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EDITORIAL

ONLY POLICE NEED GUNS ON CAMPUS

Editor Bryce McElhane says proposed legislation to allow concealed carry on campus needs to be shot down. Read his thoughts inside.

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NEWS

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY A TIME TO FEAST

Those who don't want to cook can turn inside to find out what area restaurants will be serving up Thanksgiving meals this year.

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SPORTS

INTRAMURAL EVENTS ON FINALS ROSTER

Sports Assistant Matthew Wright says Rec and Fitness is offering some sporting events to help students ease into finals week.

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COMMUNITY

BUSINESS PROF GETS NATIONAL PTK POSITION

Charles Myrick has been named as a faculty scholar adviser for Phi Theta Kappa, the largest honor society in the nation. Turn inside to read more.

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OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE PIONEER

NOV. 21, 2014

PIONEER.OCCC.EDU

COVERING OCCC SINCE 1978

Getting airtime



ETHAN COOPER/PIONEER

Physics major Marcos K. Alexander skates outside OCCC's VPAC on Nov. 6. "OCCC is a great place to skate" Alexander said. "I've been doing this since I was 13."

Search process for new president starts

OCCC Regents vote to first look internally for next college leader

LAUREN DANIEL

Senior Writer
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After much discussion, the OCCC Board of Regents decided the search for the college's next president will start first within the walls of the college.

If a suitable candidate is not found there, the search will go nationwide.

Regents voted 6 to 1 to approve the process to be used in selecting the next OCCC president during a special session Nov. 18, at Frontier State Bank in Oklahoma City.

The dissenting vote was cast by Regent Helen Camey.

Voting in favor of an internal search first were Regents Lenora Burdine, Christie Burgin, Teresa Moisant, Rick Moore, James White and Devery Youngblood.

Current President Paul Sechrist recently sent out a college-wide email announcing his plans to retire in July 2015.

Differing opinions were voiced among the regents prior to the vote.

Initially, Moisant said she favored a national search first.

"We might have to read through more résumés, but I think we're going to be able to tell the ones that don't have that culture or don't have that fit," she said. "But I want to think that we were inclusive."

Camey said she considered it important that the search extend beyond OCCC.

"We don't want to make it appear that we're just anoint-

ing someone internally," she said.

"Do they deserve an advantage in the process? They probably do, but we need to look like we're presenting and approaching this in a new level."

Camey said she recognizes that OCCC has traditionally followed the unspoken rule

of hiring from the inside. She said she believes it's a legacy to build upon.

OCCC's last three presidents have been chosen internally, meaning they had been employees before their presidential appointments.

See **PRESIDENT** page 9

OCCC transfer students have edge over others

BRYCE MCELHANEY

Editor
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OCCC transfer student GPAs are about the same as undergraduate students GPAs at area four-year universities,

according to a report by Curriculum and Assessment Director Catherine Kinyon.

Academic Affairs Vice President Felix Aquino said he's not surprised by the findings.

See **TRANSFER** page 9

OPINION

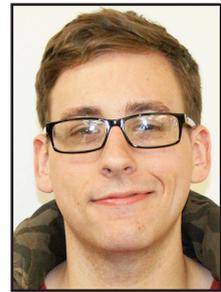
EDITORIAL | College halls should be protected by trained officers, not gun-toting citizens

Campus no place for concealed carry

No doubt it's a scary world we live in. But it's a much scarier world when every citizen has to have a handgun in order to feel safe. Imagine handguns on every person — in the grocery store, at the park and now, possibly, on college campuses.

Though a bill hasn't yet been passed by the State Legislature, the future for college campuses may be looking strange and full of guns.

According to washingtontimes.com, Republican legislators are considering allowing individuals with concealed carry permits to have firearms on college campuses.



BRYCE McELHANEY

Those who are pro gun believe it would help in emergency situations, a belief I can understand, but not agree with.

Only campus law enforcement should be carrying guns on campus.

Some may argue that those who are permitted to carry weapons are trained professionals, because they had to go through a certain amount of training to acquire their permits. However, that argument doesn't hold any weight.

Just eight hours of training is required to have an open carry handgun permit in Oklahoma, according

to www.ok.gov/governor/OpenCarryFAQ.

Add an application fee and a background check on the individual, and you've got a gun-toting person, but not a professionally trained person.

That's in stark contrast to the training law enforcement officials receive.

Don't get me wrong; the background check makes me feel safer about who's handling the weapons. But allow me to put this in perspective — my legally blind grandma has a permit to carry a handgun.

I can't imagine any college becoming safer with an increase of firearms.

There are scenarios where students and faculty with weapons could help, but I also foresee many more scenarios that would involve accidents and bad judgments.

Students for Gun Free Schools cite a study conducted by the Department of Justice which found: "93 percent of violent crimes that victimize college students occur off campus. This research demonstrates conclusively that students on the campuses of post-secondary institutions are significantly safer than both their off-campus counterparts and the nation as a whole."

SGFS said these results can be attributed largely to strict policies that have kept firearms off our nation's campuses. "Our colleges and universities are safe sanctuaries for learning, and we believe they



would be endangered by the presence of concealed handguns ..."

How are we supposed to feel comfortable in a society where, in order to be safe, we have to carry a gun? If that's the mentality of every Oklahoman, we're in trouble. If every Joe down the street is packing heat, how is that safer? How can I trust every person's mentality?

If guns were allowed on college campuses, it could hinder the campus police's ability to shoot the right target if everyone has a gun in their hands.

Only police officers who have gone through rigorous police academy training should be handling weapons on campus. And even they sometimes make mistakes.

