

TOP STORY

ICE STORM
BLANKETS
OCCC

Classes were canceled and the college closed for three days after an arctic storm moved through.

NEWS, p. 1 & 7

EDITORIAL

OUR SAFETY
IN MIND?

Pioneer staff writers Ethan Hendricks and Bishal Malla discuss whether the college made the right call by resuming classes Feb. 1 after the recent ice storm.

OPINION, p. 2

CULTURAL SERIES

HOT CLUB
RETURNS

A popular jazz band will perform in concert Feb. 9 in the Bruce Owen Theater. Learn more about the group.

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RECREATION

SHOOTING
CONTEST
PLANNED

Find out how to sign up for Recreation and Fitness' free throw and three-point shooting competitions.

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STUDENT LIFE

LECTURE
SERIES
ANNOUNCED

Student Life will host six relationship seminars from Feb. 15 to March 3. Read to find out more information.

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PIONEER

FEBRUARY 5, 2010

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COVERING OCCC SINCE 1978

THE COST OF
AN ICE STORM

JENNIFER PEARSALL/PIONEER

Ice still covers the sign at the college's entry Monday, Feb. 1. OCCC closed for three days after a storm dumped snow and ice across the Oklahoma City metro.

JUSTIN COMBS

Senior Writer
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It took 23,450 pounds of ice melt, eight tons of sand, and more than 130 staff hours to clear 33 acres of roads, sidewalks and parking lots across campus after the Jan. 28 and 29 ice storm, said Gary Phillips, Building and Campus Services supervisor.

Total cost: \$20,512.50.

The money came from the college's Educational and General contingency fund, Executive Vice President Jerry Steward said by e-mail.

Steward said the contingency fund was used because the regular budget only has a small amount set aside for equipment and materials such as salt and ice melt products.

Phillips said preparation for winter storms

begins several months ahead, with his department ordering supplies and tools that may be needed.

The college also signs contract agreements with outside companies for extra labor and heavy equipment rental, he said.

"We have a plan with our employees and the contractors of a detailed task list that states exactly what their areas of responsibility are and

“ We already have a plan in place and just wait for the event to occur to activate our plan.”

—CHRIS SNOW

FACILITIES ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

what they are to do,” Phillips said.

J.B. Messer, Facilities Management director, said staff from across campus met the Wednesday before the storm to plan how they would

respond.

“We met to put into place our operational plan as an institution, as far as who would make the reports and who we

See **STORM** page 7

Veteran student increases pose challenges

JENNIFER MASSEY

Staff Writer
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A record number of veterans coming home from active duty are using their GI benefits to attend college, said Janis Armstrong, Veterans Services coordinator.

This has caused processing delays in Veterans Services of-

fices across the nation, including OCCC.

Two returning veterans who enrolled last fall said they know all too well what problems can result.

When CaSara Butler, a National Guard member, and her roommate, Melissa Decker-Horz, returned home from active duty in Iraq in August, the women intended to go to

college, Butler said.

After getting permission from Veterans Affairs to enroll, the two women began attending classes while they waited for their paperwork to be processed.

They waited for weeks to hear any information from OCCC regarding their GI benefits, but never did, Butler said.

“Nobody knew whether the

tuition was paid,” she said.

Decker-Horz said she was just as frustrated.

“We never heard anything back from (Veterans Services office),” Decker-Horz said.

In the meantime, they received notices from the bursar saying their tuition payments were overdue and late fees were

See **VETERANS** page 9

OPINION

OUR VIEW | Point/Counterpoint: Should OCCC have closed the Monday following the ice storm?

Safety should have been in mind

The first ice storm of 2010 caused virtually every Oklahoma City school and university to cancel classes Jan. 28 to 31.

Nobody thought twice about closing those days.

Monday, Feb. 1, however, was a different story.



BISHAL MALLA

Although most of the public school systems in the metro area remained closed, OCCC decided to resume classes.

When students, faculty and staff learned of this news, many stopped and wondered: Should OCCC be open?

A survey of 220 students found that 191 answered no.

The most common reason students gave was the bad driving conditions on neighborhood streets and country roads.

No doubt, those who were not able to make it out of their driveway didn't come to school.

And don't forget, OCCC is a commuter school. Unlike other universities with a centralized student

body location, students of this college come from different areas of the metro.

Major city streets and highways may have been relatively clear by Monday, but those who live in more rural areas were still dealing with slick roads.

And for those who braved the ice to come to class, the campus parking lots were not completely cleared until late afternoon on Monday and many students were met with walkways that were covered with ice — both being very dangerous to students, faculty and staff.

Another major problem was that many parents have their class schedules planned according to their children's school or daycare. When a child's schedule is abruptly changed, the parents are forced to make last minute arrangements — this applies to students and staff alike.

Education is extremely important. The well-being of a child, however, is of greater importance.

This left many parents unable to come to class. Whatever the reason, no student likes to get behind on classes and assignments.

How many professors extended due dates and adjusted assignment schedules for those students who



MARK PARISI/OFFTHEMARK.COM

were not able to attend class last week?

Maybe a lot. Maybe very few.

The college should aim to provide its students with the best education it can. But it also should be mindful of its student body.

OCCC attracts many students from all across the city, as well as many students with children.

When driving conditions cause metro school systems to close, the college needs to follow their lead and cancel classes as well. It's in everyone's best interest.

Closing school not in everyone's best interests

Despite the fact that most Oklahoma City metro public schools were closed Monday, Feb. 1, OCCC opened its doors at 7 a.m. and carried on with its usual Monday schedule.

