

Lt. Governor to address OCCC grads May 8

By Shawn Stawicki
 News Writing Student

Oklahoma Lt. Gov. Jari Askins will provide the keynote address for graduation ceremonies at 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 8, at the Cox Convention Center.

Askins has been a pioneer in Oklahoma politics.

Sworn in as Oklahoma's 15th lieutenant governor Jan. 8, 2007, Askins became the first Democratic woman to attain that office.

She also was the first female chairwoman for Oklahoma's Pardon and Parole Board and the first woman to lead a caucus in the Okla-



Lt. Gov. Jari Askins

See "Askins," page 6

Eye in the sky



Photo by Joseph A. Moore II

Oklahoma Highway Patrol Trooper Drew Hamilton answers questions on First Responder day April 22. Behind Hamilton is the Bell OH 58 helicopter, a highly sophisticated aircraft, fitted with on-board day and night vision cameras, as well as an external uplink to the OHP Command Center.

State officials urge awareness of flu outbreak

H1M1 virus a 'variant strain' of the seasonal flu virus, expert says

By Matt Bishop
 Staff Writer

The Oklahoma Department of Health is on alert, hoping to prevent a new strain of influenza from taking hold in the state. The swine flu, officially named 2009 H1M1 flu, has spread to four continents and 11 of 50 states in the U.S.

As of April 30, Oklahoma had not yet recorded a case.

The most deaths have been recorded in Mexico.

The U.S. has confirmed 109 cases as of April 30. Four of those 11 states have confirmed 100 of those cases.

New York has confirmed 50 cases; California, 14; and South Carolina recently reported 10 cases.

Oklahoma's neighboring

state Texas has confirmed 26 cases and the only death in the United States.

Dr. Dan Boatright, senior associate dean of the School of Public Health at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, said the swine flu virus is a variant strand of the seasonal flu virus.

He said flu viruses mutate genetically and the swine flu is a new strain.

The flu shot some may have received this winter doesn't provide immunity to this strand of flu virus, Boatright said.

"Our bodies are immunologically naïve to the swine flu," he said. "We have no natural resistance."

Boatright said, as of now, the flu has mainly affected people in their 30s and 40s, and those whose health is already compromised such

as smokers with respiratory disease and those with other illnesses.

He said seasonal flu kills upwards of 36,000 a year but the difference, he said, is there is no vaccine for the swine flu.

Virologists are working on a vaccine, Boatright said, but added it will take time.

Having no cure for the swine flu scares OCCC student Maria Rios-Esqueda.

"It's a bit scary because it's getting worse," Rios-Esqueda said. "I hope they can find a cure soon."

The swine flu, at this moment, isn't as bad as other flu outbreaks such as the bird flu, Boatright said.

He said approximately 63 percent of bird-flu cases resulted in death.

However, the bird-flu did not spread, Boatright



To help prevent the spread of the flu, the Oklahoma State Department of Health recommends:

- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Avoid touching the face
- Wash hands frequently

said.

The swine flu is not as deadly at this time, but as the swine flu spreads, some think it could become more lethal, he said.

The swine flu began as a respiratory disease of pigs caused by the type A influenza virus which causes regular outbreaks in pigs, according the CDC website.

The site reports the virus cannot be obtained by eating cooked pork products.

Pam Williams of the Oklahoma State Department of Health advises people to practice basic hygiene to protect themselves in case they come into contact with someone with swine flu.

Covering coughs and sneezes, avoiding touching the face, and washing hands will help prevent the virus from spreading.

Williams said washing hands more frequently could prevent someone from contracting See "Flu," page 12

Editorial and Opinion

Editorial

When in Rome, learn latin

Language plays an important role in the development of any country. In other words, language can be regarded as the wealth of the nation.

If people are going to a new country then it's very important to have at least a basic knowledge of the culture and language before they take a tour.

If a person cannot even say hello or hi to the people where they are spending their vacation, it shows disrespect to the language of that nation.

The Oklahoma State Senate recently has given its approval to a measure allowing voters to decide whether all official business of the state should be conducted in English.

The Senate already has voted to approve House Joint Resolution 1042, authorized by Sen. Anthony Sykes.

"The Resolution states that English is the common and unifying language of the state, and that all official actions of the state will be in English," Sykes said in a press release, issued by the Oklahoma State Senate.

The adoption of this decision could be beneficial as well as risky too.

Some of the government offices in Oklahoma hire interpreters to translate the language for those who can't understand English, Gerald Weis, retired lawyer, said.

Weis, who worked as a public defender for the Oklahoma Indigent Defense System, said such offices also provide documents in many languages for those who can't understand English.

The Sykes' bill could save money that the state spends on the interpreter, but at the same time they should also think about the non-English speakers.

The legal system is made for every citizen of any country. If a person from Iraq, who cannot speak English, is a defendant on trial in Oklahoma Courts, then there must be a translator for such a situation.

So while implementing this law, government officers must make sure it will not have an effect on any non-English speaker from getting justice from the court or other government offices.

Since the U.S. is a country full of immigrants, many immigrants might disagree with this legislation.

Nevertheless, learning the country's language would be beneficial to all immigrants and other visitors.

If international students do not know how to greet their professor or friends in English, then it will be hard for them to adjust in this country.

As the saying goes, an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure.

It's better to learn some basic language skills rather than face a hard time in the future.

—**Bishal Malla**
Staff Writer

Where should smokers go?

To the editor:

With the welcome wave of reform that has hit OCCC, I have a proposal, modest, of course:

Let's end flatulence on this campus. There's far too much of it and it's bad for us and bad for the environment. Each of us can emit up to 3.5 liters per day and last July there were 6,706,993,152 of us on this planet. Well, that's a lot of gas isn't it? Maybe this is too big a problem to tackle. And given that gas is pretty much invisible and then there are those silent gaggers that you can't even hear — maybe that's an unenforceable idea.

Well, all seriousness aside, let's think about smokers on campus. You can see 'em and you can smell 'em. We (no sic, thank you) can fix this.

Now outright banishment is an old Cherokee way of punishment, so we better not try that unless we are ready to pay royalties. So, what to do?

When I was a boy, we knew about smokers. They weren't going to die from

CANCER. Nope, they were going straight to hell with a Lucky on their lips and a hot and bothered Zippo (read BIC in 2009) in their Levi pockets. Those guys sucking their cigs beneath the bridge would get their punishment. And it wasn't just pimples or cancer.