—BRYCE McELHANEY
EDITOR

LETTER TO THE EDITOR | 'Meet Me in St. Louis' a nostalgic way to get into holiday mood

Norman's Sooner Theatre bringing Christmas to the stage

To the Editor:

Join the Smith family at the 1904 World's Fair, and see how their love and respect for each other is tempered with the genuine humor that can only be generated by such a special family, in "Meet Me in St. Louis," a Broadway classic based on the MGM movie. This special holiday production runs Dec. 5 through 7 and 12 through 14 at The Sooner Theatre in Norman.

This production will be a nostalgic trip back to the days of the classic MGM musical, complete with memorable songs, such as "Boy Next Door," "The Trolley Song," and of course, "Meet Me in St. Louis."

Tickets are \$25 in the Star Circle and \$20 on the

Main Floor for all show dates and times. Tickets in either level for children 12 and under are just \$15, and discounts are also available for seniors, students with valid IDs, and groups of 10 or more. Show times are Fridays and Saturday nights at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday afternoons at 2 p.m.

In many ways, "Meet Me in St. Louis" is a timeless piece that is as touching today as the day it was written. Comedic, romantic, poignant, and charming, this production is perfect for the entire family.

Tickets can be purchased online at www.soonertheatre.com, by phone at 405-321-9600 or at the Sooner Theatre box office, 101 E Main St., Norman.

The Sooner Theatre Box Office is open from 10

a.m. to noon and from 2 to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and one hour prior to show time.

The Sooner Theatre's Sooner Stage Presents season of theatrical productions is made possible in part through the support of the Oklahoma Arts Council, the Norman Arts Council, The National Endowment for the Arts, The City of Norman, The Hyden Fund — a Donor-directed fund or the Norman Community Foundation, and Allied Arts.

For more information on The Sooner Theatre's productions, concerts or events, visit www.soonertheatre.com or call 405-321-9600.

—NANCY COGGINS
SOONER THEATRE

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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 no more 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 in room 1F2 on the first floor of the Art and Humanities Building, mailed to 7777 S May Ave., Oklahoma City, Okla. 73159, or submitted via e-mail to editor@occc.edu with a phone number for verification included. The PIONEER ONLINE also can be accessed at <http://pioneer.occc.edu>.

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

PRODUCT REVIEW | Peppermint flavor eliminates indigestion, leaves fresh breath

Tums the best smoothie ever

It has been two weeks since my last confession. I suffer from heartburn due to impulsivity and weak character. I can't blame some disease for the acid in my throat. I wash down hot pseudo-meat with enamel-dissolving soda every day. I sin against my body with every bite of Slim Jim.

It's hard to say anything bad about a tablet that can rescue you from hell like a benevolent divine hand. Without Tums antacids, I would have to give up all of the food that keeps me warm.

When my throat feels like it's trying to vomit a sword and I chew on the granulated sugary little rock, it's the closest I can possibly come to a religious experience. The tiny particles in the Tums tablet deliver me from evil with the stealth of a ninja messiah.

I led most of my life thinking Tums couldn't possibly top itself. It's already a pill that instantly cures a debilitating illness — while being chewable. I admit now that I was wrong.

A few years ago, Tums made a new kind of tablet called Tums Smoothies.

It was sweeter and fruitier than the regular kind,



and it wasn't chalky at all. It melted on the tongue, and slid down the gullet to fight the demon of heartburn, the Balrog of the digestive system.

When this happened, I knew nothing would ever be this good again. The goddess of antacids, Tumetha, smiled and wagged her finger from above for underestimating her powers.

Thusly, she sent a new angel to Earth dressed in white. His name was Tums Smoothies Peppermint.

He wasn't just delicious. He wasn't just smooth. He didn't just instantly douse my fire. He didn't just tingle and cool my tongue. He did all of these things while also freshening my breath.

No matter how badly I eat, no matter how badly I stray from the path of good dieting, Tumetha always forgives me. If humanity ever comes up with an instant cure for a hangover, I'm sure it will be invented by Tums.

Praise be to ye, Tumetha. We are all but mere worms.

Rating: A+

—JAKE McMAHON
VIDEOGRAPHER

BUSINESS REVIEW | Old General Store offers jams, fresh-butchered meats, meals

Restaurant reminder of simpler times

Once upon a time, a simpler way of life existed where home-cooked meals, freshly butchered meats, and homemade jellies were not out of the ordinary. Now, these things are looked upon as a rarity and treasured, as they once were, but in a new sense.

The Old General Store located at 117 NW 32nd St. in Newcastle is the place to go if you're craving a slice of life from the past.

Upon entering what looks like a miniature Cracker Barrel, you'll be greeted by shelves of homemade candies, fresh jams, pickled fruits and veggies, and even fresh jerky.

The Old General Store also carries bread that is delivered by Ingrid's Kitchen, which pairs well with the side items they carry such as ready-to-bake macaroni and cheese, and pasta salad.

However, no meal is complete without meat, and the Old General Store has plenty, offering everything from ribs to ribeye freshly cut at their in-house butcher shop.

While they do have plenty of items to make your dinner at home amazing, they also have a restaurant in the store.



Each day, they have daily specials such as the BBQ Chicken Special, Smoked Sausage Chili, Hickory Smoked St. Louis Ribs, and Loaded Tater Soup.

They also have a regular menu with items like hamburgers, sandwiches, and steaks. Their side items include typical comfort food items such as: french fries, fried okra, cowboy beans and salad.

I got the cheeseburger, a thick patty piled high with veggies on a homemade buttered bun from Ingrid's for around \$8.

For dessert, I had homemade Rocky Road ice cream, which tasted like it had been churned in an ice cream machine earlier that day. The store has around eight flavors of homemade ice cream to choose from, and they give a generous helping for around \$2.50.

In addition to the ice cream, they also have fried pies in various flavors like coconut cream, cherry, chocolate and many more.

The atmosphere in the Old General Store will make you feel like you're sitting in your uncle's living room, or an old-fashioned hunting lodge.

You'll feel right at home while enjoying some great food.