In a poll taken by the Pioneer, a majority of students said the college should have remained closed too.

I disagree with this. While the roads in many neighborhoods were still in bad condition, the highways and state roads were clear. Sure, there were a few slick spots but other than that, the roads were relatively free of snow and ice.

While public schools were closed because of the conditions of neighborhood streets and side roads — also known as primary bus routes — the college decided to open because all major routes were safe to drive.

Attendance at the college reflected this by the majority of students being on campus.

It's understandable that student parents have problems coming to class when their children's schools close, and professors should be understanding. However, once again, the college seemed to be decently full Feb. 1.

Is it fair to punish the majority for the convenience of the minority? No, it's not.

While public schools are able to make up missed days later in the year, OCCC cannot. Any day the college is closed is simply a missed day. Students are forced to double up on assignments, which can make it harder to maintain grades. Why would any student want added stress?

And, on the other hand, how much help would the college provide professors who would have to squeeze another day's lesson into a later class?

Most professors have students' educational interests in mind. They desire to teach the course material as

effectively as possible. Canceling class makes OCCC's instructors work even harder.

Another issue is the longer the college is closed, the less part-time staff get to work. This, in turn, reduces their paycheck amounts. That's not fair to those employees.

While another day off of school may have provided short-term fun for students, the effects of a continued closure would surely have been less than desirable as the semester wore on.

In my opinion, President Paul Sechrist did the right thing by resuming classes Feb. 1. Well done, OCCC.



ETHAN HENDRICKS

- | | | | |
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Opinions expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the PIONEER, the college or the publisher.

The PIONEER welcomes **letters** to the editor and encourages the use of this publication as a community forum. All letters must include the author's name, address, phone number and signature. E-mail letters should include all but the signature. The PIONEER will withhold the author's name if the request is made in writing. The PIONEER has

the right to edit all letters and submissions for length, libel and obscenity. Letters should be fewer than 250 words. Students must list their major. OCCC staff and faculty must list their work title.

Letters to the editor can be submitted to the PIONEER office, located on the second floor of the Main Building, across from the elevator, mailed to 7777 S. May Ave., Oklahoma City, Okla. 73159, faxed to 405-682-7843, or submitted via e-mail to editor@occc.edu with a phone number for verification included. The PIONEER ONLINE also can be accessed on the Internet at www.occc.edu/pioneer.

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COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

FILM REVIEW | Movie shows bible in new light

Movie offers twist to religious wars

“Book of Eli” is one of those movies you will either hate or like based on your disposition to movies.

Set in a post-apocalyptic world, Eli, (Denzel Washington) is a survivor of a giant, nuclear war that ripped a hole in the ozone layer.

The ensuing radiation has transformed Earth into a hell where most of population is illiterate and water is extremely scarce.

Eli, a former soldier, has been wandering for 30 years across the U.S., safeguarding the only copy of the Bible left in the entire world.

This Bible is supposedly the key to returning Earth

to its pre-apocalyptic state.

Carnegie (Gary Oldman) is the dictator of the one of the few post-apocalyptic towns.

He is still literate, thus giving him an edge over most other people.

A despot who charges the citizens of his town for access to water, Carnegie is searching for the Bible Eli carries.

He believes the Bible will give him the ability to control the masses and conquer two other towns, which have water sources.

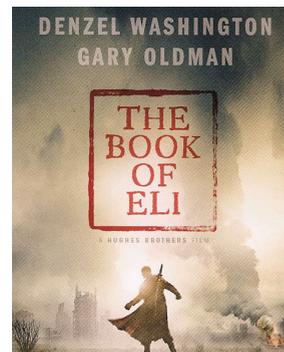
When passing through Carnegie’s town, Eli defends himself in a bar fight, drawing the attention of Carnegie.

Carnegie tries to get Eli to stay by various means, promising him food, water and women. Eli politely refuses to stay but before he can leave, the book is discovered.

The rest of the movie details Carnegie’s attempts to attain the book from Eli.

Caught up in the struggle is Solara, (Mila Kunis) and her blind mother, Claudia (Jennifer Beals), who is Carnegie’s mistress.

The movie seems slow at first but gives good detail into just how lonely this post-apocalyptic world can be. A few things are left unexplained but they do not detract from the



overall movie.

In terms of screen time, “Book of Eli” does a good job of separating its lengthy segments of dialogue with well-choreographed action scenes.

The ending also has a surprise twist which will leave you shocked.

Rating: A-

—ETHAN HENDRICKS
STAFF WRITER

BOOK REVIEW | Novel good example of old fashioned detective work

‘Falcon’ still thrills after many years

Say the names Dashiell Hammett and Samuel Spade in polite company and you might receive a blank stare.

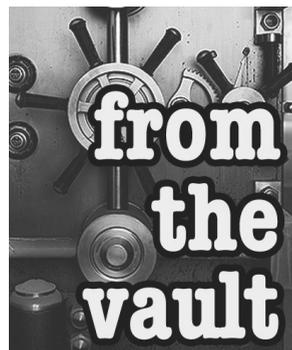
Even Humphrey Bogart and Peter Lorre have fallen from the covers of Hollywood gossip columns.

That is why renewed interest in “The Maltese Falcon” is an exciting addition to The Big Read program.

For those not familiar with The Big Read, it is an initiative designed to restore interest in reading and literacy.

Various books are chosen throughout the year, read and discussed by anyone interested in participating.