But even in that benighted time and place, there was sanctuary for the smokers. In high school, we had smokers hall (no apostrophe — they don't use em in Texas). Nobody went down there unless you were dying to smoke. And smoke, they did.

Today, we are more enlightened. We know that smoking only kills you — sooner or later. Still, smokers are human and they need their space. I propose that we create our own OCCC SMOKERS HALL. Well, not actually a hall, I'd say that the island in the middle of Lake Todd would be perfect. Sure, they'd have to swim out and kick a few geese out of the way, but it would work. The college could provide floats for the non-swimmers. The re-

ally good swimmers could do a backstroke and get a few extra puffs while coming and going. Who says we can't all work together? Coexistence — that's the way. See, there's a solution for everything.

—**Clay Randolph**
English Professor

PIONEER

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Letters may also be e-mailed to editor@occc.edu. A phone number for verification must be included.

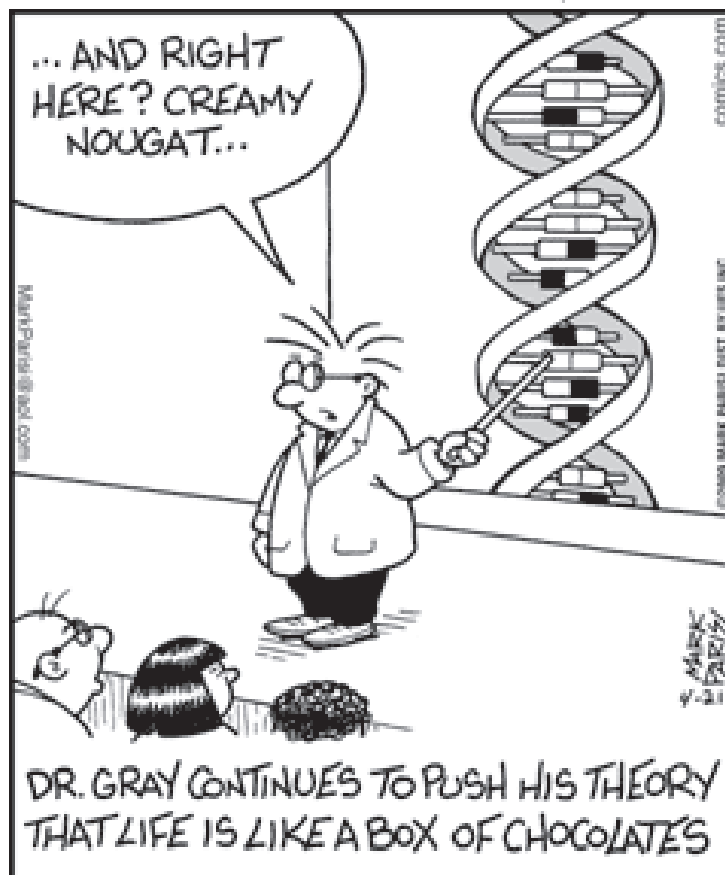
The PIONEER can be accessed on the Internet at: www.occc.edu/pioneer.

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OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

off the mark.com by Mark Parisi



Comments and Reviews

Professor shows dislike for editorial, calls it disturbing

To the editor:

Dear Mr. Bishop:

As both a college student and an adjunct professor, I found your editorial of April 24 extremely disturbing, ill-informed, and even disrespectful.

First, you stated that OU "has a dead week before finals week where students have a week to get caught up and prepare for their classes without being assigned any extra homework."

However, according to OUDaily (OU's newspaper) "The current Dead Week policy, as outlined in the OU Faculty Handbook, prohibits instructors from assigning projects during Dead Week, and any assignments due that week must be equal to or less than 10 percent of the class's total grade."

That's not a week off. And I'd be willing to bet that OCCC's Faculty Handbook offers similar guidelines. If it doesn't, then by all means, pursue changes to the appropriate policies.

Second, you imply that professors who have 100 exams to grade are likely to "rush through grading to make the deadline." I have been an adjunct for over five years. I have never rushed through the grading of a single final exam.

Since I have a full-time job

"As both a college student and an adjunct professor, I found your editorial of April 24, 2009 extremely disturbing, ill-informed, and even disrespectful."

— Cathy Klasek
English Instructor

in addition to my teaching load, I have stayed awake all night to grade and then gone to work the next day. I have wished that, despite being an English teacher, I could give a multiple-choice or Scantron exam. I have never rushed a grade. And in the cases where the final exam lowered the student's grade, I was even more careful than usual to the student's benefit. To imply that a professor would rush through grading to a student's detriment is disrespectful to your professors.

Third, I take exception with your conclusion. "Hopefully, someday professors will be able to accommodate the busy lives of students." When I read that line, I nearly choked. Literally.

The job of a professor is not to accommodate a student's busy life. It's to provide students with the kind of education that will allow those same students to be successful in the world — most likely in the world of work.

My class load does not accommodate my

busy life — as a teacher or as a student. Your future employer will not accommodate your busy life. Your future children will not accommodate your busy life.

If professors were to accommodate your busy life, we'd never get any teaching done and then you'd complain that you didn't learn anything from us. Professors teach subject matter and life skills. Please remember that at one point in time, we were all busy college students too and we survived. You will too — when you decide to.

P.S. — You have a grammatical error in the 16th paragraph of your editorial. Please remember that one sentence does not a paragraph make.

Or perhaps when you shortened the semester by taking a dead week, you missed your journalism professor's discussions on copy editing and the ethical obligations of journalists.

—Cathy Klasek
English Instructor
Pathways Middle
College High School

Program lacks advertisement

To the editor:

The other day I turned on the television and noticed an interesting show airing.

It was called "Around the Campus," and it was on COX Channel 18 at 5:30 p.m. I am surprised there has been little advertisement about the 30-minute segment.

The show was informative and to the point. I even

found myself enjoying that I could know what was going on at the college without even being there.

So, with all this in mind, why not advertise it more?

The college should post fliers, or even have something online about the show.

After all, isn't the whole purpose of a television show to reach audiences and inform?

Another thing I liked about the show was the little five minute segment with the "O-Triple-C sports guys."

It's good they are giving exposure to the sports of OCCC. It's almost like a poor man's ESPN. I would just suggest the college do a little more advertising. It's a good show.

—Name withheld by request

Counselor's Corner

This time of the semester tends to be hard on everyone. We're so close to the end, a time when people can rest for a little while before starting class again, but we have so many projects and papers and exams left to complete before we can finally breathe.

Now, we also have the threat of a pandemic illness to worry about.