Game app allows users to rule world

Recently, a friend of mine got me into a game called "Plague Inc." I don't normally buy apps, let alone games, but after playing a few rounds on his phone, I was hooked.

This is a single-player, strategy game that was inspired by the movie "Contagion." The player creates a pathogen and his or her goal is to infect the world with the plague. The player must kill off humanity while building the plague's defenses against humanity.

Scarily, this simulation is something that actually could happen, so it is interesting to see how one can evolve a disease to where it is incurable. Evolution can be anything from building a drug resistance to a climate resistance that is able to be transmitted from the air, livestock and other ways.

The first couple of rounds are a bit tricky. If you build your plague and immediately start creating symptoms, the disease will be noticed. People will start working on a cure. The more radical your symptoms, the higher the priority for a cure to be found. If your disease is eradicated, you lose. If there are healthy people still left in the world, but you have killed everyone that you have infected, you also lose. If governments start collapsing, treatments will slow.

In the game the stages are bacteria, virus, fungus, parasite, prion, nano-virus and bio-weapon. If you beat the stages on normal, brutal or mega brutal, you can move on to the next stage.

The difficulties are based on handwashing, working doctors and how sick people are treated.

I have been playing this game for about two weeks and I have just gotten out of the virus stage. Now it's on to the fungus stage.

This game is terribly addictive. If you like strategy games, you may have just found your match.

"Plague Inc.," created by Ndemic Creations, is available on the Apple App Store and the Google Play Android Store for 99 cents.

—CANDICE A. SCHAFER
COMMUNITY WRITER

Visit their Facebook page to see daily specials at www.facebook.com/OldGeneralStore/timeline.

Rating: A

—LAUREN DANIEL
SENIOR WRITER

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

FROM THE VAULT MOVIE REVIEW | 1990 horror classic full of creepy, crawly spiders

'Arachnophobia' still has lots of eek appeal

It's difficult for a horror movie to actually frighten me.

Creatures like ghosts, zombies and Freddy Kruger aren't scary because they don't exist.

But spiders, or as I like to call them, "Satan's Eight-Legged Parasites," do exist.

And I'm the type of person who can't sleep at night knowing there's one silently living underneath my bed.

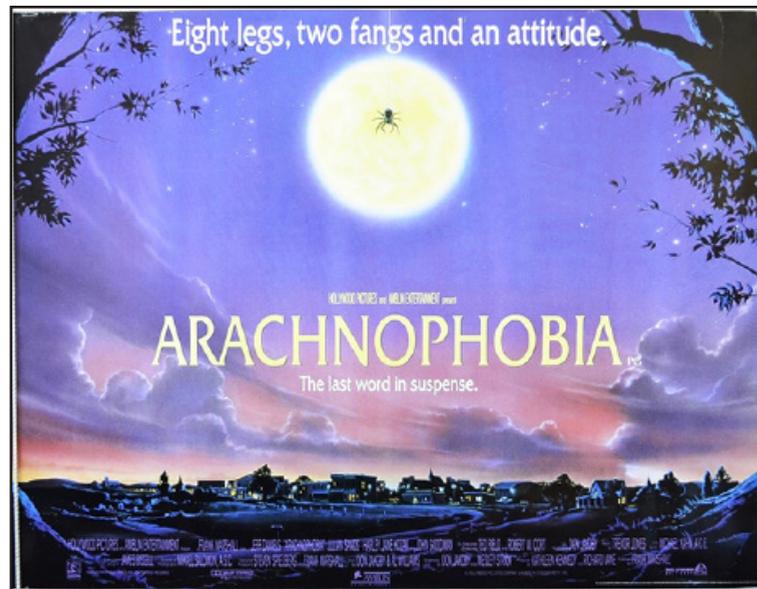
If I see a spider, I have to kill it. There are no negotiations — it has to be destroyed.

And the only film to intensify my fear of spiders is the 1990 horror comedy classic "Arachnophobia."

This movie is basically Alfred Hitchcock's "The Birds" but with spiders.

The story centers around a newly discovered spider being transported from Venezuela to a small American town.

The arachnid then produces a new race of deadly vermin which begin killing the town's residents one



by one.

The film stars Jeff Daniels, Harley Jane Kozak, Julian Sands and John Goodman.

It also was the directing debut for Frank Marshall, the producer of "Back to the Future," "Raiders of the Lost Ark" and "Poltergeist."

If you are remotely afraid of spiders, "Arachno-

bia" will make you panic and squirm.

From spiders falling into food, hiding in shoes and crawling out of dead people's mouths, the ridiculous magnitude of shenanigans in "Arachnophobia" will amplify anyone's fear of arachnids to extreme lengths.

The only downside to this movie is its weak first half. By today's standards, the beginning of this movie is kind of slow and boring.

Other than its slow escalation, "Arachnophobia" is a great family thriller/comedy kids can enjoy.

If you have spider-phobia and want to safely experience the terrifying sensation of looking at spiders, then you will enjoy this movie.

"Arachnophobia" is currently available on Netflix Instant.

Rating: B

—ETHAN COOPER
PHOTOGRAPHER

BUSINESS REVIEW | Nightly drink specials, open mic night just a few of the perks at Norman nightspot

Opie's for a cheap but fun time

If you're 21 and living in Norman, it's easy to be blinded by Campus Corner's overpriced attractions and The Mont's sweet concoction known as the Sooner Swirl.

Sure, a Gummy Bear shot at Logie's can always chase away the aftertaste of a night spent at Sugers — and The Mont serves some pretty mean cheese fries — but most college students have to ball on a budget.

If you find yourself pressed for cash and unable to afford a night out on campus, it makes sense to try some of the cheaper venues around town.

One place I've found to be a great place to drink cheaply and have a good time is Opie's Club located at 1430 W Lindsey St. in Norman.

I'll admit Opie's is for an older crowd — it's been around since the '70s — but it's a local gem that few

who go there will forget about.