For those not familiar with the “Maltese Falcon,” it is one of the most well written and contro-



versial detective stories of the 20th century.

Hammett’s main character, Sam Spade, is a rough and tumble private detective.

His adventures are loosely based on Hammett’s own experiences as an operative for the Pinkerton Detective Agency.

Spade has a partner, Miles Archer, whom he is not fond of. This is just as well, since Archer doesn’t make it past the first chapter.

The agency secretary, Effie Perine, has obviously not heard of women’s rights as she endures the most sexist treatment. She and Spade exchange innuendo, and he refers to her as “honey”, “good girl”, “sweetie” etc.

This is a reflection of the era in which the book was written, 1929.

Enter the femme fatale, Miss Wonderly, a strong-willed woman with a secret and a purse full of money.

Thus the adventure begins, and introduces a variety of unusual characters in search of a jewel-encrusted statue of a falcon.

The book impressed movie director John Huston so much, he wrote a screenplay and brought the story to life on film in 1941.

Huston found a cast of characters to complement the story, and worked around the references to some of Hammett’s main characters being gay.

This was not an easy task to get past the censors, but he managed.

The resulting film was nominated for three Academy Awards.

The Keith Leftwich Memorial Library has several free copies of “The Maltese Falcon” for those interested in a good read.

The library also will sponsor a free screening of the movie from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 23, in CU2 and 3.

The film and book are both great entertainment.

Rating: A

—CYNTHIA PRAEFKE
STAFF WRITER

JOB & CAREER POWER

There were nearly 6.4 unemployed workers for every one job available at the end of November, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

And, the national unemployment rate is predicted to reach 10.5 percent later in 2010.

Now, the good news: Student Employment and Career Services is providing some wonderful opportunities to assist both job hunting and career decision goals

Student Jobs Orientation

“Learn how to WORK on campus!” with Karen Schmidt, Human Resources specialist, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday Feb. 9, in CU 3.

Tinker Jobs Orientation

“Learn how to apply for Student Jobs, both full-time and part-time, and Internships” with a representative from Tinker Air Force Base from noon to 1 p.m. and 1 to 2 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 16, in CU 3.

Military Career Fair

“Learn about the new GI educational benefits and career field training” from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 25, in the general dining area and CU 3. Includes all military branches plus the ROTC programs from the University of Oklahoma and the University of Central Oklahoma. Also present will be the Oklahoma City Veteran’s Administration Medical Center as well as OCCC Veterans Services.

Job Fair and Health Job Fair

“Over 100 employers: Public welcome.” General employers from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and health employers from noon to 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 3, in the student union.

Each of these events is designed to maximize the opportunities for students and community members alike.

We also offer daily services including résumé and cover letter creation and a student and alumni job board at www.collegecentral.com/occc with more than 200 daily job listings.

For additional details, visit our office located next to Student Life on the first floor of the Main Building, call 405-682-7519 or e-mail employmentservices@occc.edu.

—DEBRA VAUGHN

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT AND
CAREER SERVICES DIRECTOR

Comments? Opinions? Let us Know!

E-mail Mark Smith at

editor@occc.edu

Let your voice be heard!

OCCC STUDENT LOSES HOME IN FIRE



PHOTO PROVIDED

The remains of student Rachel Laraway's living room after her home burned down during the winter break.

Professor asks campus to help house-fire victim

A professor is reaching out to help a student who found herself homeless after a house fire destroyed her home during winter break.

The Jan. 8 fire destroyed approximately \$20,000 of personal belonging, said Rachel Laraway, OCCC student.

Amy Wilson, learning skills professor, is collecting donations for Laraway.

Wilson, who taught Laraway last semester, said Laraway was a very dedicated, helpful and nice student who would always help others.

"Now it's our turn to help her when she is in trouble," Wilson said.

Laraway said she was grateful for Wilson's efforts.

"Wilson is a wonderful, wonderful person," Laraway said. "She's an amazing professor too."

The fire was a result of a faulty fireplace flue, she said. The single mom of 6-year-old twins said she had been burning wood days before and, unknown to her, embers had gotten through the flue wall and into the attic.

"Apparently the fire was smoldering for days in the attic," she said.

The blaze broke out while Laraway and her children were at home. She said they were getting ready to leave when she noticed an orange glow and called the fire department.

"We just happened to be going to my sister's house," Laraway said.

"We got out [about] one minute before the living room exploded.

"The fire shot out like an ocean wave."

She said she and her children were unharmed.

"I'm very grateful it didn't happen when we were sleeping," Laraway said, her voice trembling. "We were lucky. We were so lucky."

Laraway said the American Red Cross initially promised to help her get a new apartment and pay the security deposit, but the offer was rescinded after the Red Cross cited its first priority was helping the people of Haiti.

The Red Cross could not be reached for comment.

Laraway did not have renter's insurance. She said she had canceled it just this past year.

"This is the first time I haven't had [renter's insurance]," Laraway said. "I was trying to save some money, trying to cut corners. I blame myself for this mess."

However, Laraway found shelter with a friend, Justin Donnell, OCCC business major. Laraway said her family lived with Donnell for about a month before getting their own apartment.

"It's empty right now," she said. "We don't have any furniture yet."