Your best strategies for staying healthy and finishing strong this semester are the same ones you should employ even if there were no flu worries on the horizon.

First and foremost, you must get enough rest. While studying for finals and getting adequate sleep aren't necessarily happy bedfellows, it is crucial that you sleep as much as you can so that you can do well on exams. Sleep is necessary for you to remember all the things you've learned this semester. It also helps you focus and remain calm when you are testing. If you let yourself get too tired, you won't be able to perform as well as you could.

Sleep is also important for keeping your immune system functioning at an optimal level. It is also important for you to maintain your nutrition and hydration levels. Eat a balanced diet and drink plenty of water. Even though the typical finals diet consists of sugar and caffeine, you'll be more focused if you eat lots of fruits and vegetables, complex carbs, and protein to keep your blood sugar levels stable. Water also helps keep you focused.

With the added concern of swine flu all around, a few other precautions can help you stay healthy as you navigate the last couple of weeks of the semester. Wash your hands. Hand washing is one of the best, and easiest, ways to help prevent the spread of disease. If at all possible, avoid contact with people who seem to be sick — those who are sneezing, coughing and so forth. If you can't avoid exposure, then take steps to sanitize surfaces that others have touched.

Although no Americans have died from swine flu yet, some of you may be more at risk for contracting and suffering the ill effects of this disease. Very young children, the elderly, pregnant women, and those with chronic illnesses tend to be at greater risk because their immune systems may be immature or impaired. If you are in one of these risk groups, you should take extra precautions.

No vaccine is currently available (the one you may have taken last fall was for a different strain of the flu and will not protect you against this one). If you experience any symptoms of the flu such as a fever with a rash, pain or pressure in your chest, or difficulty breathing, see your health care provider as soon as possible.

—Mary Turner
Learning Support Specialist

Mother's Day celebrated in various ways

By Matt Bishop
Staff Writer

Mothers have helped keep the world spinning for thousands of years.

On Sunday, May 10, sons, daughters, husbands, grandchildren and friends across the nation will honor their mothers on Mother's Day.

"It's a day to show appreciation for my mom and grandmother," said OCCC student Candice James.

"They have been a real inspiration in my life."

James said she plans to prepare dinner and take the family out to an afternoon movie.

David Curtis, engineering major, said he plans

to spend all day with his mother.

"My mom doesn't expect much," he said. "Just spending a day with her makes her happy."

Surgical technician major Teresa Adams said spending time with her family means more than a purchased gift.

Adams is the mother of a daughter and has three grandchildren. She said she most enjoys having family cookouts on Mother's Day in order to stay away from the typical Mother's Day rush at restaurants.

But if you are the one who would like to give a special gift for Mother's Day, there are plenty of options.

Websites such as www.dayofmothers.com and www.holidays.net/mother provide an array of ideas

such as cards, crafts, gifts and recipes to cook up the perfect Mother's Day.

Staff Writer Matt Bishop can be reached at SeniorWriter@occc.edu.

Did you know... mother's day facts

The first North American Mother's Day was conceptualized with Julia Ward Howe's Mother's Day Proclamation in 1870. Despite having penned The Battle Hymn of the Republic 12 years earlier, Howe had become so distraught by the death and carnage of the Civil War that she called on Mother's to come together and protest what she saw as the futility of their sons killing the sons of other mothers. She called for an international Mother's Day celebrating peace and motherhood. See full text of the proclamation at www.occc.edu/pioneer.

— www.mothersdaycentral.com

Mother's Day is now celebrated in many countries around the world. Australia, Mexico, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Turkey, Belgium, Russia, China and Thailand, all have special celebrations to honor mothers, but not in the same way or on the same day as the United States.

— www.agirlsworld.com

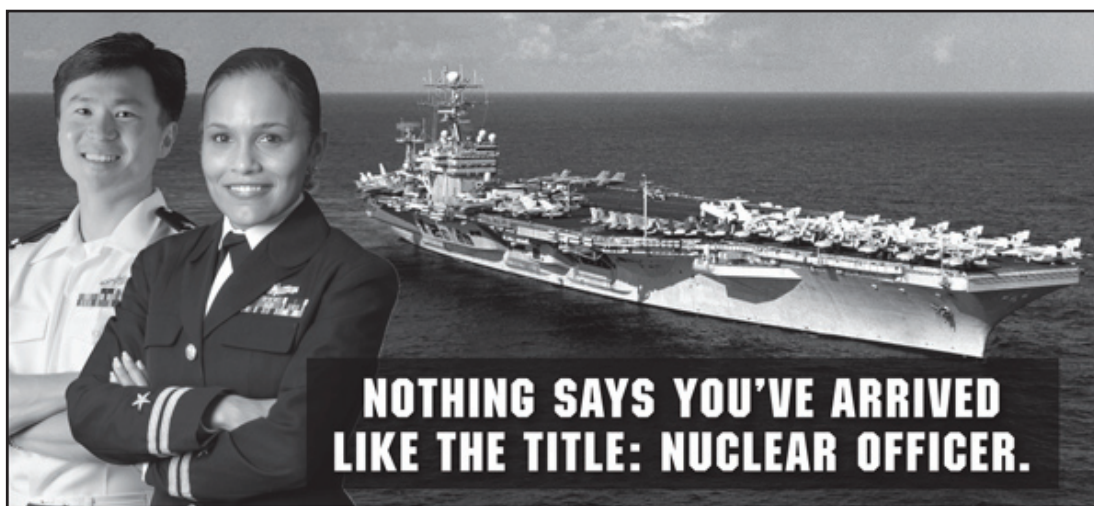
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Do you have news you'd like to share? Maybe you know of an OCCC student worthy of a mention. If so, contact Stephen at editor@occc.edu or call 405-682-1611, ext. 7409.

VP recognized for work in higher education

By Vincent Millsap
News Writing Student

Marion Paden, Enrollment and Student Services vice president, joined six other Oklahoma women honored at the 51st Byliners Awards Dinner earlier this spring.

Paden was recognized for her work in higher education.

The Association of Women in Communications said they recognized these women for their compelling professional roles and beneficial community contributions. The banquet was held at the Oklahoma City Golf and Country Club.

In the community, Paden serves on the board for the American Red Cross and the Christmas Connection. She said she first got involved in volunteer work through her mother, who had polio. Even with the disease, her mother found time to volunteer.

Paden's first volunteer experiences involved helping children with polio when she was younger, she said.

Paden joined the OCCC staff in 1982. In 1992, she was promoted to vice president.



Marion Paden

ident.

