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# THE GROWLER

Odessa High School, Odessa, Missouri

## Girls wrestling becomes official sport



**Mateja Wilson and Sahrinity Gilmore, OHS sophomores, are the first girls on the MSHSAA sponsored girls wrestling team.**

By Hannah Newkirk

Only one girl competed in the Missouri state wrestling tournament last year, Mary “Belle” Harrell. She won a match by fall in the 113-pound weight class for Macon High School. However, the number of girls competing increased for the 2018-19 school year.

Mateja Wilson, sophomore, competed at this year’s state competition in Columbia after securing a spot by winning third place at districts on February 2 at Nixa. Wilson and Sahrinity Gilmore, also a sophomores at OHS, will go down in school history as the first girls on the Missouri State High School Activities Association sponsored girls wrestling team. Missouri became the ninth state to officially add girls wrestling as a high school sport, which meant there are separate district and state tournaments for boys and girls this season. However, girls could still

wrestle boys in the regular season during a two-year transition period.

Wilson wrestles in the 126-pound weight class and was 15-5 for the season. Gilmore wrestles in the 131-pound weight class and was 3-3 after being out part of the season with a knee injury.

Gilmore also said that other teams should watch out for them because their team might be small, but they are mighty.

“I think they underestimate us because of the size of our girls team,” Gilmore said. “They think we’re not as good, but they are wrong.”

Kirk Gross, head wrestling coach, said he would like to break the stereotype that wrestling isn’t a girls sport.

“It may not be a girly thing to do, but, hey, it is just society telling us that. Mateja (Wilson) is going to have a chance to be a state-placer. I mean, she is good,” Gross said.

Wilson was inspired to become a wrestler. She credits

fellow OHS wrestler, Jacob Evinger, sophomore, because he did a presentation in the fifth grade about his aunt, Tonya Evinger.

“Tonya Evinger became my inspiration. I wanted to be just like her,” Wilson said.

T. Evinger, 2000 OHS graduate, is a 37-year-old mixed martial artist who was ranked eleventh in the official bantamweight ranking as of January 2.

Gilmore, while not inspired by anyone in particular, said she just wanted to wrestle because it sounded like fun. Neither girls have wrestlers in their families, but they said their families are supportive of their wrestling endeavors, and both girls plan to wrestle next year.

“My mom loves it,” Gilmore said.

Gross said the girls have good energy and are excited to be part of the first year of girls wrestling.

“They have to be so dang mentally tough,” Gross said. “They usually practice against each other, but we have had to make some adjustments this year due to injuries.”

Gross said that he wished he had ten or 12 girls so they could have their own practice time and coach because it is difficult for girls to wrestle against the boys. Gross said that Sam Hughes, assistant coach, has taken the girls “under his wing” and works well with them. Gross noted that for the program to grow, it would be nice to update the facilities to provide separate spaces for the girls to feel more comfortable.

Even when overcoming these See **WRESTLE**, page 3

## StuCo president works hard behind the scenes



**Delaney Baker, OHS Student Council president, embraces the role and her ability to help others and be the voice of the OHS student body.**

By Hannah Newkirk & Kyra Morris

Advice to the OHS student body: students need to stay organized, learn to manage their time, delegate tasks and get involved in many activities. This sage advice is from Delaney Baker, OHS Student Council president.

Baker, a senior who has been in StuCo for the past two years, said she embraces the role of president and her ability to help others. To prepare for her new role, Baker put in many hours of training prior to the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year.

Angie Sallee, Stuco sponsor, and Baker attended a week-

long camp hosted by the Missouri Association of Student Councils in Fulton. Delaney was one of 700 students who attended.

“Delaney leads quietly behind the scenes but has the ability to step into the spotlight as needed,” Sallee said. “She demonstrated this by organizing and hosting the Homecoming Football Feud Game Show.”

Baker said she was pleased with the outcome of the Spirit Week “shenanigans.” Baker enjoyed designing shirts, decorating and watching the whole week play out smoothly.