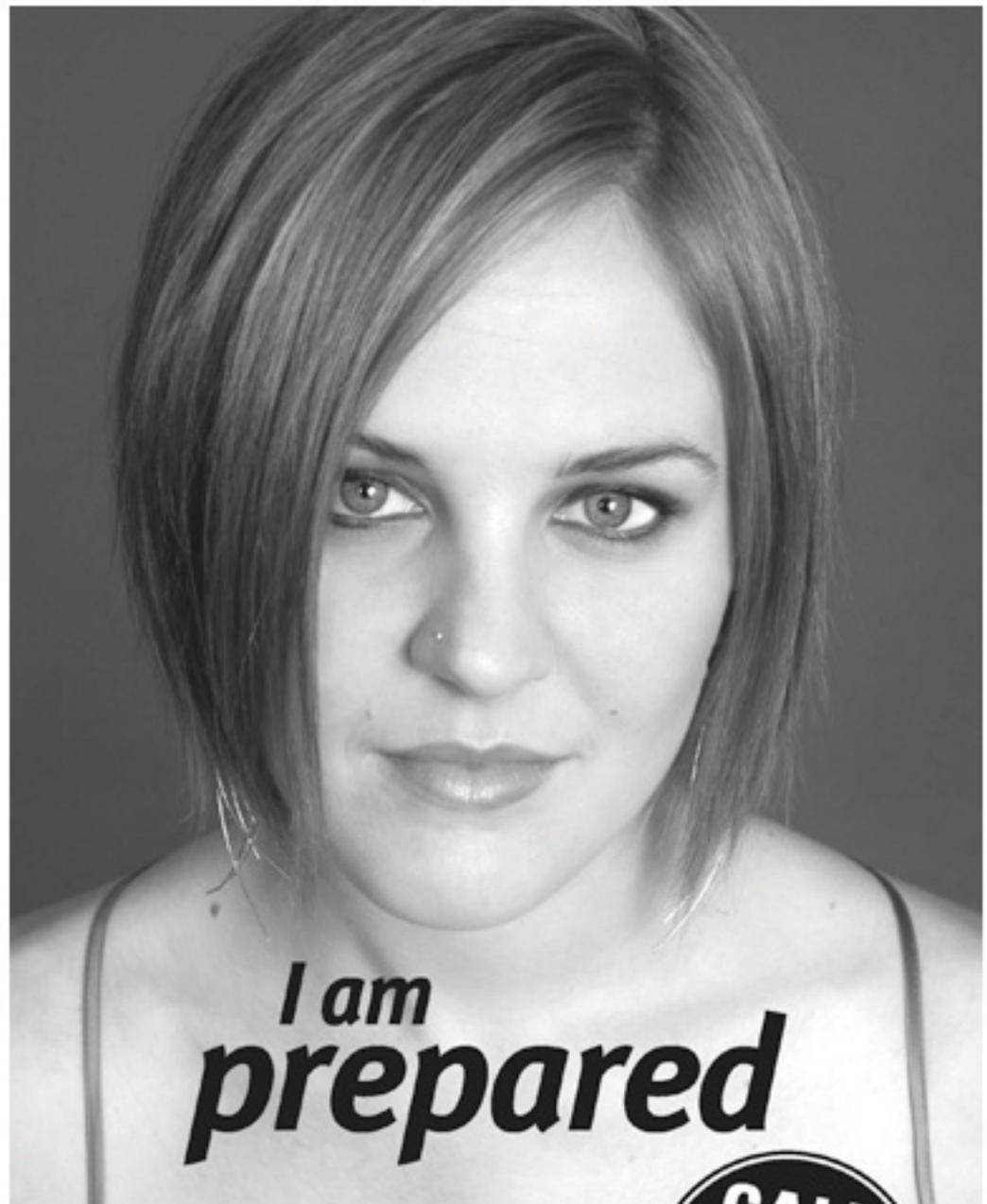
Despite the tragedy, Laraway said, she has resumed full-time classes this semester and is staying positive.

Donations for Laraway can be left with Wilson in her office, room 2F1 of Arts and Humanities.

—Pioneer Staff Reports



Rachel Laraway



I am
prepared



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CULTURAL ART SERIES BRINGS BAY AREA BAND BACK

Hot Club returns as part of cultural series

ETHAN HENDRICKS

Staff Writer

staffwriter3@occc.edu

The Hot Club of San Francisco will return to OCCC at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 9, in the Bruce Owen Theater.

Hot Club, known for its Gypsy jazz, is a five-member band from San Francisco that has gained fame around the world for its fast, up-tempo playing style.

It's a style that works well with OCCC's theater, said Lemuel Bardeguez, Cultural Programs director.

"The Bruce Owen Theater is not a large, open theater," Bardeguez said. "Hot Club uses lots of fiddles and guitars. The acoustic instruments which are



PHOTO PROVIDED

Cultural Art Series performer The Hot Club of San Francisco. The band will play a concert at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 9, in the Bruce Owen Theater.

used by Hot Club sound best in a smaller, closed theater like the Bruce Owen."

The jazz band played at the

college in 2008 and its performance was well received, Bardeguez said.

"In fact, they were such a

big hit that people requested the Hot Club perform in the Cultural Arts Series every few years," he said.

Bardeguez said Hot Club seems happy to be performing at the college once more.

The music played by Hot Club pays tribute to Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli — two French musicians who were pioneers in the genre of Gypsy jazz in France, Bardeguez said.

Jordan Cordell, Media Relations coordinator, said in a press release that Hot Club also plays other music too, including adaptations of classical music written by the lead guitarist, Paul Mehling.

Tickets are available online at www.occc.edu/cas or in the

Cultural Programs office in room 1G-1A.