Opie's features several pool tables, dancing, nightly drink specials and an open mic night on Thursdays — plus the authenticity of cloudy secondhand smoke.

Tuesday evenings are my personal favorite, as Opie's drink special that night features \$2 Redbull and Vodka — which is cheaper than buying a Redbull by itself.

Another unique aspect about Opie's is that the club owner — Opie himself — often frequents the venue and checks on his patrons.

I might not be able to afford a lavish bottle of wine, but for a good time and a good buzz there's nothing wrong with spending an evening at Opie's.

Rating: C

—SIALI SIAOSI
ONLINE EDITOR



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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 no more 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 in 1F2 on the first floor of the Art and Humanities Building, mailed to 7777 S May Ave., Oklahoma City, Okla. 73159, or submitted via e-mail to editor@occc.edu with a phone number for verification included. The Pioneer Online also can be accessed at pioneer.occc.edu.

TOP 20 MOVIES

Weekend of Nov. 14 through Nov. 16
www.newyorktimes.com

1. *Dumb and Dumber To*
2. *Big Hero 6*
3. *Interstellar*
4. *Beyond the Lights*
5. *Gone Girl*
6. *St. Vincent*
7. *Fury*
8. *Ouija*
9. *Nightcrawler*
10. *Birdman*
11. *John Wick*
12. *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*
13. *Rosewater*
14. *The Judge*
15. *Kirk Cameron's Saving Christmas*
16. *The Book of Life*
17. *The Theory of Everything*
18. *Whiplash*
19. *The Best of Me*
20. *The Maze Runner*

Thanksgiving served up restaurant style

LAUREN DANIEL

Senior Writer
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Not everyone likes to spend hours preparing a Thanksgiving spread. For those folks, a number of restaurants will be open on the holiday that offer traditional foods for reasonable prices.

Western Sizzlin' offers a buffet from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. featuring Thanksgiving favorites such as turkey and dressing, as well as other foods like fried chicken, ribs and ham.

Prices are: Adults, \$13.99; seniors, \$12.99; children 8 to 12, \$6.99; children 4 to 7, \$4.99; and children 3 and under, \$1.99.

To find a location near you, visit www.mackiessteakhouse.com.

Cracker Barrel is open from 6 a.m. until 10 p.m. on Thanksgiving and serves breakfast all day. The Traditional Thanksgiving begins at 11 a.m. and includes: oven roasted turkey breast, cornbread, dressing, savory gravy, a sampling of sugar-cured ham, sweet potato casserole, cranberry relish, a choice of country style vegetables n' sides, beverage, biscuits or corn



muffins made from scratch, and a slice of pumpkin pecan streusel pie with whipped cream.

Prices are: Adults, \$10.99, and children can have a smaller portion for \$5.99.

Cracker Barrel also offers Thanksgiving Dinner To-Go from Nov. 22 through Nov. 30 for those who may want to enjoy dinner at home but don't want to cook.

The \$59.99 dinner serves six and includes: Turkey n' gravy, cornbread dressing, a sampling of sugar-cured ham, cranberry relish, choice of three country style vegetables n' sides, and a baker's dozen of corn

muffins, or a loaf of sourdough bread.

To find a location near you, visit www.crackerbarrel.com.

Furr's Fresh Buffet will offer be open from 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thanksgiving day and will offer a buffet featuring turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes and more.

The lunch buffet is \$8.99. The dinner buffet starts at 4 p.m. and costs \$11.29. Furr's is located in 1201 S Interstate Dr. in Moore. For more information, visit www.furrs.net.

Golden Corral be open from 10 a.m. until 8 p.m. Nov. 27 serving a \$12.99 Thanksgiving Day buffet that will include carved and sliced turkey, fried chicken, pot roast, meatloaf steaks, baked sweet potatoes, green bean casserole, corn, stuffing, endless pumpkin pie, and more.

To find a location near you, visit www.goldencorral.com.

Mimi's Cafe located at 3015 W Memorial Rd in Oklahoma City will be open from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. to serve Traditional Thanksgiving dinner.

Prices are: Adults, \$18.99 and kids, \$8.99. Reservations are recommended. For more information, visit www.mimiscafe.com.

HOLIDAY BUILDING HOURS

Main Campus

— 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday, Nov. 24
— 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 25
— 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 26

Capitol Hill Center

— 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday, Nov. 24
— 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 25, through Wednesday, Nov. 26

Family and Community Education Center

— 6:45 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 24
— 6:45 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 25 through Wednesday, Nov. 26

Library

— 7:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday, Nov. 24
— 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 25
— 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 26

Professional Development Institute

— 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Nov. 24, through Wednesday, Nov. 26

No money for food? No problem

The holidays can be a stressful time for many — either because there is no money to provide a traditional holiday meal or because the thought of having to cook that meal is daunting.

A number of places are offering a free Thanksgiving dinner or a chance to receive the ingredients free of charge for those who fall in either category.

Each year, the **Jesus House** at 1335 W Sheridan in downtown Oklahoma City, distributes hundreds of Thanksgiving food baskets on the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday before Thanks-

giving — Nov. 24 through 26.

The distributions will take place from 8 a.m. until designated supplies for the day are exhausted.

The food baskets typically contain most of the ingredients to prepare a traditional Thanksgiving dinner, including a frozen turkey or ham.

“The Thanksgiving food basket campaign is a signature event of Jesus House which helps low-income households in Oklahoma City with groceries for Thanksgiving dinner.

Last year, we distributed [more than] 1,300 Thanksgiving food baskets in the

three days before Thanksgiving. We expect to exceed those numbers this year,” according to the Jesus House Facebook page.

Donated items also are needed for the food baskets. Those include frozen turkeys or hams, boxed stuffing mix, chicken broth, turkey or chicken gravy mixes, instant mashed potatoes, canned cranberries or cranberry sauce, canned yams, chicken broth and canned vegetables. Dessert mixes and pie fillings are appreciated.