While working in higher education, Paden said, she has been an advocate for students.

Twice a month, she said, she attends the Student Leadership Council, where she listens to students so students have a voice.

"I want to hear feedback (to) ensure that students are involved in administrative decisions," Paden said. "They are a part of the school as well."

Paden said she has always believed in students

having a voice on campus.

She said she also has worked hard to help new students make the transition from high school to college.

For many students, the transition from high school to college is scary, she said.

"High school is a place of little freedom in individual choice to attend class while in college there is complete freedom of choice to attend," she said. "It's all about what you want for your life."

Paden said she is in higher education for student success and she believes that her role in Student Services helps build the character of the student as a whole.

Paden received her bachelor's and master's degrees at Oklahoma State University. She received her doctorate from Nova Southeastern University in Florida.

Liz Largent, Student Development dean, said she has learned a great deal from Paden, who is her supervisor.

"Probably the number one thing Marion has taught me, and it is something she talked about with me in my first weeks at OCCC, is that success is dependent upon building relationships," Largent said in an e-mail. "It is important to get to know people at all levels throughout the institution because it is only through the collaborative spirit that we as an institution can move forward."

OCCC President Paul Sechrist said Paden has played a key role in the success of OCCC, making it one of the most successful community colleges in

the nation.

Sechrist said he worked closely with Paden when he was vice president of academic affairs.

He said they were both committed to having a strong partnership between student services and academic affairs, both having the goal of increasing the number of students who achieve the dream of becoming a college graduate.

Even though Paden is successful in her professional life, she also is known to have a little fun, said Kim Velleca, Paden's assistant.

Velleca said for one Halloween, Paden dressed up like a clown while wearing roller skates.

She said Paden was the recipient of a pie in the face, and even kissed a pig, on other occasions for a good cause.

"Marion deserves the recognition," Velleca said. "She has been quite an inspiration to me in the 12 years I have worked for her."

Paden said being appreciated for her work is important. The award lets her know that her work matters.

Guitarist Brad Richter, cellist Viktor Uzur to play May 7

By Stephanie Pham
News Writing Student

Guitarist Brad Richter and cellist Viktor Uzur will perform a blend of classical music spiced with "street savvy" at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 7, in the Bruce Owen Theater. This performance will be closing this year's OCCC's Cultural Arts Series.

The performance was originally scheduled for Jan. 27, but was canceled due to weather.

"We were fortunate that they offered a rescheduled performance," said Lemuel Bardeguez, cultural director. "They're very young and very dynamic."

"When they do covers of

popular music, it's their take. They are very original."

Richter teaches at the University of Arizona and acts as the artistic director of "Lead Guitar!" — a non-profit program he co-founded in 2006 that sets up guitar programs in schools around the country with high populations of at-risk youth, according to his website. Richter is a native of Enid.

Uzur is a prize winner at a number of international competitions Europe, according to his website.

Richter said he met Uzur in the U.S.

"We met in Utah, of all places," Richter said in an interview with PressRe-

public.com. "He's the cello professor at Weaver State University. They commissioned me to do a piece that included cello. He's the best musician I have been in contact with."

Richter will be holding a master class at 2 p.m. in the Bruce Owen Theater the day of the performance. Uzur will be teaching a master class at 2 p.m. in the Visual and Performance Arts Center room 132.

Both classes are free and open to the public.

Tickets to the Brad Richter and Viktor Uzur concert are \$10 for students, faculty and children under 17. Senior citizens and alumni can buy tickets for

"... They're very young and very dynamic. When they do covers of popular music, it's their take. They are very original."

—Lemuel Bardeguez
Cultural Director

\$17 and tickets for general admission are \$22.

Tickets will be available at the door on the day of the show. Prior to the show, tickets can be purchased on campus at the

Cultural Art Series ticket office in the Main Building, room 1G1.

For more information on the Cultural Art Series, contact the CAS office at 405-682-7579.

CORRECTION: Due to a reporting error, the Pioneer incorrectly reported in the April 27 issue that Bookstore Director Brenda Reinke said OCCC's bookstore has a wider selection of used textbooks than the University of Oklahoma's bookstore. Reinke said she has no knowledge of the availability of used textbooks at OU and did not provide that information to the reporter. The Pioneer regrets the error.

Almost 1,100 students eligible to walk

OCCC's commencement set for May 8 in the Cox Convention Center

By Stephen Sossamon
Editor

About 1,100 students are eligible to walk the stage during this year's commencement.

Graduation will be at 7:30 p.m. in the Cox Convention Center May 8, said Barbara Gowdy, Graduation Services director.

Gowdy said she doesn't

know how many will participate in the commencement ceremony.

"We don't know until they buy their cap and gown," she said. "We think for the summer, spring and fall semesters there will be between 350 and 400 students [attending]."

"We have three graduating classes — spring, summer and fall — and one commencement cer-

emony," she said. "Commencement is held on May 8 this year."

Students who complete their degrees during those times can participate in commencement.

Only one commencement ceremony is held, Barton said, because the college can host one nice-sized ceremony each year.

"Most smaller schools only do it once a year," she

said.

Gloria Cardenas Barton, Enrollment Management dean, said students who need to check their graduation status can do that online at MineOnline, mineonline.occc.edu.