Tickets are \$10 for students and children, \$17 for staff, alumni, faculty and seniors, and \$22 for general admission.

For more information about The Hot Club of San Francisco, visit its Web site www.hcsf.com.

If you go

WHAT: A five-piece jazz band from San Francisco known for its up-tempo playing style.

WHEN: 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 9.

WHERE: Bruce Owen Theater.

DETAILS: Tickets available at Cultural Programs office in the Main Building, room 1G-1A or at www.occc.edu/cas.

CONTACT: 405-682-7579.

Coping with Alzheimer's session enlightening

JUSTIN COMBS

Staff Writer

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Every 70 seconds someone is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. More than 70,000 Oklahomans live with the brain deteriorating disease. Nationwide, that number is 5.3 million, said Paula Avery, a specialist in care giving for Alzheimer's patients.

Alzheimer's disease is a form

of dementia, Avery said. Sixty percent of all dementia cases are tied to Alzheimer's.

"Physicians can better assess for the early warning signs with the advancement of technology and improvements in medication."

Three medications are on the market for Alzheimer's — Razadyne, Exelon and Aricept, each costing \$250 a month.

She said people's brains shrink as they get older, but

that's not directly linked.

"The simplest way to explain Alzheimer's is that brain cells are being destroyed," Avery said. "So, when we begin having that damage ... it begins to affect different abilities."

Short term memory loss is the biggest warning sign associated with Alzheimer's, she said.

"People with this disease may be able to talk about their childhood with clarity and detail like it happened yesterday.

But if you ask them what they had for lunch they won't have the slightest idea what you are talking about."

The disease, in terms of relationships and memory, affects the most recent first. "That is where the confusion first occurs — forgetting names of grandchildren and how they relate."

Language problems also are associated with Alzheimer's, Avery said.

"They may not be able to find

the right word or the words won't come out or be able to complete sentences," Avery said.

Alzheimer's affects the reasoning or judgment part of the brain, Avery said. "We have a lot of Alzheimer's patients paying one bill two or three times."

Changes in mood, personality and behavior also are common with Alzheimer's patients, she said.

"Sometimes people who have been very outgoing begin to withdraw and not do things they would usually do."

Avery said patients may have an awareness that something is changing and don't want anyone to know.

"It's frustrating to them because they feel like they should be able to do all the things they once could ..." It can also magnify personality characteristics, Avery said.

"You add Alzheimer's to people who are controlling or very structured, it's 10 times worse," Avery said.

While Alzheimer's is a terminal illness, she said, it is one of the few people can live a long time with.

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ICE STORM 2010



OCCC deals with arctic aftermath

The decision for OCCC to reopen the Monday after the Jan. 28 and 29 ice storm left several students and staff members feeling left out in the cold.

Terri Black, English major and Communications Lab assistant, said the campus should have been closed.

“The thing about a community college is you have commuting students who come from all walks of life,” Black said. “There are [students] with kids, people who are disabled and people who live in rural areas where the roads weren’t crystal clear like they were in the city.”

“A lot of people couldn’t get out of their own driveway, much less make it all the way to school.”

Jeremy Neal, public relations major,

agreed.

“I know the highways and some of the regular roads were cleared, but not all of them were,” Neal said.

He said the college should not have risked the safety of its students by remaining open.

“It was a foolish decision,” Neal said. “This is a state of emergency.”

However, Laura Zuck, psychology major, said she saw no need for campus to shut down Feb. 1.

“I live 45 minutes away from campus and I made it here just fine, as did several of my friends,” Zuck said. “The roads weren’t bad at all.”

“I think the school made a reasonable decision.”

John Boyd, vice president for Business and

Finance, is the college official responsible for deciding if classes will be canceled in the event of inclement weather, according to OCCC policy No. 2209.

Boyd was unavailable for comment.

Adjunct math professor Donald Young said the icy conditions reduced attendance in his classes — but he still thought the college made the right decision in remaining open.

“Over half of my students didn’t show up Monday,” Young said. “I was a little surprised by it. I saw no reason for the college to close.”

However, he said, he has no intentions of penalizing any student who did not attend class.

“I understand if students who live far away didn’t want to make the trip,” Young said.

“Everyone’s situation is different.”

Storm: Funds drawn from general, education budgets

Continued from page 1

would report to,” Messer said.

Doing the most with the least amount of effort was the priority in taking on the ice and snow, said Chris Snow, Facilities assistant director.

“First we contacted Minick [Materials and Equipment] as an outside contractor to (clean) parking lots and roads with front end loaders,” Snow said.

The college also rented five Bobcats that were operated by Facilities Management employees, Phillips said.

These employees worked 12-hour shifts Saturday, Jan. 30, and Sunday, Jan. 31, he said.

Snow said their priority was to get most of the snow removed first, then have college employees finish with shovels and ice melt.

He said the large machinery was contracted because the college does not own the equipment nor are college workers trained to operate it.

“It’s more economically feasible for the college to rent the heavy machinery since these storms seldom occur,” Snow said.

“Another advantage is we get that 24-hour operation with the hired labor to meet our deadline of opening the college on Monday [Feb. 1].”

Snow said the college was proactive in its approach in responding to the storm.

“We already have a plan in place and just wait for the event to occur to activate our plan,” Snow said.

The Pioneer asked 220 students Monday, Feb. 1, if they thought classes should have been canceled. These are the results of the survey.