Donations may be dropped off at the Jesus House offices at 1335 W Sheridan in Oklahoma City until 7 p.m. on

Tuesday, Nov. 25.

The website **Need Help Paying Bills** at www.needhelp-payingbills.com, has a complete list of organizations that can help with groceries.

At the main page, choose Oklahoma from the list of states. Then, scroll down the page to Food Assistance from Distribution Centers and Food Banks to access the list.

Food Pantries.org lists several places within the state that provide a helping hand with food needs.

Select Oklahoma from the website's main page to bring up the list.

Turkey hotlines ready to help holiday cooks

USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline: 888-674-6854 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. CST, Monday through Friday. Closed weekends and holidays, except Thanksgiving. Special hours of operation on Thanksgiving are 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. CST.

Reynolds Turkey Tips

Line: 800-745-4000 Open through Dec. 31, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Butterball Turkey Talk Line: 800-BUTTERBALL (800-288-8373) Available Nov. 1 through Dec. 28, weekdays 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. CST; Saturday and Sunday, 8 a.m. to

6 p.m. CST; Thanksgiving Day, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. CST; Nov. 24 to Dec. 25, weekdays, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. CST.

Honeysuckle White: 800-810-6325 Recorded answers to frequently asked turkey preparation questions.

Foster Farms: 800-255-

7227. Live operators answer your questions 24 hours a day Nov. 19 through Dec. 1.

Perdue Chicken: 800-473-7383. Thanksgiving week: Monday and Tuesday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. CST, Nov. 27, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. CST, Thanksgiving Day, 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. CST.

it's a small world

Nigerian student always dreamed of U.S.

JORGE KRZYZANIAK
Sports Writer
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Isuamfon Williams said he moved to the U.S. when he was almost 16. “I came from the southern part of Nigeria; Akwa Ibom,” Williams said. He said of the state, “It’s not that densely populated. It’s just a normal area.”

Before he moved to the U.S., Williams said, he had a grand but obscured vision of what life in America might be like.

“I thought it was heaven on Earth.”

Williams said American culture had in some ways permeated Nigeria during his youth but he knew so little of what was real.

He said after moving to the U.S. he was confused to see a near geriatric Arnold Schwarzenegger on television. He had recently seen the Schwarzenegger movie “Terminator,” a new release to Nigeria just months before. It was then, he said, that he realized what he knew of American culture was vastly outdated and off base.

Williams said, as a child, he would discuss America happily with his friends, imagining what it would be like.

“We thought there’d be witches and wizards, and they could use your brain to make technology,” he said.

“We just wanted to be there. I just knew that America would be the best place ever.”

Even at a young age, he said, he was longing for the opportunities that a life in the U.S. might afford him.

“In Nigeria, you have to go to private school to get an education,” he said. “Private school is very expensive.”

“Here ... you have the opportunity to apply for a Pell Grant or a loan,” Williams said. “That helps me to pay for tuition. With that, I’ll be able to help society.”

“That’s a huge thing and I very much appreciate that. There’s a lot more opportunity in the U.S.”

Upon arriving in the States, Williams said, he was astonished by the presence of high-tech devices everywhere.

“Everywhere is technology,” he said.



ETHAN COOPER/PIONEER

Isuamfon Williams

“You don’t really have to do things manually. Everything is computerized. That touches me.”

Williams said his home Akwa Ibom is rich in oil. The oil reserves of Nigeria prop up the nation’s economy. He said he sees undeniable similarities between Oklahoma and his former home state in this way. There were oil refineries where he grew up and drilling rigs dotted the landscape as they do here, he said.

Even with the oil richness of Nigeria, Williams said, unbridled corruption withholds opportunities from the nation’s people.

He said the Nigerian government has sometimes encouraged the siphoning of oil from broken pipelines to sell on the black market.

It inspires theft and bribery among people kept desperate by lack of resources in spite of their strong economy.

“Some people die,” he said. “There’s no health care,” he said. “Sometimes there’s no electricity. It is not free. It is not fair.”

Williams said it’s his opinion that corruption in Nigeria has contributed the

most to the suffering of its people.

He spoke of manipulative campaigns and false promises, bought-off officials and government agencies that operate without oversight or accountability. Although he’s only 18 and he’s far removed from his home country, Williams said he is determined to help.

“That’s why I’m studying petroleum engineering,” he said.

Williams said he hopes to put the knowledge he gains here to use back home. He said he intends to improve Nigeria’s mainstay industry in whatever way he can. Through that endeavor, he hopes to alleviate some of the suffering of people there.

“In my state, there’s resources that I could use for helping people.”

Williams said he feels at home here.

“I have assimilated into American culture so much that I don’t even really like traditional Nigerian food anymore.”

Even so, he said, his 10-year plan includes returning to Akwa Ibom to make whatever difference he can there.

Until then, he said he encourages others to take their education seriously.

“If you see the opportunity, take the opportunity with both hands and then strive for it. Then you can succeed.”