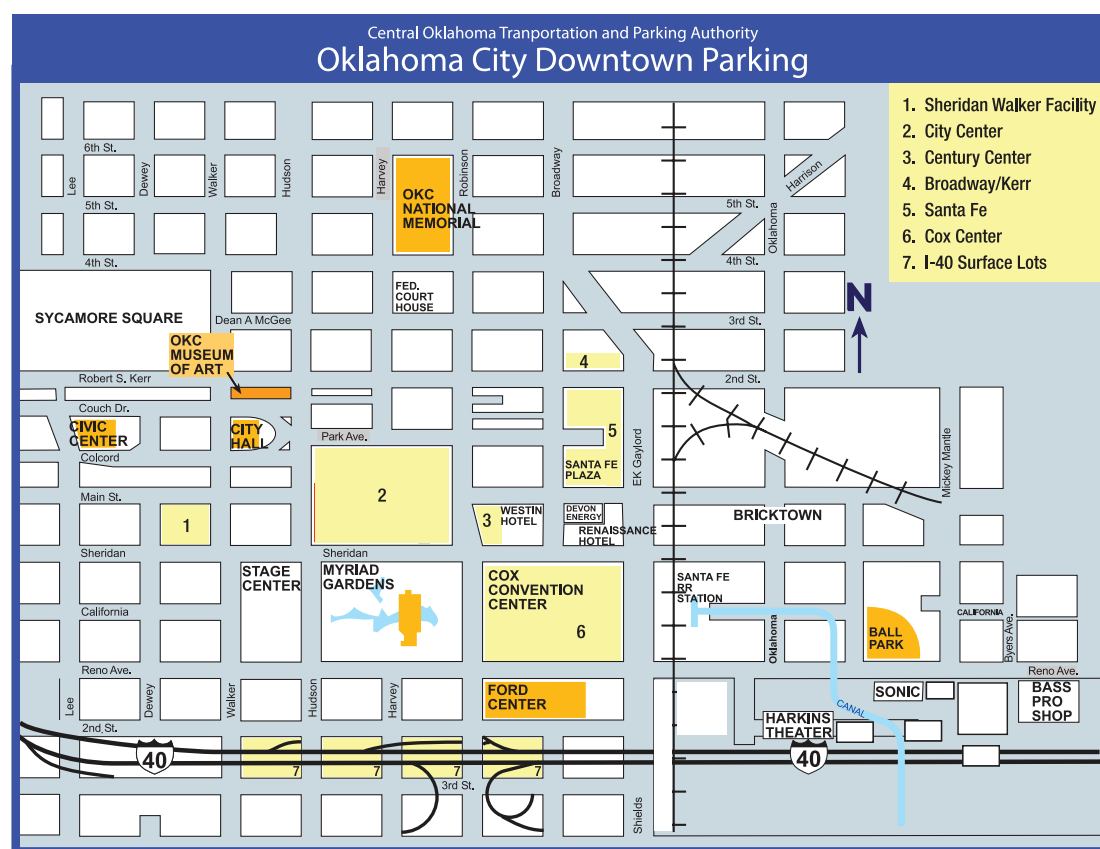
Click "Log In" at the top-right of the page, then, after logging in, click "Current Students." Next, select "Program Evaluation" on the right side of the page,

under "Academic Profile."

From there, students can retrieve information regarding their graduating status, Barton said.

For more information on the commencement service, contact Graduation Services at 682-1611 ext. 7470 or e-mail bgowdy@occc.edu.

Editor Stephen Sossamon can be reached at editor@occc.edu.



For a more detailed and interactive map showing the various parking garages and parking areas near the Cox Convention Center, visit www.parkingokc.com. The areas shown, along with two surface lots, offer 7,700 parking spaces.

Summer grads: apply for graduation

By Stephen Sossamon
Editor

Shortly after the May commencement, graduation deadlines start again, said Gloria Cardenas Barton, Enrollment Management dean.

Barton said the deadline to apply for summer graduation is June 26.

"Students need to fill out an application for graduation," she said. "As soon as that is processed — when they complete 45 hours or more — they will receive a letter in the mail indicating exactly what remains for their degree."

Students should then talk to their faculty advisers and go through a degree check.

She said the degree check varies in how long it takes. Some students have a lot of questions while others don't, she said.

"Sometimes it takes only five minutes."

For more information, call Records and Graduation Services at 405-682-7512.

Editor Stephen Sossamon can be reached at editor@occc.edu.

President lauds Askins as 'prominent' graduation speaker

"Askins,"

Cont. from page 1

homa Legislature.

Marion Paden, vice president for Enrollment and Student Services, said graduation is a time to celebrate unique accomplishments and Askins is a good speaker who has accomplished those.

"I think the students will relate to her and remember her as their commencement speaker," Paden said.

OCCC President Paul

Sechrist said Askins is a worthy graduation speaker.

"As a state college, OCCC often invites prominent state officials to speak at commencement," Sechrist said in an e-mail. "I am delighted that our state's lieutenant governor accepted our invitation to provide this year's commencement address."

Barbara Gowdy, Graduation Services director, said about 1,100 students will graduate this year, including students from the

summer, fall and spring semesters.

"People have realized the importance of getting an associate degree," Gowdy said.

OCCC is anticipating a 10 percent increase in the number of degrees and certificates earned this year, Paden said.

"An associate degree increases your employability, especially in difficult economic times," Paden said.

Sechrist agreed, saying when an economy soft-

ens, college enrollment increases.

"As the labor market tightens, college becomes a good option for many," he said.

Andy Beard, a 25-year-old political science major, said he chose to pursue a degree at OCCC for several reasons: "affordability, comfortable atmosphere, and location." Beard plans to graduate next year.

Lauren Swearingen, 20-year-old biology major, said OCCC is a serious college where graduation

matters.

"I think it's a big deal," Swearingen said of those graduating from associate-degree programs. "It shows how much work students put into it."

Look in next week's Pioneer for a complete list of Spring 2009 graduates

Professors purchase mineral collection to serve as a classroom teaching tool

Greg Holland looks online for gravel, ends up with unique rock collection

By **Jamie Malthaner**
News Writing Student

Craigslist.com turned into a gold mine for engineering professors Gary Houlette and Greg Holland.

One day last September, Holland was looking on www.craigslist.com, a popular website where people can post and search many local classified ads for just about anything.

Holland wanted to buy gravel for his driveway when he came across a bargain he just couldn't pass up.

Dena Tucker, a woman from Oklahoma City, was selling a mineral specimen collection that had belonged to her deceased brother. Professor Holland called her and then he and Professor Houlette went to her house to check out the collection that very day.

"It's funny to think I just needed gravel that day," Holland said.

The treasure was waiting for them in a storage building, covered with spider webs and trash.

The professors set up tables to inspect the individual rocks.

"For me, looking at a collection of thousands of mineral samples was very exciting and I knew it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience," Houlette said.

Although he said he collects rocks on a personal level, Houlette admitted this collection was far above anything he had seen.

Holland said he carried the boxes out and Houlette picked out the best ones from the bunch.

The two were left with about 170 mineral specimens from all around the

world totalling around \$2,500, about \$15 per item.

"Considering the amount and quality of the minerals, it was an excellent deal," Holland said.

Some of the smaller ones are worth up to \$200 by themselves, he said.

"The collection has so many unique and interesting minerals that even if you knew nothing about them, they would still be amazing to look at," Holland said.

These specimens come in all shapes and sizes, from the size of a dime to some weighing around 30 pounds. One of the heavyweights is the okenite, which is from a lava flow in India.

A few of these minerals glow in the dark if exposed to a black light.

Kristin Spiva, public relations major, said she enjoys the collection and has already picked a favorite.

"The mineral collection is phenomenal," she said. "I love the lava rocks."