“I like being able to be be- See **STUCO**, page 3

# OHS Drama Department to perform One Act, The Dark Road

By Lilah Bane

Maria Applegate, sophomore, and Lauryn Roncelli, junior, take the lead roles in the OHS One Act, The Dark Road. Tryouts were January 9 and ten of the 15 students who tried out, received roles.

“We wanted to do something that was different than the things we’ve done in the past,” Connor Bush, OHS Drama teacher, said. “It’s a little bit more realistic and more dramatic in nature.”

The story is told in a flashback from Greta’s perspective during the Holocaust. Greta, the main character, is a young girl living in Nazi Germany in the 1940s. She decides to take a job at the nearby women’s concentration camp, Ravensbruck, to help her earn money to take care of her sister, Lise.

However, she finds out that her duties are horrible, but she follows her orders blindly to her own death. Inside the camp, detainees are wounded, and the wounds are allowed to fester. Then, medical testing is performed on them to see which medicines work best. Lise is upset at what her sister has become.

Applegate, who will be playing her first lead role, said the

role is important to her because it is necessary for people to know their actions have consequences.

“It’s important to produce this show so people understand history, and so we don’t repeat these horrible events,” Applegate said. “This show teaches us the negative effects of stereotyping and prejudices.”

Roncelli, who will also be playing her first lead role, said she is excited to be playing a character with so much stage time. She said she knows it will be challenging, but she is ready for the challenge.

“To me Greta is such a complex character,” Roncelli said. “You want to understand why she made the decisions she did, when she changed her mind and when her morals left her.” Roncelli also said she hopes the audience sees how bad decisions can catch up with you and ruin your life.

“I hope what the audience takes away from this story is how to treat and respect others because in the end, we’re all human, all equal and all deserve love.”

Greta (present) is played by Roncelli, and Greta (past) is played by Applegate. Other roles are Daimler, played by Ethan Cox, junior; Lise, played

by Jordan Jackson, sophomore; commandant/doctor/guard, played by Camden Lanciaux, junior; Ingrid, played by Hope Turner, senior; Marga, played by Taylor Murnahan, senior; prisoner one/woman one, played by Sahrinity Gilmore, sophomore; prisoner two/woman two, played by Aydan McMahon, sophomore; and prisoner three/woman three, played by Makenzie Lewis, junior.

Bush said he filled the main roles because of how well he believes the performers can bring truth to the characters. He also said he was excited for this year’s One Act and looks forward to seeing how the students in the main roles perform as they are taking the lead for the first time.

Bush said the cast only has one month to put it all together and he is “ecstatic” to see the outcome of this story. The cast practices Monday, Wednesday and Fridays after school until around 4:30 p.m. They go through the script with Bush directing. Then they work on running through the show to get it performance ready. They will create fences, a guard tower and a bunkhouse as props to give the show a realistic feel. One Act conference competi-



OHS One Act cast members run through the show. Taylor Murnahan, senior, playing Marga, “kicks” Sahrinity Gilmore, sophomore, playing a prisoner. Aydan McMahon (back left), sophomore, plays a prisoner, and Maria Applegate (back right), sophomore, plays Greta past.

tion was February 18 at Oak Grove High School and districts will be March 1 at State Fair Community College. They placed 2nd at districts and will be moving into state in April. “The biggest challenge right

now that we are facing is weather and whether or not we will have enough rehearsals to get the show ready” Bush said. “However, I think our performers will rise to the occasion and get the show on its feet.”

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## OHS history department adds two new teachers

By Briana Coen & Olivia Stucker

History department has two additions for the 2018-19 school year, Barry Blank and Tim Cogan. Blank came from Boonville High School and has been teaching for 22 years. Cogan came from Archie High School and has been teaching for eight years.

“Mr. Blank and Mr. Cogan have great relationships with the students,” Terry Stever, OHS history department chair, said. “They came right in and became a part of the OHS team.”