Nigeria

Capital: Abuja

Population: 173.6 million (2013)

GDP: 3,005.51 billion U.S. Dollars (2013)

Size: 356,669 sq. miles

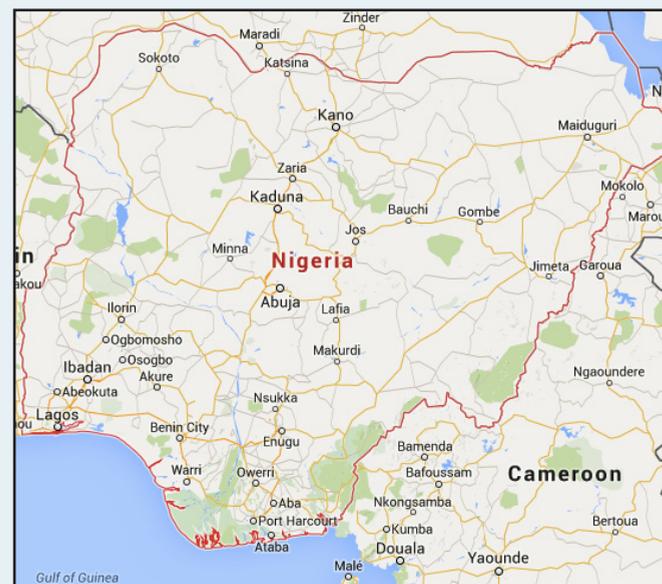
Official Languages: English

Currency: Nigerian naira

Government: The president, who is both head of state and head of government, is popularly elected for a four-year term and is eligible for a second term.

Religion: Predominately Christian (49.3 percent) and Muslim (48.8 percent).

Details: Nigeria, one-third larger than Texas and the most populous country in Africa, is situated on the Gulf of Guinea in West Africa. Its neighbors are Benin, Niger, Cameroon, and Chad.



—google.com

SPORTS

EVENT NEWS

Fitness fun



ETHAN COOPER/PIONEER

Criminal Justice major Bryce Fennell, left, and Business major Andrew Blalock play basketball together on Nov. 12 in OCCC's gym. Blalock said he enjoys hanging out at the gym.

"I think it's great they let students come out here to play and they don't charge us anything," he said. The facility, located in the Wellness Center on the first floor of the Main Building is free to all students with a valid student ID. Balls are available on-site. For more information, contact the Recreation and Fitness Office at 405-682-7580 or visit www.occc.edu/rf.

SPORTS | Recreation and Fitness planning end-of-semester events

Volleyball, basketball on sports roster

JORGE KRZYZANIAK

Sports Writer
sportswriter@occc.edu



With finals looming, Sports Assistant Matthew Wright said, for some, the true tests may be taking place in the weeks before finals in the school's gymnasium.

OCCC's Recreation and Fitness department has two more intramural sporting events slated for the fall semester, Wright said. He said these pre-finals week intramurals are expected to be a welcome distraction from the pressures associated with studying for tests.

Wright said 14 people were already registered to participate in coed volleyball by the first day of competition Nov. 12. He said more are expected to "trickle in," and no one with a valid school ID will be turned away.

Volleyball games will take place on Wednesdays at around 5:30 p.m. until the season ends on Wednesday, Dec.

3, Wright said.

He said he hopes to keep games fun and interesting with a casual structure.

"It will be teams of seven-on-seven unless we get more players and we'll mix up the teams each week to keep it interesting," Wright said.

A five-on-five basketball tournament will follow soon after, he said, on Thursday, Dec. 4, and Friday, Dec. 5.

Registration deadline to participate in the basketball tournament is Wednesday, Dec. 3.

Recreation and Fitness Director Eric Watson said this basketball tournament is generally one of the most well-received, recurring intramural events offered at OCCC. This tournament has taken place every fall for the last few years, he said.

Wright said this semester, up to eight teams may participate in the tournament. The style of tournament play will be determined by the number of teams, he said. Winners will be rewarded with intramural championship T-shirts.

Wright said participation is free for both events but said individuals must register through the IMleagues website. Both events are open to OCCC students, faculty and staff. A valid school ID and appropriate attire is required.

For the actual week of finals, Dec. 8 through Dec. 13, Wright said, there won't be any intramural events.

However, he said, the department will offer something special for students to help reduce finals week stress.

Follow the Pioneer Online at <http://pioneer.occc.edu> for updates.

To register for intramural sports or to see rules, rosters and schedules, visit www.imleagues.com. For more information, contact Wright at matthew.j.wright@occc.edu

Fall 2014:

- Students with a valid OCCC ID can use the Aquatic Center free of charge. The Aquatic Center features two pools, and an 18½-ft. deep diving well with 1- and 3-meter spring boards and 5-, 7- and 10-meter platforms. For more information, visit www.occc.edu/rf.

- OCCC Group Fitness classes are offered at a variety of fitness levels and are spaced conveniently throughout the afternoon and late evening hours. Discounted group fitness passes are available. See more at www.occc.edu/rf/cr-group-fitness.

- The Recreation & Fitness Center is open to students, faculty, staff and community members. The center features a 15,000-square-foot gym with two basketball courts and one recreational volleyball court, a cardio room with three treadmills, two cross trainers and two recumbent bikes as well as a weight room featuring a complete circuit of Cybex equipment and free weights. Students with a valid OCCC ID can use the facilities free of charge. For more information, visit www.occc.edu/rf or call 405-682-7860.



Scan the QR code with your smart phone to be directed to a list of OCCC Intramural events, complete with the most current updates.

(Free QR code reader apps can be found online or in app stores on smart phones. Follow the directions for the app you download.)

All event news is due Monday by 5 p.m. for inclusion in the next issue. Email your news to sportswriter@occc.edu.

President: College regents begin search for new leader

Continued from page 1

When Sechrist was appointed as president in December 2005, he had been acting as president for almost two years due to health problems of the previous president, Dr. Robert P. Todd.

Camey said seeing Sechrist perform in the job allowed the regents to see that he would be the right choice; therefore, no other candidate was interviewed for the position.

Youngblood said the decision to hire from inside OCCC should be carefully considered.

“By doing this, that means anybody — a dean, anybody else who thinks they’re ready — can interview. By all means, come forward.”

“I would even go so far as to say we ought to interview every one of them,” Youngblood said. “I really think that strongly about our own people.”

Former Regent John Michael Williams was a special adviser at the meeting. Williams is an attorney and president at Williams Box Forshee & Bullard PC.

He said he went through three presidential searches while serving on the OCCC Board of Regents. Based upon his experience, he suggested the regents search internally

first.