Another favorite is the pryrite specimen from Spain that came right out of the ground as a cluster of perfect gold colored cubes about 1 inch on all sides.

Among the many visually interesting examples is the dogtooth calcite, which looks like a brown hedgehog on top.

"We really did get quite the deal," Houlette said.

The two engineering professors were able to purchase their find through the OCCC Foundation.

OCCC President Paul Sechrist and Pat Berryhill, Institutional Advancement executive director, were more than helpful in getting the money once they

heard what it was going toward, said Houlette.

Sara Yandell, technology major, said she believes having the minerals will help interest all students, not just ones taking geology.

Houlette said the mineral collection is already being used in his classes such as geology and earth science.

"I display the samples during those labs," he said. "We also show the samples to anyone who will look.

"They are always impressed and surprised that we have such a quality collection."

Because of the collection, OCCC will offer an elements class, Holland said.

The professors also are hoping to get the minerals



Photo by Joseph A. Moore II

Students of professors Greg Holland and Gary Houlette examine OCCC's new collection of minerals and stones. The collection includes gypsum, calcite, okenite and malacite from areas of Spain to sites here in Oklahoma.

into a display case where they can arrange their mineral specimens for specific themes.

"For instance, one case

might hold only elements of the periodic table, while another might showcase gem stones," Houlette said.

Winning duo



Photo by Bishal Malla

Broadcasting majors Eduardo de Leon and Nick Stout display their awards they received at the Outstanding Achievement in Student Broadcasting Awards on April 17. Stout received third place in the Television Commercial category and de Leon was awarded first place in Radio Personality Aircheck. They received the awards from Oklahoma Broadcast Education Association President John Allen. OBEA gave awards to more 70 students in 28 different categories.

Sports

UPCOMING

OCCC INTRAMURALS EVENTS

• **May 4:** Adult Volleyball league come to an end. For more information, contact Recreation and Fitness Specialist Eric Watson at 405-682-1611, ext. 7786.

• **May 5:** Coaches meeting for T-ball to be held at 7 p.m. in the Wellness Center Gym. For more information, contact Recreation and Fitness Specialist Eric Watson at 405-682-1611, ext. 7786.

• **May 7:** Men's Basketball League comes to an end. For more information contact Recreation and Fitness Specialist Eric Watson at 405-682-1611, ext. 7786.

• **May 11:** T-ball will begin practicing. For more information, contact Recreation and Fitness Specialist Eric Watson at 405-682-1611, ext. 7786.

• **May 28 :** T-ball starts play in the summer league. For more information, contact Recreation and Fitness Specialist Eric Watson at 405-682-1611, ext. 7786.

Have a sports story idea? Call Justin Combs at 405-682-1611, ext. 7440, or send an e-mail to StaffWriter2@occc.edu.

The Pioneer Online is the place to go for up-to-the minute sports news and weekly sports vodcasts!

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Devil Dogs team captain Zac Pinkerton chases down Swagga's Craig Ralls during a flag football game on April 24 here on campus. Swagga' walked away with 37-28 win in the match-up.

For more information about flag football and other intramural sports, contact Recreation and Fitness specialist Eric Watson at 405-682-1611, ext. 7786.

Photo by Joseph A. Moore II

Swagga' runs by Devil Dogs

By Justin Combs
Staff Writer

OCCC athletes took advantage of the warm weather to feed their gridiron hunger in a flag football game between the Devil Dogs and Swagga' on April 24.

Swagga' walked away with a 37-28 victory over the Devil Dogs, who made it to the semi-finals in a flag football tournament in Missouri.

Swagga' received first possession of the game and scored a touchdown when Josh Vanover threw a pass to Jarod Martin to lead 7-0 with a successful extra point.

The Dogs came firing back when quarterback Matt Edmonds raced down the field after the snap for a first-and-goal.

On first-and-goal, Edmonds rifled a short pass to Ty Hamilton in the end zone, trailing Swagga' 7-6.

Looking to take the lead, the Devil Dogs chose to go for a two-point conversion that succeeded, putting them ahead, 8-7.

Switching to defense, the Devil Dogs held tight coverage over Swagga's offense, stalling their drive and keeping them out of the end zone.

Swagga' came right back defensively when Martin intercepted a pass from Edmonds in the end zone ending the Devil Dog's six play drive.

Vanover got his team well down the field in two plays, passing the ball to Craig Ralls both times.

On the third play of the drive, Vanover rushed the ball to the outside for a touchdown to lead 13-8.

The Devil Dogs scored a touchdown in the closing seconds of the first half, Edmonds connected to Collin Gentry to lead 14-13.

During the extra point effort, Swagga's Jarod Martin intercepted Edmonds' pass and stormed down to the end zone for a touchdown to lead the game 21-14, with the help of a two-point conversion at the half.

After an unsuccessful drive by the Dogs in the second half,

Swagga' scored on their possession when Vanover caught a pass and cut through the Devil Dogs defense to score a touchdown. They converted a two-point conversion with a catch by Ralls to lead 29-14.

The Devil Dogs made things happen on fourth down of their next possession when Edmonds fired a long pass to Zac Pinkerton who ran the ball in for a touchdown.

Edmonds would connect an outside pass to Aaron Rigsby to complete a two-point conversion to trail Swagga' 29-22.

Swagga' would come back on fourth-and-goal, when Vanover threw a quick pass to Ralls for a touchdown. Then on the two-point conversion, Vanover passed to a wide open Carlos Garza to lead 37-22.

The Devil Dogs would score another touchdown when they teamed up to charge down the field ending the game nine points behind Swagga' 37-28.

Staff Writer Justin Combs can be reached at StaffWriter2@occc.

Student success goal of Career Transitions

Graduates leave with skills that help them be self supportive

By **Adriane Scherer**
News Writing Student

Student Jasmine Johnson spoke about her path to achieving her dream career in computer networking to a small class of journalism students April 9.

Johnson explained the steps she has taken toward a career in computer networking and the struggles she avoided because of a program called Career Transitions on campus.

A panel of three Career Transitions staff members joined Johnson to explain the history, guidelines and goals of the program, as well as the role it played in her life.

The Career Transitions Program was founded on the OCCC campus in 1996. It is a program designed to assist recipients of TANF, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, in their desire to develop skills that will help them become self-supportive. TANF recipients are always single parents, said Susan Manley, retention specialist. Career Transitions serves up to 100 students each year.

Students enrolled in the program can work toward a certificate of completion or a college degree, the transition experts said.

