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THE GROWLER

Odessa High School, Odessa, Missouri

Chamber of Commerce hosts first student development day



James Hines, community member, presents the session on car maintenance to seniors in the shop at OHS for the senior student development day.

By Briana Coen

OHS seniors participated in the first Student Development Day on March 14 at OHS with seniors attending two required sessions, Adulting 101/Finance and Welcome to the Real World, and three of nine sessions of their choice. The sessions, presented by members of the Odessa Chamber of Commerce, were designed to give students information and resources they would need in the “real world”.

OHS counselors were approached by Tamara Kirk, Chamber director, after she saw an article about a southern Missouri school that implemented a student development day with success. She was interested in joining with the school to offer a development day for OHS seniors. The OHS administration and counselors liked the idea and worked with Kirk to plan the event. Amanda Twombly and Ashley Ray, OHS counselors, Kirk, and Cathy Thompson,

Chamber president, developed the day.

“We surveyed the juniors and seniors,” Twombly said. “The Chamber of Commerce surveyed their membership, and we also used data from the Missouri School Counseling Association to develop our sessions.”

The Adulting 101/Finance session covered mortgage, dorm living, renting, taxes, how to make large purchases, banking, credit and budgeting. The Welcome to the Real World session included interviewing, soft skills (social and communication skills), learning how to deal with confrontational situations in the workplace, networking, and social media dos and don’ts.

Hannah Spaar, news editor of *The Odessan* and Nici Wilson, Odessa city administrator presented the Welcome to the Real World session. Spaar talked to students about the importance of networking. She also presented pitfalls of social media

explaining to seniors how their social media accounts could potentially endanger their future careers and to use good judgment before posting.

“I learned to be more aware of my social media,” Janessa Carlton, senior, said.

Wilson talked about soft skills and said students probably have been working on these interpersonal skills in high school, in organizations and in other extracurricular activities. These skills, Wilson said, will help students when interviewing for jobs.

“A big thing is your body language,” Wilson said. “I can tell a lot about you without you speaking to me.”

Wilson said employers are seeking workers who have the ability to grasp people, make decisions and manage situations.

“You will need to know about conflict resolution and how to handle difficult people. This will help you stand out,” Wilson said.

Wilson also talked about the need for perseverance, working through adversity and developing a strong work ethic and ethical morals for the workplace.

“Your employer will want to know that you’re dependable and responsible,” Wilson said.

Finally, Wilson talked about getting ready for a job interview and how a real career job interview will need to be more official than what they have done in the past. Wilson demonstrated the vital handshake. She told students to make sure their hands are clean, to stand up, reach out

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OUE celebrates ‘Read Across America’ with Mayor Couch



Adam Couch, Odessa mayor, reads *Oh, The Places You’ll Go* by Dr. Seuss on March 1 to Rachel Young’s third grade class to celebrate Read Across America.

By Kloee Grubb

Adam Couch, Odessa mayor, read a book at OUE as third-graders gathered around his chair on the carpet. He pointed to illustrations, and the children asked several questions when the story was complete.

Couch read *Oh The Places You’ll Go* by Dr. Seuss on March 1 to Rachel Young’s class to celebrate Read Across America. The event, sponsored by National Education Association, is one of the largest reading celebrations in the country.

“He told us that you can go anywhere and dream big and do anything if you believe it,” Makayla Cole, third-grader, said of Couch.

Couch was just one of many

selected “mystery readers” for the day.

Other guest readers included: Mike Gwodz, custodian, Glenda Weber, Title 1 reading teacher, Patty Reynolds, third grade paraprofessional, Young’s husband, Casey, Kristi Bieri, P.E. teacher and Buffie McConville, OUE principal. The readers gave the class mystery clues about themselves in advance, so students could try to guess their identity.

Mystery readers were just a part of the activities planned to emphasize reading. Young said she believes that helping cultivate a love of reading is important.

“Schools hold pep rallies to get kids excited about football

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New OHS teacher has a passion for teaching the deaf



Jordan Bowman, new OHS teacher, enjoys spending time with her husband, Jason, and Patre Marie, daughter.

By Kyra Morris

Jordan Bowman, OHS teacher, is using her passion for deaf education and communication skills to help an OHS student. Bowman said she enjoys working with the deaf student

during the day and assisting him with his work. She said it is a “wonderful experience” to be another communication model for him and his hearing peers.

“I love being able to com-

municate with him,” Bowman said. “Being able to talk to him through American Sign Language (ASL) is something that I feel is rewarding for both myself and him.”

Bowman has a bachelor’s degree in sign language interpreting and is a certified educational sign language interpreter. She also plans on getting her master’s degree in Deaf Education in the near future.