87% yes 13% no



A hired contractor clears ice and snow from the street in front of the Main Building. The college hires out work that requires heavy machinery, said Chris Snow, Facilities assistant director. “It’s more economically feasible for the college to rent the heavy machinery since these storms seldom occur,” Snow said.



A caution sign sits in front of the Visual Performing and Arts Center on Feb. 1. These signs were posted on many steps around campus.

PHOTOS BY JENNIFER PEARSALL

TEXT BY WHITNEY KNIGHT

To watch an audio slide show of the effects of January’s ice storm, visit www.occc.edu/pioneer

PIONEER Online
www.occc.edu/pioneer

SPORTS

Blocked Out

Michael Zeleke, business management major, is stopped from scoring by Duncan Grant, ministry major.

The Wellness Center gymnasium is free for students to use with their student IDs.

Students need to bring a pair of basketball shoes to be able to play on the court.



LANDA MCCLURE/PIONEER

INTRAMURALS | Student athletes to shoot free throws, three-pointers in basketball competition

Hot Shots Challenge seeks contestants

LANDA MCCLURE
Staff Writer
staffwriter2@occc.edu

Two basketball shooting competitions are scheduled for this month in the Wellness Center gymnasium.

Recreation and Fitness will host Hot Shots Challenge — a free throw and three-point shooting contest, said Eric Watson, Recreation and Fitness specialist.

The competition is open to all male and female students, said Charlie Tarver, Recreation and Fitness sports assistant.

Tarver said he is hoping there is enough interest to create male and female divisions.

“It’ll be a fun competition for students to participate in,” Tarver said. “Everyone has fun.”

The free throw contest will take place

at noon Friday, Feb. 12, and the three-point contest will be held at 1 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 23, Watson said.

Two of this year’s contestants were eager to promote themselves as possible champions.

Tim McCoy, emergency medical services major, said he competed in the Hot Shots Challenge two years ago and had a blast.

“It’s fun and competitive,” McCoy said. “I am competing again this year.”

McCoy said he believes he will win.

Saajan Patel, business major, encouraged students to participate in the event, but he also predicted the outcome.

“It’ll be a good competition but I’m going to be victorious,” Patel said.

The first round of the free throw shooting will be best out of 10 shots and the second round will be best out of five, Tarver said.

Depending on the number of par-

ticipants, he said, there may be a third and fourth round.

Tarver said the three-point competition will be judged on how many baskets can be made in one minute for the first round and how many can be made in 30 seconds in the second round.

Recreation and Fitness has hosted the Hot Shots Challenge for four years, Tarver said.

The challenge will last two hours both days.

Tarver said the winners will be presented an award at the Intramurals Sports Banquet later in the semester.

He said a date has not been scheduled for the banquet.

To sign up, students can go by Recreation and Fitness or e-mail Tarver at ctarver@occc.edu or e-mail Watson at ewatson@occc.edu.

For more information, contact Recreation and Fitness at 405-682-7860.

UPCOMING INTRAMURALS EVENTS

• **Feb. 12:** Intramural basketball Hot Shots Challenge, free throw competition, at noon in the Wellness Center gymnasium.

• **Feb. 12:** Intramural basketball: Ballaholics vs. DBA at 1 p.m., court 2. Us vs. Team of Me at 2 p.m., court 3. Staff Infection vs. Da Team at 3 p.m., court 2. Games are held in the Wellness Center gymnasium.

• **Feb. 13:** Aquatic Center to host YMCA State Swim Meet. Pool will close Friday, Feb. 12, and reopen Monday, Feb. 15.

• **Feb. 19:** Intramural basketball: DBA vs. Ballaholics at 1 p.m., court 2. Da Team vs. Team of Me at 2 p.m., court 3. Staff Infection vs. Us at 3 p.m., court 2. Games are held in the Wellness Center gymnasium.

• **Feb. 19:** Intramural basketball: Women’s three-on-three basketball will have a meeting in the Wellness Center gymnasium.

• **Feb. 19-20:** Aquatic Center to host OSSAA Swimming Championship Swim Meet. Pool will close Thursday, Feb. 18, and reopen Monday, Feb. 22.

• **Feb. 23:** Intramural basketball: Hot Shots Challenge, three-point competition, at 1 p.m. in the Wellness Center gym.

• **Feb. 23-27:** Aquatic Center to host Mountain West Conference Championship Swim Meet. Pool will close Monday, Feb. 22, and reopen Monday, March 1.

• **Feb. 26:** Intramural basketball: DBA vs. Da Team at 1 p.m., court 2. Us vs. Team of Me at 2 p.m., court 3. Staff Infection vs. Us at 3 p.m., court 2. Games are held in the Wellness Center gymnasium.

• **March. 4-7:** Aquatic Center to host Sectional Swim Meet. Pool will close Wednesday, March 3, and reopen Monday, March 8.

For more information, contact Recreation and Fitness specialist Eric Watson at 405-682-1611, ext. 7786.

Military: Students should apply early, be informed about GI benefits

Continued from page 1

being charged against their accounts. Because their fall tuition was never paid, a hold was placed on their bursar accounts which prevented them from enrolling in spring classes, Butler said.

Armstrong, speaking from behind stacks of veterans files awaiting processing on her desk, said because the process to apply for benefits is so complicated, there can be any number of things holding up the benefits but her office wouldn't know about it.

Armstrong said there must be a concentrated effort by all parties, including Veterans Affairs, the college, students and their military units, to keep the

process moving.