“If you like the direction Oklahoma City Community College is going, it’s not just the current president, it’s not just Paul (Sechrist) — it’s a team,” he said. “There are other people that have been a part of this.”

“The other people, they’re already on this train where you’re already going ... You will know so much more about those people than you’ll know about anyone else ...”

However, Williams said, he recognizes that OCCC has experienced a great deal of growth since he was on the board and going with an outside hire may be the best option.

“You may not have the option that you had the last 24 years to have somebody from within,” he said.

“But if you do, there are certain benefits.”

Williams said the process of hiring a president can be handled several different ways. He said his personal experiences have shown the candidates need exposure to the faculty and student body.

He said with the help of a professional, third-party consultant, the applicants should be put through a rigorous process, whether they are currently employed by OCCC or

from across the country.

“I’d start with listening sessions and then we can get finalists.”

“And I’d do it again with [the finalists]. I’m not talking about 20 minutes, either. I’m talking about multiple sessions that ... people can ask anything they want ...”

The regents listed character attributes they’re seeking in the next president: being open to others’ thinking; being able to process input and move forward with calculated risk; having a proven track record; being able to build partnerships at the state and national level; capable of building a team; having good communication skills; able to look outside themselves; being strong, calm and collected; being able to provide a seamless transition; and being committed to serving central Oklahoma and the surrounding area.

Two major factors that were emphasized were student access and understanding the culture of OCCC.

Williams said the culture differs from any other college or university in the state.

“Oklahoma City Community College’s culture is unique. It’s not the same as OSU’s culture. It’s not the same as ... Rose State. It will take some time to understand [that].”

Facilitator Frank Merrick, who has facilitated previous Board of Regents retreats, said the college is one of the most vital educational institutions in the state, providing many students a stepping stone to the future.

“I do not believe there is a more important educational institution in Central Oklahoma, even more so than Oklahoma City Public Schools,” he said.

“I think you can help where that institution has maybe failed students. You give them a chance.”

Merrick said the decision of choosing a new president provides a set of challenges for the regents. He said the position of OCCC president is a prestigious and honored one.

“This is the single biggest decision these regents have made in 10 years,” he said.

“This is going to take Oklahoma City Community College to that next level ...”

“To that first-generation college student, to that person coming out of generational poverty, to that person who the public schools have failed — you’re their last best chance to a meaningful career.”

Sechrist said he will not take part in the search for his successor, but said OCCC is in good hands.

“The Board of Regents has

the responsibility to decide the process they will use to select the next president,” he said.

“Generally, the current president does not play any formal role in the process. I know it will be the intention of the Board of Regents to keep the campus community informed as they work their way through the process.”

In an email dated Nov. 20, Moisant said the meeting officially set the search in motion.

“The Board of Regents, with the assistance of an external search firm, will first conduct an internal search for the position of president.”

“Following the internal search, the search process may be extended to include external applicants.”

“Further, as chair, I will appoint a three-member Board Committee to solicit proposals and recommend the search firm to be selected by the full Board of Regents.”

“I anticipate providing additional details about the search once the search firm has been identified and begins working with the Board of Regents.”

The next Regents meeting is at 8:30 a.m. Monday, Dec. 15, in the Al Snipes Board Room on campus.

For more information, visit www.occ.edu/aboutus/boardofregents.

Transfer: OCCC students benefit from smaller class sizes

Continued from page 1

He attributes the comparison to what he calls OCCC’s “second-to-none” facilities.

“We are one of six community colleges in the country that has a cadaver lab,” Aquino said.

“Have you been to our film and video production? I mean, that is professional.”

“You’re not going to find anything better between here and Mexico City.”

The GPAs of students who transfer from OCCC reflect the findings.

Numbers show that OCCC students who transfer to the University of Central Oklaho-

ma have GPAs averaging a 2.9.

Students who transfer to Oklahoma State University have GPAs which average to a 3.0, and students who transfer to the University of Oklahoma have the highest GPA average — usually ranging at 3.2.

That wasn’t always the case.

According to a report by Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, OCCC students who transferred to OU between 2003 and 2006 had performances averaging a 2.7 GPA.

Aquino said he attributes the increase to the high standards OCCC sets for its students.

“We expect a higher level of

rigor from our students than is at the receiving institutions,” he said.

“From my perspective, that’s purely hearsay. But I do know that we are very rigorous and we do not grade on a curve here.”

Another factor, he said, is OCCC’s small class sizes.

He said that plays a vital part in student success.

“Normally, our classes top out at 25 or 40 — not several hundred as happens in some of the universities.”

Aquino said OCCC also is good at communicating to students that the college cares about them.

“We’ve had many, many students who transfer to OU or UCO and they’re doing great, and they say, ‘can’t I come back? I miss this,’ because we are a very student-centered organization,” he said.

OCCC also is very conscientious when it comes to training the professors who teach here, Aquino said.

“We put a lot of resources into teaching people how to teach and how to be better teachers,” he said.

OCCC does not compromise standards, Aquino said, and has the means and resources to get students where they need to be, such as labs.

“... We want to surround our students around that — the Math Lab, the Communications Lab, the World Languages and Cultures Center,” he said.

For the eight years Aquino has been at OCCC, he said, the college has lived up to these same standards.

“I think this is a great place if you’re thinking of transferring,” he said. “If your goal is to get a bachelor’s degree, this is a great way to start it.”

For more information about transferring to a four-year university, call Student Support Services at 405-682-7865, or visit www.occ.edu/sss/transfer.

CAMPUS COMMUNITY

Real-world training



ETHAN COOPER/PIONEER

Graphic Communications in Multimedia major Tim O'Dell records broadcasting major Clayton Mitchell outside the Bruce Owen Theater on Nov. 12. Mitchell said the two were working on an assignment for their Video Production class. "For this project we're making a mock OCCC commercial," Mitchell said.