“Jordan’s background in deaf interpretation and her ability to work with our deaf populations, has been a quality addition to our staff,” Brad Briscoe, principal, said. “She is a compassionate, hard-working and dedicated employee to OHS.”

Bowman is currently working in the Special Education Department. She co-teaches history classes and has several sections of Applied Academics where she helps students with Individualized Education Programs or IEPs.

Bowman grew up in Palmyra, Illinois, where she attended high school. She said she loved high school and made good grades while playing softball and working as a lifeguard.

She attended Quincy University, a small private Catholic liberal arts college, in Illinois and graduated in 2018. Her first job after college was substitute teaching at Palmyra.

Bowman decided to apply for a job in Odessa because she has family in the area. She said the students and staff are great, and her Bulldog Block class is one of her favorites.

“The freshmen I have in Bulldog Block are always happy,” Bowman said. “This class gets along great with each other and will do anything to help one another.”

She said she felt like teaching was her destiny because she has many family members who are educators. Her mother, Sherri, retired after 35 years at Palmyra Elementary.

She continues to substitute for the district. Her oldest sister, Bethany, teaches at Centralia Intermediate as a fifth grade teacher. Her youngest sister, Madison, is a Special Education teacher in Ellinwood, Kansas.

“I love everything about teaching,” Bowman said.

Bowman and her husband, Jason, live in Odessa. He works for Overhead Door in Olathe, Kansas. They have a seven-year-old daughter, Patre Marie, who is in the first grade.

“I named her after my great-grandma, Goldie,” Bowman said. “Her maiden name was Patre. Her middle name is after my grandma, Gladys and mine.”

Bowman and her family enjoy being outside, working in the garden, riding bikes and playing softball.

“We’re teaching Patre how to pitch,” Bowman said. “Both Jason and I played baseball and softball in high school. We were pitchers.”

Meteorology class studies military technology

By Lilah Bane

Whiteman Air Force Base meteorologists talked to students in the OHS Meteorology class on March 6 about the military’s latest technology and how it is used to make weather predictions.

Staff Sergeant Adam Ratliff and Senior Airman Luke Calvert, meteorologists, said their jobs are important because they predict the weather to help the military plan activities, help determine when pilots can safely fly and to keep everyone safe.

The meteorologists spoke about the Air Force weather career field and the daily duties and lives of Air Force members.

“During the day, we forecast weather conditions in relation to Whiteman Air Force Base and support a number of aircraft assigned to this location,” said Ratliff.

They also brought a Kes-

trel 5000, which is a handheld weather sensor with the ability to measure temperatures, wind speeds and atmospheric pressure.

The meteorologists said the military has better technology than news stations. They use a 3-D model, and news stations typically use a 2-D model. The military also uses weather balloons to determine the temperature, pressure and dew point. They use drones to check on current conditions and have satellites orbiting in space.

“One of the most interesting parts of the presentation was learning how they predict weather differently than broadcasters you see on television,” Evelyn Hemmen, senior meteorology student, said.

Ratliff has been in the military for 13 years, and Calvert has been enlisted for two years.

Both airmen noted that ac-

countability is important. They said that when their weather predictions are not accurate, they must analyze what went wrong to try to improve accuracy in the future.

The meteorologists said they often travel with other branches of the military and go on missions with them. They predict the weather, not only on base, but wherever they are stationed.

“I enjoyed the meteorologists sharing the experiences they have had in their jobs, whether it be in or out of service,” Mason Hawkins, senior, said.

Allan Twilligear, meteorology teacher, said he scheduled the speakers because he wanted the students to be aware of different opportunities in the field of meteorology and to understand the difficulties of forecasting in different areas of the world.

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Mayor emphasizes the importance of reading

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games. They hold assemblies to talk about character counting, so why don't we have an event that is all about reading?" Young asked.

So, Young planned activities focused around reading. In addition to mystery readers, her class talked about why reading is important, shared their favorite books, reflected upon the books read and graphed the individual and class totals of what they had read.

Couch said he enjoys spending time in the schools and talking to students when he can.

"I went to school here, grew up here, and the kids are not only the future of America, but they are also the future of Odessa," Couch, said. "At that age, the world is still full of possibilities. They can do anything, and they are so amazed and interested in everything."

Couch said he enjoys spending time in the schools, attending sporting events and keeping up with the kids on social media to show them he takes an interest in their lives as well.

OHS students learn tips about interviews

Senior, from 1

and firmly shake the person's hand while making eye contact.

"Having a firm handshake can prove that you're confident," Wilson said. "A handshake is key for a lot of people."