Brad Briscoe, principal said both Blank and Cogan do a

good job of holding students accountable. He said they utilize a variety of instructional strategies including lecture, group discussion and multimedia technology in their classrooms.

“They foster group collaborations,” Briscoe said. “They enjoy the content that they teach, and while their teaching styles are a little different from each other, they are both very effective in what they do.”

Blank teaches world history, a freshman class, and he is an assistant football coach in charge of inside linebackers and the offensive line.

Blank has taught P.E.,

strength and conditioning, and history at his previous schools, Jefferson City, Blair Oaks and Boonville High Schools.

“I really enjoy Odessa,” Blank said. “I like the kids, the faculty and the administration.”

Blank said his favorite part about Odessa, in addition to the students, is how friendly everyone has been. He likes the location and enjoys living in Odessa.

Cogan teaches American history, a sophomore class, and American government, a junior class. He is also an assistant football coach in charge of wide receivers/defensive line

and is an assistant basketball coach.

Previously, Cogan taught history at Staley, Mid Buchanan and Archie high schools and was head football coach at Mid Buchanan.

“My first year has been awesome,” Cogan said. “I just love it. It’s been a lot of fun.”

Cogan said he also loves the kids and the atmosphere of Odessa.

Before changing careers, Cogan was a businessman. He and his wife, Lori, have two children, Kyle, 30, and Claire, 26. They currently live in Liberty.

## OHS Girls wrestling team is excited to make progress

**WRESTLE** from 1  
difficulties, both girls feel that wrestling is a great stress-reliever for them. They love the morning runs because they get them “pumped up” and ready to start the day. The girls also said they have learned life-skills like discipline, how to listen and how to respect others. Wilson said that wrestling helps her become a better person.

“It keeps me in check and opens my eyes because I have to watch what I am eating and what I am putting in my body to make sure I am healthy,” Wilson said.

Another difficulty, according to the girls, is learning the names of all the wrestling moves. They said it is a lot to remember, but they are making progress.

Wilson said her signature moves are the cradle and the barbwire.

“The cradle is probably my best pinning combination,” Wilson said. “It is what I’ve always pinned people with, and you can hit it whenever you want.”

Gilmore’s said her signature move is the head and arm.

“The moment you load them into it, they instantly know that they’re about to hit the mat,” Gilmore said. “I throw people really hard, and sometimes I feel bad afterwards. I just love it. It’s almost an instant pin.”

Being accepted by the boys and having to wrestle against them also can be difficult, according to the girls.

“When you are wrestling boys, they have a lot more

strength than girls,” Gilmore said.

To help assimilate into the team, the girls said they try to be as much like the boys as possible. They want the coaches to treat them the same, and the girls said they do. Wilson said if coaches are giving girls exceptions on the wrestling team, then she does not believe the girls should be there.

“I hate to say this, but it is a boy-oriented sport, so you need to be able to do the same and more as the boys,” Wilson said.

“If anything, Coach Gross expects more from us than the boys,” said Gilmore.

“Coach Gross expects us to be the best of the best everywhere, not just on our team,” Wilson said.

Both girls are proud of their progress this season and said that the boys have been supportive and told them that some of them didn’t win a match their first seasons. Wilson said she felt a little guilty when winning against a boy for the first time in a regular-season match.

“I hurt his feelings, and he was crying, but after the guilt went away, I was like ‘yeah, let’s go!’” Wilson said.

Gilmore said she cried after losing her first match because she was worried that the coaches might be mad.

“They just build me back up, and that was nice,” Gilmore said.

Wilson said she has enjoyed every second of the season. Gilmore said she would like to encourage more girls to join.

“It is extremely fun,” Gilmore said.

## StuCo president hopes to create more student involvement at OHS

**STUCO** from 1  
-hind the scenes and take input from others in what we plan and events that we do,” Baker said.

Baker said she also enjoys being the voice of OHS students and passing along their ideas and opinions to administration. She hopes to foster a more positive attitude at the school and help the student body become more involved in the community through volunteering.