Kathy E. Bailey, Employment and Training coordinator, works directly with Career Transitions students to find them a job while they are working on their education.

"The goal of this program is employment and self-sufficiency," Bailey said.

She said she finds internships for the students within the field they are pursuing, which allows them to receive job training and experience while earning college credit.

"It's a really good program because, in the end, you have the degree, plus the experience," Johnson said.

She said she moved to

"It's a really good program because, in the end, you have the degree, plus the experience."

—Jasmine Johnson

Former OCCC Career Transitions Student

Oklahoma in late October with her 8-year-old son. She sought help through the welfare department.

Johnson came to the college in January and Career Transitions employees quickly found her an internship working for a computer-related company called "Click-it."

Johnson worked for the company over spring break, and was offered a job after her internship. She turned down the offer and decided to continue toward her associate degree.

Tatiana Vanderslice, Career Transitions training specialist, said the competition between classes and work is common in the program.

The students need instant cash, so if they are offered a job, they usually take it, Vanderslice said. When possible, program advisers adjust class schedules to allow students to take classes at night so they can continue to work and go to college, Vanderslice said.

"Many students who choose to pursue OCCC's two-month pharmacy-technician program are sent to jobsites such as Walgreen's, CVS, or the VA hospital, which are good-paying jobs," she said.

Susan Manley works to provide social support for Career Transitions students, most of whom are women. Although the students spend a lot of time on jobsites, they are still struggling financially and often have no support group, Manley said.

As a former social worker, Manley admits that a TANF stipend of \$225 a month is not enough money for its recipients to survive on.

She takes pride in the numerous resources she

can draw from to provide all of her students with basic necessities such as food and clothing to get them through the semester. She said she does as much as she can to lessen their struggle.

"If they don't find a career by the end of the 60-month TANF assistance, they are just out of luck." Manley said. Manley said she wants the students to have every chance for success.

The road to becoming a Career Transitions student is very direct. Everyone must follow the same steps and fit the same requirements to enroll.

Single parents who are receiving TANF may apply for the Career Transitions Program at the DHS office, just as Johnson did.

Applicants must then take the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) and score at least an eighth grade reading level. Applicants will then select the training program that best

fits their needs.

"We support the interest of our students, when choosing a college program," Vanderslice said.

Once the students have enrolled in college, they must take another series of tests. The KeyTrain tests measure the students' skills in reading, writing, math and information location.

After testing, an assigned Career Transitions adviser works to design an employment plan and a class

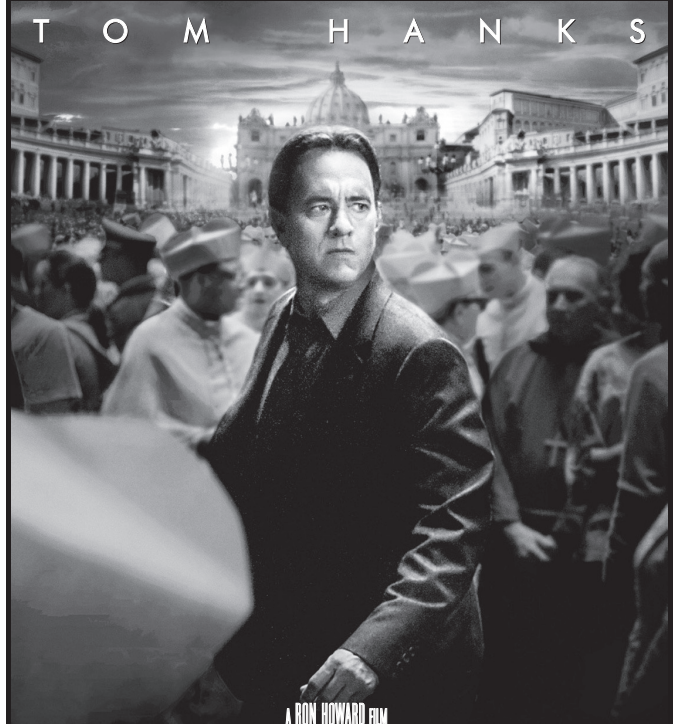
schedule for the individual. Classes and jobs start immediately.

Johnson said she followed this same fast-paced path and is one of the many success stories.

After just one semester, Johnson is the president of a campus organization called the Transition Club. She has been awarded a scholarship and is now working toward her goal of a degree in computer networking.

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Highlights

Guitarist, cellist to perform May 7

The final performance of the Cultural Art Series will begin at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 7, in the Bruce Owen Theater. Brad Richter and Victor Uzur will hit the stage with their dual performance. This performance will be closing this year's OCCC's Cultural Arts Series. Richter is a master composer of classical guitar and Uzur is a cellist and teacher. In addition to the performance, the duo will be offering free master classes at 2 p.m. on campus prior to the concert. Richter will instruct a guitar class in the Bruce Owen Theater and Uzur will hold a cello master class in room 132, located in the VPAC Building. Interested students also will get the chance to perform pieces for each artist. For more information to sign up for the class or for the concert tickets, call 405-682-7579 or visit www.occ.edu/cas.

International Student Association election

The International Student Association is electing new officers at its general meeting at 12:30 p.m. Thursday, May 7, in room 2R0, located in the Main Building. ISA is looking for enthusiastic people to serve and make the academic year 2009-10 at OCCC a success. ISA welcomes not only international students, but also American students to join the club. This is an opportunity to share, learn and meet people from different nations. Interested students can sign up to become a member. For more information, contact ISA sponsor E. Ginnett Rollins at 405-682-7704 or e-mail isaclub@gmail.com.

Engineering Center hamburger cook out

The Engineering Center invites all students, faculty and staff to attend an open house and hamburger cook out from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday, May 8, in room 1T2, located in the Main Building. The new Engineering Center is not 100 percent complete, but student and faculty can explore the lab equipment, student projects and the new mineral collection purchased by the OCCC foundation. Engineering professor Greg Holland and Physical Science professor Gary Houlette will be cooking hamburgers in the outside instructional area to make the event more interesting. For more information, contact Houlette at 405-682-7272.

Absolute Literary Magazine not on sale

Due to technical problems, the 2009 Absolute Literary Magazine will not be available for sale this year at the bookstore. For more information, e-mail Cynthia Praefke at adman@occ.edu.