The college's veteran student enrollment has grown by more than 60 percent in the past two years, Armstrong said.

Veteran's Services now handles more than 900 veteran students and the number is still climbing, she said.

Armstrong declined to say how many people work in her office processing veterans' paperwork.

At the national level, some are working to address the problem.

According to a Jan. 20 press release from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the VA is focusing on an aggressive processing goal for paying benefits.

The press release states

Veterans Affairs is making a concerted effort to reach out to everyone to provide timely benefits to those who served the nation.

At the national level, the VA has taken steps to improve processing times by increasing their staff by more than 500 people, Armstrong said.

Bursar Brandi Henson said all students, including veterans, must complete their part of the process in a timely manner. In other words, students should attend to tuition payment notices, even if they believe the VA should be responsible for the bill.

In some instances, OCCC Veterans Services has the ability to put a hold on a student's bursar account to prevent late

fees and finance charges from accumulating, Henson said.

However, Henson said, this depends on the type of aid the veteran is receiving.

"If the aid comes directly to the school, then the bursar's office will back out the fees," she said.

In the case of Butler and Decker-Horz, the funds were paid directly to them, when they finally arrived.

Butler said the light at the end of the tunnel was a waiver from the state of Oklahoma that paid fall tuition for Butler and Decker-Horz.

It is important to note there can be many different GI Bill benefits available to veterans, and it is not always easy for the student or the college to know

exactly what bill or benefits apply to a particular student, Armstrong said.

Once the student has selected a GI Bill option, the decision is final and will not be reversed, Armstrong said.

In order to avoid any troubles, Armstrong said, veteran students should apply as early as possible and be fully informed of what benefits are available.

For more information, contact Veteran's Services at 405-682-1611, ext. 7595.

Getting started

To apply for the GI bill, visit the OCCC Veterans Services office or go to www.gbill.va.gov.

OCCC organizes fair to encourage health

LANDA MCCLURE
Staff Writer
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More than 30 vendors will promote healthy living at the second annual Health and Wellness Fair.

Faculty, students and community members are encouraged to visit the fair from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 18, in CU 2 and 3, said Lisa Vaughan, Risk Management coordinator.

"The main focus is bringing health and wellness to the forefront of people's minds," Vaughan said. "We want to get everyone healthy."

Fair vendors will include Aflac and the Oklahoma Blood Institute, she said.

Many booths will offer free health screenings, such as blood pressure checks, and also will have giveaways, Vaughan said.

"One of the prizes will be a gift certificate for a defense driving course," Vaughan said. "Some car insurance companies will lower the rates (for taking the course)."

The Oklahoma County Health Department also will be giving free H1N1 shots in the Wellness Center gymnasium, she said.

The Wellness Task Force and Enrollment and Student Services Department are sponsoring the fair.

The Wellness Task Force has designed exercise programs such as Walktober and Less of Me at OCCC.

For more information, contact Vaughan at 405-682-7587.



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STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Learning the ropes



JENNIFER PEARSALL/PIONEER

Stuart Bennett, engineering major, looks over OKC-Go information during the organization's kickoff Feb. 3. The event offered OKC-Go students an opportunity to socialize with other members and learn about program expectations.

STUDENT LIFE | Six-part relationship series to launch Feb. 15

Lecture series all about love

WHITNEY KNIGHT
Staff Writer
staffwriter1@occc.edu

Love isn't always fair, nor is it always easy.

That's one reason Student Life will launch Relationship U, a six-part lecture series based on interpersonal communications, said Stephanie Baird, programs coordinator.

Baird said the series, which is sponsored by the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative, will begin Feb. 15 and continue through March 3.

"The number one request we get from students is to do something

on relationship issues," Baird said. "They asked for it, and they got it."

Sessions will be held from noon to 1 p.m. in rooms CU 1, 2, or 3, depending on availability, Baird said.

OMI is a private organization dedicated to helping couples strengthen their relationship and improve their marriage, according to its Web site.

Baird said discussion topics at the sessions will include gender roles, communication skills and everything in-between.

Though the series focuses on romantic rela-

tionships, she said, it is not limited to them.

"Students will learn about traits and characteristics from all kinds of relationships," Baird said.

"It doesn't matter if it's your spouse, your parents or your friends.

"There is something for everyone to learn from this."

Nicole VanDuzer, political science major, said she had not heard of the Relationship U series — but is interested in attending.

"It sounds like a great idea," VanDuzer said. "We are all so focused on schoolwork right

now, I think we forget how important it is to communicate with our loved ones."

Refreshments and dessert will be provided during the sessions, as well as door prizes such as T-shirts and stress balls, she said.

"We really hope this series is a lot of fun for everyone," Baird said. "If it's a success we'll definitely offer it again in the future."

For more information about the lecture series, contact Student Life at 405-682-7523, or visit the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative Web site at www.okmarriage.org.

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

Campus job seminar to be held

Interested in working on campus? Learn how with the OCCC Student Jobs Orientation. Two sessions will be offered from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 9, in CU3. For more information, contact Judi McGee at 405-682-1611, ext. 7369.

Blood drive to be held

Student Life will host a blood drive from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10, in the College Union. For more information, contact Student Life at 405-682-7532.

Math scholarship deadline Feb. 19

Entries are now being accepted for the 2010 Jack Cain Memorial Scholarship. To qualify, a student must have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours, have completed or currently be enrolled in MATH 2104, have a minimum grade point average of 3.25, be intent on completing an associate degree at OCCC, and plan on returning to OCCC in the upcoming summer or fall semesters. A brief essay entry also is required. Entries must be received by Friday, Feb. 19. Applications are available in the Math Lab, located in 2G6 of the Science, Engineering and Math Center.