Other sessions included: car maintenance; emergency preparedness; mental wellness;

"He does a great job of recognizing our schools and students on social media," Robert Brinkley, superintendent, said. "He is always positive. He is a celebrity with our kids."

Couch is currently in his third term, serving as Mayor for the fifth year. He said he is not sure how many years he would like to be mayor but said he will "take it one year at a time."

Couch visits the schools during local government week, speaks at assemblies, attends D.A.R.E. graduation, judges senior projects and hosts interns in the finance department during the summer. Other days, he makes more casual visits and comes to the school to have lunch with the students.

"Mayor Couch and his total commitment to the community and schools helps build a better place for our patrons to live, work and raise a family," Brinkley, said. "I have worked with many mayors over the years, but not one of them has ever worked as hard at supporting our students as Mayor Couch."

transitioning to college; transitioning to a full-time job; planning to get a full-time job; cyber security and media literacy; being thrifty; and making big purchases.

Twombly said the feedback from the seniors was positive overall, and the school hopes to host the event again in the future.



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OHS 2019 prom was a big success

By Hannah Newkirk

OHS "Happily Ever After" themed Prom was on April 13 after more than a year of planning by Prom committee members and sponsors. The enchanted forest event featured rustic wooden decorations and ties in with the 2018-19 school-wide theme, "Our Story."

The event was held from 8-11 p.m. at Lone Summit Ranch located off Highway 50 in Lake Lotawana.

"My favorite part has been getting everything organized and set up and all the sneak peeks," Keiton Johnson, junior Prom committee member, said.

Committee members include Johnson, Kloee Grubb, Danielle Wildschuetz, Tori

Goulden, Lyndsey Roseler, Destiny Dodge, Makenzie Lewis and Carsyn Schloman, juniors, and Lynette Williams and Angie Sallee, sponsors. Williams is an OHS social studies teacher, and Sallee is the OHS librarian. As head sponsors, part of their duties include helping juniors plan Prom.

"The juniors have had a lot of enthusiasm," Williams said.

Williams said the junior class raised enough money by working concession stands to allow the seniors to attend Prom for free. Attendees were required to RSVP and pay in advance because no tickets were sold at the door. The cost was \$30 for freshman and

sophomore guests, \$20 for juniors and \$40 for guests from other schools.

The event featured a dessert bar, candy bar, chocolate fountain and mini bundt cakes. Grubb noted that most attendees go out to dinner before the event, so the desserts seemed to make more sense than offering food or hors d'oeuvres. The committee also decided to hire Alex Harbolt as the DJ. He worked the Homecoming and Court-Mat dances this school year and was popular with the students.

"It's been really fun coming up with the ideas and putting everything together," Wildschuetz said. "It's going to have a great outcome."

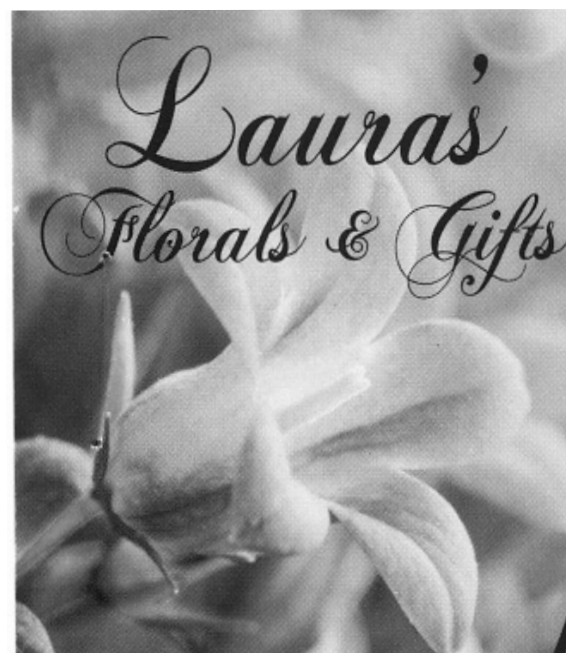


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Students display solar system models at OUE parent night



Daniel Porter, fifth-grader, enjoyed creating the sun out of paper mache for his solar system model.

By Gracie Buxton

Fifth grade parent night was held March 7 at OUE where students presented solar system models to the community. Projects ranged from posters with drawings, boards with glued-on buttons for planets and even cakes with planets made from icing.

Some students enjoyed being creative, and others preferred to visit the craft store and buy a solar system kit. The displays ranged in size from a shoe box to a washing machine box and were displayed in the cafeteria.