Cystic Fibrosis walk fundraiser

OCCC bookstore employee Deborah Kahmar is doing a fundraiser for the Cystic Fibrosis walk which is going to be held beginning at 9 a.m. Saturday, May 9, at the Myraid Botanical Garden, located in downtown Oklahoma City. Cystic Fibrosis is a devastating genetic disease that affects many children and young adults in the U.S. every year. Interested people who want to help the Cystic Fibrosis patient can contact, Kahmar at the bookstore on or before Friday, May 8. Checks should be made in the name of Great Strides Cystic Fibrosis. For more information, contact Kahmar at 405-682-7689.

OCCC 2009 Commencement Ceremony May 8

OCCC's 36th Commencement ceremony is scheduled at 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 8, at the Cox Convention Center, located in downtown Oklahoma City. More than 1,100 students are preparing to walk across the stage during the commencement. Oklahoma Lt. Governor Jari Askins will be delivering the keynote speech at the ceremony. For more information about the commencement ceremony, contact The Records and Graduation office at 405-682-7512.

Give blood, give life



Photo by Joseph A. Moore II

Valentin DeLeon, freshmen forensic science major, donates two units of red blood cells at the OCCC blood drive April 22. "My lips begin to tingle, like when it's really cold outside," said DeLeon about giving blood. DeLeon will not be able to donate again until August, due to the rarity of the blood he is donating. "I donate because my blood can go out right away if some one needs it."

The Leadership Council counts fall break, recycling among successes

By Bishal Malla
Staff Writer

Thanks to The Leadership Council, OCCC's academic calendar for the upcoming year includes a fall break on Thursday and Friday, Oct. 15 and 16, said OCCC President Paul Sechrist.

Classes will not be held during fall break but the college will remain open for all other activities and business, Sechrist said.

TLC passed the resolution to the college administration in the 2008-2009 school year.

In the past, OCCC had a fall break that was combined with the Thanksgiving holiday at the end of November.

"It's the first time in a recent history that the fall break has been separated from the Thanksgiving break," Sechrist said.

Having a fall break added to OCCC's academic calendar was one of the many great accomplishments of TLC, said Tino Ceballos, TLC co-chair.

Proposing a comprehensive recycling program was another resolution TLC passed this semester, Ceballos said.

He said the resolution recommends the recycling of paper, plastic and cans inside the campus.

"This wouldn't have any cost, or maybe a minimum cost for the campus," Ceballos said. "This way students, faculty and community people can participate in recycling and make the college environment more clean and beautiful."

TLC also has supported making OCCC a tobacco-free campus, he said.

He said TLC members believe this policy should be implemented soon.

"One of the main reasons we want to make OCCC tobacco-free is to make students and faculty healthier and make the campus environment smell better," Ceballos said.

TLC serves as the college's student leadership organization.

They recently elected

pre-engineering major Alex Wilkes as chair of The Leadership Council next school year.

Wilkes was elected April 23, along with two other officers — Jasmine Johnson as Community and Public Relations director and Dayshawn Burns as Research director.

Wilkes said she has been serving TLC for the last three years. She encouraged all students to attend the TLC meetings so their voices can reach the faculty and administration.

Weis said she supports the tobacco-free campus issue because she thinks everyone would benefit from it.

She said health care costs for faculty and staff might go down as a result. Which is good because that money could be used in student services, she said.

"It also provides a healthier environment for students and staff," Weis said.

Staff Writer Bishal Malla can be reached at StaffWriter1@occ.edu.

Classifieds

Pioneer Classified Advertising is free to all enrolled OCCC students and employees for any personal classified ad. Ads must be submitted in writing with IDs supplied or work area and college extension included. Deadline for advertising is 5 p.m. Tuesday prior to the publication date. For more information, call 405-682-1611, ext. 7674, or adman@occc.edu.

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- 15 "The Mammoth Hunters" heroine
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DOWN

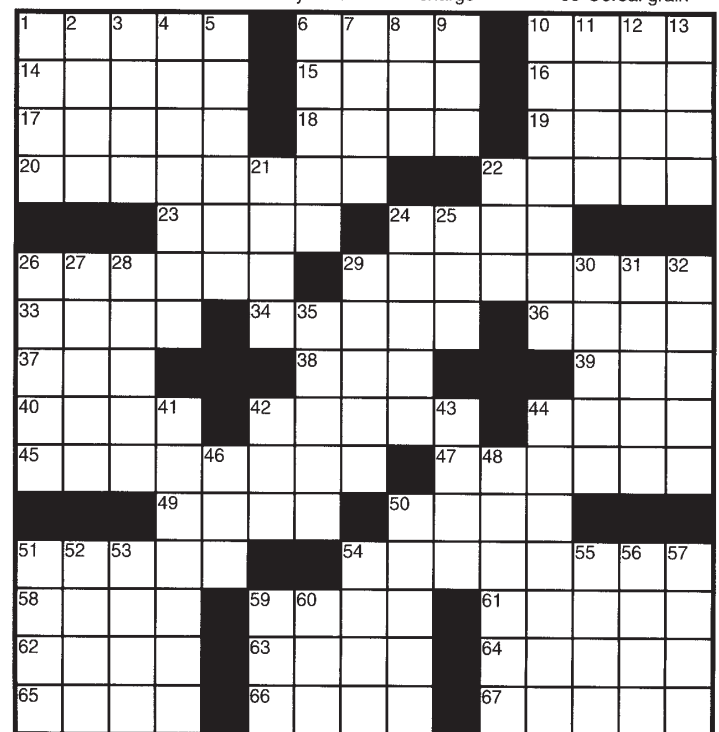
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Flu hotline opens for questions

“Flu,”

Cont. from page 1

the virus because the virus can live nearly anywhere, including doorknobs.

She said symptoms include coughing, fever of over 103-degrees, diarrhea, body aches and respiratory congestion.

Both Boatright and Williams said they would recommend people forgo trips to Mexico until the swine flu is contained.

“I would avoid non-essential travel,” Boatright said.

OCCC President Paul Sechrist sent an all employee e-mail April 30 saying the college is closely monitoring the outbreak.

He advises students and employees to stay home and limit contact with others if they become ill with symptoms.

Alex Wilkes, student ambassador for graduation and student services, said she won't change her daily routine.

“There's too much in life to enjoy to worry about it,” Wilkes said.

For more information and daily updates on the swine flu, visit www.ok.gov/health or call the Swine Flu Phone Bank at 1-866-278-7134.

The hotline is open is from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. CST.

Staff Writer Matt Bishop can be reached at SeniorWriter@occc.edu.

Do you have sports news you'd like to share? Maybe you know of an OCCC athlete worthy of a mention. If so, contact Justin at StaffWriter2@occc.edu or call 405-682-1611, ext. 7440.

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