Bruce B. Owen scholarship due March 5

Applications are now being accepted for the 2010 Dr. Bruce B. Owen Memorial Scholarship. To qualify, a student must have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours, have a minimum grade point average of 2.0, have a declared major, and be intent on completing an associate degree at OCCC. Applications may be obtained at Recruitment and Admissions and are due by 5 p.m. Friday, March 5. For more information, contact Linda Sapp at 405-682-1611, ext. 7654.

Baptist club offers free lunch

Baptist Collegiate Ministries will offer free lunch to all students, faculty and staff during the meetings this semester. Meetings will be held from noon to 12:50 p.m. Mondays in the Bruce Owen Theater and from 12:30 to 1:20 p.m. Thursdays in room 3N0 of the Main Building. For more information, contact Mark Barnett at 405-323-0583.

Haiti donations requested

In an effort to support victims of the recent Haitian earthquake, Student Life has placed collection jars in Student Life, the Bookstore, and in the general dining area. Donations will be sent to the American Red Cross. For more information, contact Student Life at 405-682-7532.

All Highlights are due Monday by 5 p.m. for inclusion in the next issue.

Highlight forms can be picked up in the Pioneer office, located on the second floor of the Main Building, across from the elevator.

CLASSIFIEDS

Pioneer classified advertising is free to all enrolled OCCC students and employees for any personal classified ad. Ad applications must be submitted with IDs supplied by 5 p.m. Mondays prior to the publication date. For more information, call the Ad Manager at 405-682-1611, ext. 7674, or e-mail adman@occc.edu.

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TODAY'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

- Synagogue item
- Priests' robes
- Scandinavian capital
- Giraffe's relative
- Trickle
- Wharf
- Fairylike
- Ringlets
- Cartoonist Peter
- Went out with
- Made more rewarding
- Young grizzly
- Expression of disgust
- Skillful
- Brewery kiln
- Bid
- Luau memento
- Identical
- Flowery shrub
- Rock-band instruments
- Scoundrels
- Mountain lake
- Bite
- Insignificant one
- of Capri
- Sherbets
- Writer's need
- Mate for ewe
- Dangerous seaward pull
- Classify
- gin
- Appoint
- Wide open
- Conjunctions
- out: makes do with
- Tumult
- Barrel
- Transmitted
- Willow
- 1 — the line: obeyed
- Sooner st.
- Rapids craft
- of the action
- Indian native
- Arthur of tennis
- Skinny
- Lebanese capital
- New shoot
- Brilliant fish
- Father
- Be a banker
- Gold, to Pedro
- Polish-born composer
- Razorbacks
- Wide-awake
- Underneath
- Feudal lord
- Yvette's boyfriend
- Denominations

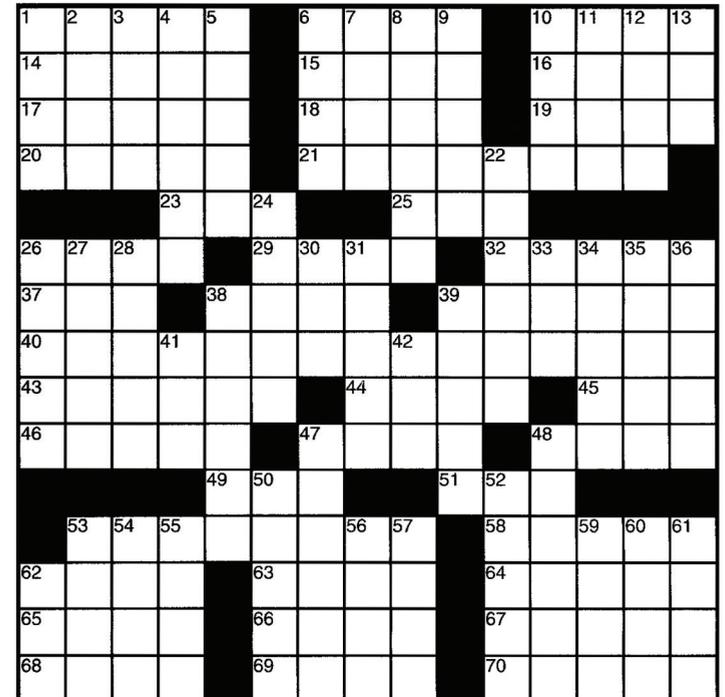
DOWN

- In good shape
- French coin
- Ghostly
- Coarse files
- Treeless plain
- More certain
- Mongrel
- Four qts.
- Type of valve
- Reflections
- Sea eagles
- San Antonio tourist site
- Arm bone
- Head motions
- Writing table
- Sign of the future
- "How the — Was Won"
- Java's neighbor
- Fencer's sword
- Cast a sidelong glance
- Pouch

PREVIOUS PUZZLE SOLVED

O	A	T	E	S	S	K	Y	C	R	A	N	E
C	L	E	A	T	Q	U	E	O	U	T	E	R
T	A	X	R	E	T	U	R	N	U	L	T	R
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A	E	R	I	E	A	S	E	A	E	C	R	U
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C	O	M	I	C	S	U	N	F	L	O	W	E
A	D	U	L	T	A	M	A	I	R	E	N	E
M	A	S	T	S	N	O	R	C	E	N	T	S

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