time and effort they put into bringing the holiday spirit to this special group of people is amazing."



OHS Unified Club helps make an impact at OHS

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"You are never quite sure what you will be doing," Sallee said. "No matter the task assigned, fun and team-building take place. The most important piece is that the work being done makes a difference in the community by providing food for those who are food insecure."

"I learned that people randomly stick their fingers into the peanut butter when they are in the donation bins," Hailey Sapp, freshman, said. "I also learned that a lot of people don't get enough food. I like that I got to spend time with new people and make new friends."

Harvesters is a regional food bank that serves northwestern Missouri and northeastern Kansas, providing food and other needed items to non-for-profit agencies to distribute.

OHS Unified Club members meet multiple times a year during Bulldog Block. The meetings include games and food. This year's kickoff party had a 'Nacho Average Party' theme. In November, the group members, along with the entire OHS Student Council, attended a KC Mavericks hockey game.

The Unified Club is also planning an awareness week in February. The group has applied for a grant to fund an inclusive youth leadership summit this spring, as well. In addition, many group members serve in unified pairs presenting monthly Character Strong lessons to freshman Bulldog Block classes. These character education lessons focus on positive character traits, such as patience, kindness, humility, respect, selflessness, forgiveness, honesty and commitment.

Kindergarteners participate in Function Junction Fridays



Anistyn Bowman, front, Trenton Van Buren, middle and Carter Kerr, back, kindergarteners, participate in Function Junction Fridays at McQuerry Elementary.

By Liberty Hobson and Amelia Burch

Kindergarteners at McQuerry Elementary enjoy participating in Function Junction Fridays, a motor lab modeled after the Ready Bodies program developed by occupational and physical therapists. This is the second year for kindergarteners to participate. Valerie Pennington, paraprofessional at McQuerry and Upper Elementary, runs the program.

After participating in Function Junction Fridays, according to Pennington, only 33% of kindergarteners in the past two years showed functional vision issues compared to the

state average of 40-45%, and most of those were not as serious as in the past.

Pennington said that vision issues can interfere with learning as it affects the ability to track and to maintain focus while reading, doing math and board work.

"There has already been so much improvement over the past year," Pennington said. "So far, I have gotten positive feedback from the teachers, the kids and the parents. I am hopeful that it will make lifelong learners who will reach their highest potential."

Pennington said her purpose for the program is to develop

all areas of the visual system through directed activities. The four main areas are visual perception, eye movement and teaming (the eyes working together), hand-eye coordination and gross motor (large muscle) skills.

"These activities are fun and encourage the child to explore and grow," Pennington said.

Pennington has some sessions in the classroom, but the majority are in the motor lab. Each kindergarten class participates for 20 minutes every Friday. Before the students are allowed into the classroom, they are assigned a card with a number on it. They find the carpet squares with the matching number to locate their station.

Pennington can be heard using the term "LLTA" which stands for "look, listen and think before you act." The students must listen and pay attention to the rules before beginning the exercises.

She divides the activities into eight stations, with two to three students participating at each station. Students rotate through the stations with the students doing approximately four of the eight stations each week.

"I incorporate some fun holiday activities when appro-

priate," Pennington said. "For Halloween, we had a pumpkin-shaped ball they bounced, and we had an activity called the Pumpkin Walk."

One of the favorite stations was Popcorn where students counted to 15 for Patrick Mahomes' Chiefs jersey number. This was a reflexive activity where students curled into a ball and then let their arms and legs pop out like kernels of popcorn popping when Pennington said 'popcorn.'

"I used Mahome's number while he was hurt to 'send love' for his healing," Pennington said. "The kids loved that, and one girl even asked whether it had worked. As you know, he did play that week, so I told her that he must have felt our love going his way," Pennington joked.

There is also the trampoline station where the child bounces and taps a mat that has a "L" and "R" taped on it. They are to tap the "L" with their left hand and the "R" with their right hand aiming to help with hand-eye coordination and learning left from right.

Sammi Burroughs, kindergarten teacher, said that Pennington is good at including the curriculum they use in their classrooms, such as

counting, in the motor labs and incorporating the physical aspects of their lessons.

The program was originally started 10 years ago to help students with possible visual issues which could make it harder to read. Annette Robinson, counselor at OUE, and Nancy Fallman, former reading teacher at OUE, had heard about a program that helped students advance in reading.

"Our district decided to try it. I was asked if I would be willing to be trained and implement the program," Pennington said.

At first, only third-graders participated, but in the last year, the program was moved to the kindergarten level.

"This place (motor lab) is so fun!" Anabella Lowe, kindergartener, said.

Bennett Burke, kindergartener, shared his favorite station. "I like the trampoline one because I get to jump all over the place," Burke said.

"I feel that it helps with their overall coordination and development," Aimee Feagan, kindergarten teacher, said. "They do balancing activities, visual activities, jumping, fine motor and puzzles. It helps them build core strength, too. My kids love it, and I think it is great for all of them."



The Growler Staff:

Front, Anna Bradley and Nikole Smith; middle, Liberty Hobson, Amelia Burch and Brittany Affolter; back, Kaleigh Snow, Ashley Overcast, Cali Meierarend, Emma Austin and Makenzie Harget, sophomores.



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