The students were given a scoring guide to direct them, but they had to create the projects in approximately a month at home with their parents. Students were given a chance to show their creativity when demonstrating how the solar system works.

"It gives the students and the parents something to bond over," Becky Armstrong, fifth grade teacher, said.

Students included all eight planets and Pluto, a dwarf planet, complete with rings if needed. They included the moon, stars and at least one constellation. They were also graded on spelling, neatness and creativity.

Teachers taught the solar system material at school and showed Brain Pop videos to supplement the material

in the science books. Student studied orbits, turns of the planets as well as the shadows.

Larry Scott, fifth-grader, used a 3-D printer that his parents own. His project took almost seventy-two hours to print.

"You have to code how you want the planets on the computer," Scott said. "It's a program on the computer."

Scott said his dad uses the printer to make Christmas tree ornaments and forks for school lunches.

"We can print models of pretty much anything," Scott said.

Daniel Porter, fifth-grader, used a giant box to create his solar system. He attached the planets with string and let them hang down. He created the sun out of paper mache.

"My favorite part of the project was using the NASA website to see what colors to make the planets," Daniel said.

"We don't want this to be something where they have to spend a lot of money," Armstrong said.

Parent nights have been scheduled at OUE for more than ten years with each grade having a different topic. Third grade held an animal wax museum where they presented reports dressed as the animal of their choice. The fourth grade created and presented historical bottle people.

OHS Seniors create unique senior projects

By Dakotah Stubblefield

OHS Magic the Gathering Club hosted a tournament from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, March 2 in the OHS library. Fourteen people attended with six playing Magic the Gathering and eight playing a Dungeons and Dragons campaign. The games ran side by side.

Robert Evanoff and Nate Kem, seniors, were the commander student finalists. Dustin Thomas, sophomore, and Evanoff won the two-headed dragon modern format. Evanoff and Pat Smith, sophomore, were the two semifinalists for one-on-one modern.

Kem and Evanoff planned and held the tournament as part of their senior projects. Their senior project was a creative endeavor, and all projects must fit into one of three categories. The other two categories are career exploration and social service. Senior projects also require a minimum of 30 hours outside of class to complete the project. Amanda Twombly, the club's sponsor was the boys' senior project mentor.

In class, the seniors created project proposals which were approved by the senior project committee. They also completed research papers on the history of board games and on the history of Magic the Gathering.

During the Senior Project Community Night on April 18 at OHS, they presented their tri-fold visual aid during the open house portion, and then they presented their projects including a slide show during the presentation/judging portion. Open house was from 5-5:45 p.m. and the presentations began at 6 p.m. A program with schedules of room numbers and times were handed out that night.

Developing the tournament was a large part of Evanoff and Kem's senior project. To prepare for the event, they created and posted a flyer, researched the cost of prizes and

decided on the tournament format and entry fees. Participants paid a \$5 entry fee which went to the club.

Kem and Evanoff's plans were interrupted early on by inclement weather, and the original tournament date of February 9 had to be rescheduled.

"Our event was pushed back almost a month," Kem said.

Prizes were set up in a door prize model, so most students received prizes. Larger prizes included a dice set for Dungeons and Dragons and a set of 80-count black deck protector card sleeves for Magic the Gathering cards.

Dungeons and Dragons is a fantasy and role-playing game, and Magic The Gathering is a card game that is strategy-based and is won when one player depletes the opponent's starting 20 life points.

Kem and Evanoff, in addition to participating in the tournament, helped other students build their decks for the game. Students could bring in their own decks or borrow one at the tournament.

"I enjoyed being able to play with others," Kem said. "It is a fun thing to play casually and even competitively. It can get really competitive."

Amanda Twombly, OHS counselor, is the club's sponsor.

The group meets on Tuesdays from 3-4 p.m. The club, in its second year, was developed by Noah Pulliam, Smith and Drew Covey, OHS sophomores and club members. The club has approximately 20 members, and unlike most OHS clubs, has members from other schools in the district.

"This is the only school club that I know of that has members from all of the other schools, and they all get along so well," Amanda Twombly, club sponsor, said.

The club also participates in DND, a tabletop RPG, along with other tabletop and card games such as Yugioh. Next year, the club will be changing its name to The Tabletop Gaming Club to better fit their focus.

"We're pretty laid back, and they're always looking for new people to join them," Twombly said.

The club went to Planet Comicon, a gaming and esport event center, in Kansas City on March 30 for their spring field trip. In addition to the tournament proceeds, Evanoff and Kem worked concession stands as part of their senior project to help fund the trip. Most students dressed in cosplay where they wore a costume and took on the personality of a character of their choice.

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