“If we’re all going to be here for four years, we might as

well make the best of it and make some fun memories,” Baker said.

Alexa Gust, former StuCo president, said she believes Baker will listen to the student body, be proactive and have “new and exciting ideas.”

“Her outgoing personality and great attitude are two strong qualities she possesses,” Gust said.

Baker credits Gust and Terry Stever, OHS history teacher and former StuCo sponsor, for influencing her decision to run for the office.

“You meet a lot of friends,

and you have a lot of great opportunities.” Baker said.

In addition to StuCo, Baker stays busy at OHS by participating in golf, soccer, NHS, choir, FCA and Spanish Club.

After graduation, Baker plans to pursue a digital media degree from Weber State University in Utah and hopes to create apps and websites for companies. Baker is interested in being in Student Council at Weber as well.

“I would like to be a part of that established group,” Baker said. “I think that would be a lot of fun.”

## OHS boys basketball team ends a great season

By Kloee Grubb  
Middle school boys basketball A and B teams ended the season on January 24 at Oak Grove. The A team defeated the Panthers 48-20 ending the season 14-1. The B team lost in overtime 22-28 bringing the season record to 3-9. Chris Herring and Scott Ragland coached the teams.

OHS basketball teams are eighth-graders. All other schools in the conference have combined seventh and eighth grade teams. Herring said sometimes his team struggles against the more-developed teams, specifically Pleasant Hill.

“They are very good. For eighth grade boys, they are tall, mature, and they are developed,” Herring said. “However, our boys work extremely hard.”

The A team’s only loss was early in the season to the Roosters, 24-29; however, the boys faced them again on January 17 and defeated the previously undefeated team in a tight 33-32 victory.

Herring, head coach, has coached for five years. He started as an eighth grade boys’ B team coach, then moved to assistant varsity coach, then moved to eighth grade head coach, where he has been for the past three years.

“This year has been a lot of fun,” Herring said. “They (the teams) are all different, all challenging, so I can’t truly pick a favorite.”

“This season was fun because we passed the ball around,” Jonah Metzdorf, A team guard, said. “It is a team sport, and everyone was involved.”

The teams faced a challenging opponent when they traveled to Warrensburg, the home of the Tigers, where they battled it out in a tough game but ultimately came out on top with the nail-biting score of 33-29.

“It was a close game,” Jackson Murry, A team forward, said. “It was always going back and forth. I could feel the adrenaline pumping through my body.”

“The way we play as a team, helps us win the games that we need to win,” Zach Miller, A team guard, said. “We make it fun because we win.”

B team coach, Scott Ragland, is new to the district. He teaches special education and co-teaches with regular education teachers. Even though it is his first year of coaching in Odessa, Ragland said sports have always been a part of his life. He coached football at Lee’s Summit West High School, and he coached baseball at Lee’s Summit North High School for three years and helped with softball.

“I started out coaching my own kids in youth sports. I coached football, baseball, basketball and soccer for all of my kids,” Ragland said.

The A and B teams shared several players, such as Noah Terrell. Terrell said the boys liked their new coach and were glad to end the season on a high note. He said he wants them to continue to grow together and get better at the game they love.

### SPORTS RECORDS

<b>G I R L S</b>	JV Basketball	<b>4-3</b>
	C Team	<b>4-2</b>
<b>B O Y S</b>	JV Basketball	<b>3-4</b>
	C Team Basketball	<b>8-1</b>
	Wrestling	<b>2-2-2</b>

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## OHS Chamber Choir preps for trip to Washington D.C.

By Jillian Taylor

OHS Chamber Choir students will visit Washington, D.C. April 3-7 to compete at the WorldStrides OnStage Festival. Harry Hamblin, choir director, is excited about the trip because the choir hasn't taken a trip of this magnitude in more than 20 years.

"I think it's a great experience for kids from the midwest to see our nation's capital and a whole different way of life," Hamblin said. "This is something I want to establish-getting to do a trip like this-every couple of years."

The choir will be performing three pieces: "Beati quorum via," by Charles Stanford; "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," by Lowell Mason and arranged by Gilbert M. Martin; and either "Spaseniye sodelal," by Pavel Chesnokov or "The Ship That Sails," by Brad Printz for their third selection. These songs can be previewed on March 4 at the OHS choral Pre-Festival Concert.

The students will tour the city, especially around the National Mall. They will visit the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, the National World War I Memorial, the World War II Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

"I am excited to eat at cool restaurants and visit the monuments," Ammon Dawson, sophomore Chamber Choir member, said.

The choir will also be visiting Arlington National Cemetery to witness the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

"I got to go Washington, D.C. last summer with my fami-

ly, and it was life changing," Hamblin said. "There's a whole bunch of our nation's history, and it's all right there within a mile," said Hamblin.

The trip will cost approximately \$600 for each of the 32 students planning to attend, which includes the bus trips, hotel fees and meals.

To help fundraise for the trip, the choir has held a mattress sale and has sold cookie dough mixes, magazines, candy bars and items from Wally's Nut House.

The choir also held a creative fundraiser on February 2. They hosted an Escape Room Puzzle Game fundraiser.

An Escape Room, which is a relatively new form of entertainment, is typically a room that is locked and clues lead participants to answers that are used to unlock the exit and "escape."

There were 20 puzzles offered at the OHS event. Some of the puzzles included the following: Dead Man on the Orient Express, The Pharaoh's Tomb, The Forbidden Castle, The Polar Station, The Mysterious Museum and The Sunken Treasure.

The event was held in OHS classrooms, and each puzzle was monitored by a Chamber Choir student. Each student timed the teams and allowed the participants to leave the room once the puzzle was solved. It cost \$10 per person per game.

Hamblin said fundraising has been going well, and the community is always supportive. An anonymous donor gave \$5000 in the fall to go towards the gym door expansion project, the grand piano will not fit through the current doors.

## OHS students get creative with graphic design

By Dakotah Stubblefield

Bang! Boom! Bam! Andrea Birdsong's sixth hour Graphic Design class began a graphic novel unit designed to teach students concepts commonly used in comic books and throughout graphic design. Birdsong, art teacher, has taught at OHS for 11 years.

"It's not about having a really clean, polished or super artistic narrative," Birdsong said. "it's about understanding the concepts, transitions, gutters, use of line and whether or not they made an attempt to show that they understand the concept interacts with imagery. This is seen not only in graphic novels but in other forms of communication, like advertising. She teaches how imagery communicates to others through expressive line, shape and color.

Iconography, the use of images to portray a subject, movement or idea, is another concept Birdsong teaches in the graphic novel project. Iconography is a key piece in graphic design.

Birdsong enjoys the project and the textbook they're using, "Understanding Comics" by Scott McCloud. The textbook covers visual communication across disciplines written in comics. Every night the students go home and read a



Andrea Birdsong, OHS art teacher (center), helps Kaylin Hotmer and Carsyn Schloman, juniors, with their graphic novels.

chapter, and then they come back and review the chapter the next day in class.

"It has a lot of really good information," Birdsong said.

Birdsong actually came up with the idea for the unit after taking a masters course on graphic novels during the summer of 2017. The course was taught by Nick Kramer, a specialist in graphic novels. Birdsong first incorporated the project into the Graphic Design curriculum during the 2017-2018 school year.

The novels aren't required to be made in any specific style because the project is designed to work with a diverse group of students. Birdsong likes to give the students creative freedom, so they are comfortable with what they are draw-

ing. However, she joked that no stick figures were allowed.

Students must come up with their own subject, storyline and characters. They will also be developing and displaying their drawing skills, storyboarding and photoshopping skills.

This project, along with the majority of Birdsong's projects, are graded on a student's personal effort and ability. Students are not graded in comparison to other students' projects but on their ability to show they have learned and paid attention.

"The dialogue should match the imagery, the skills should be applied correctly, and time should have been spent wisely," Birdsong said.



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