COMMUNITY | Charles Myrick says Phi Theta Kappa has given him great opportunities

Business prof named as national adviser

VANESSA MARTINEZ
News Writing Student

A research project on the habitat destruction of gopher tortoises has landed business Professor Charles Myrick a national position as a faculty scholar adviser with Phi Theta Kappa.

PTK is an academic honor society for two-year colleges and the largest honor society in the nation.

Only 10 percent of college students are invited to join.

Myrick teaches economics. He said he has been a professor for 10 years with five and half years of those at OCCC.

He said the position provides him with access to other serious thinkers.

"Now being a faculty scholar adviser, I have the opportunity to meet with some of the brightest minds in the country to share information.

"There will be an academy that I have to attend over the summer where I will ... come up with ideas that would benefit Oklahoma City Community College," said Myrick, in regards to the duties of a faculty scholar for Phi Theta Kappa.

It's his first time to be selected as a Phi Theta Kappa faculty scholar, he said.

Myrick said being a faculty scholar means applying to compete against other Phi Theta Kappa advisers around the country by researching a particular topic and coming up with a solution to the inquiry.

Being from Southern Mississippi, Myrick said, is why he chose the topic of the plight of gopher tortoises.

He said he hopes the animals will survive so his children will get to see gopher tortoises one day.

Myrick said he wrote about the destruction their habitat and how other species, such as fire ants, are wiping out these tortoises.

Through Phi Theta Kappa, Myrick said, he has had the opportunity to listen to great speakers over the years such as astrophysicist Neil DeGrasse Tyson and tennis player Billie Jean King.

He said he first encountered Phi Theta Kappa when he was a student and said he is now happy to be a faculty scholar adviser.

"Phi Theta Kappa is a really amazing honor society that provides lots of opportunities, not just monetarily speaking but also scholastic opportunities, for students."

For more information about Phi Beta Kappa, contact Myrick at cmerrick@occc.edu or call 405-682-1611, ext. 7492.

“Phi Theta Kappa is a really amazing honor society that provides lots of opportunities ...”

—CHARLES MYRICK
PTK FACULTY SCHOLAR ADVISER

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

Thanksgiving Dinner Tips talk planned

First time in charge of Thanksgiving Dinner? Looking to get some extra tips to make things run a little smoother? Join Financial Aid Assistant Director Meghan Morgan for "Thanksgiving Dinner Tips," a Brown Bag lecture from noon until 1 p.m. Monday, Nov. 24, in room CU3. For more information, contact Student Life at 405-682-7523.

Students encouraged to give feedback Nov. 25

In the Office of Student Life, it's all about you—the students. Your feedback is very valuable and helps make OCCC a positive experience for everyone. All students are encouraged to stop by the Programs Survey table from 9 to 11 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 25, in the Main Building lobby and let Student Life know what is important to you. For more information, contact Student Life at 405-682-7523.

Event to focus on study preparation tips

With finals quickly approaching, the Student Life office has partnered with the Communications Lab to bring students some helpful study preparation tips during what could be a stressful time. Join them for the Brown Bag luncheon "Study Prep" from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 2 in CU3 to get pointers for how to help ease the stress of finals week. For more information, contact Student Life at 405-682-7523.

ESL Conversation Groups aim to help fluency

English as a Second Language will host conversation groups designed to help strengthen the fluency of those who may not speak English as their first language. The groups are a safe place where participants can have fun while gaining self-confidence. The groups are held from 12:30 until 2 p.m. each Monday in VPAC room 146 and from 12:30 p.m. until 2:30 p.m. each Thursday in VPAC room 146. For more information, visit www.occc.edu/comlab/eslcg.html or contact Senior Communications Lab Assistant Lydia Rucker at 405-682-1611, ext. 7105.

Kathy Mattea's "Songs and the Season" Dec. 4

For the first time since 2010, Grammy-award-winning artist Kathy Mattea will be touring her "Songs and the Season" Christmas program, a thoughtful blend of old favorites and new songs from her celebrated holiday albums, "Joy For Christmas Day" and "Good News." The singer's unmistakable voice explores music's most basic human essence through timeless melodies and uplifting narratives while intimately connecting with her audience.

Mattea will perform at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 4 in the VPAC Theater. Tickets are \$15 to \$45 and can be purchased at www.vendini.com, by calling (405) 682-7579, or at the box office in the VPAC Atrium.

All Highlights are due Monday by noon for inclusion in the next issue. Email your event to editor@occc.edu or drop by the Pioneer office located in AH 1F2.

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. Fridays prior to the next publication date. For more information, call the Ad Manager at 405-682-1611, ext. 7674, or e-mail adman@occc.edu.

7760, or swcomsvc+drexel@gmail.com. More info at <http://goo.gl/nELiFw>.

LOOKING FOR ROOM TO RENT: Close to campus. Male roommates only. Call Nahtali-Noel Nhongho at 832-738-2527 or email nahtali-noel-e-nhongho@my.occc.edu.

FURNITURE

FOR SALE: 40" CRT television in excellent condition. Big screen makes it great for a gaming TV. \$30. Text 405-818-0083.

MISCELLANEOUS

FOR RENT: 2-Bed House/1 Ba./1 Car Garage; 924 sq. ft. approx. 1 mile from OCCC. \$850 per month & \$850 security deposit. Call Pat: 405-627-

LOOKING FOR ROOM TO RENT: Male, 23, student looking to rent a room close to campus for no more than \$250-\$300 a month through fall semester. Email john.white336@my.occc.edu.

FOR SALE: Calpak Lightweight 20-Inch Rolling Shopper Tote from Overstock.com. Large polka dots in orange, brown and green. Used once. \$20. Email for picture: 4allmypets@gmail.com.



WCD WIC Program

New at OCCC Family and Community Education (FACE) Center
9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday, North Hall
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Currently on another WIC program?
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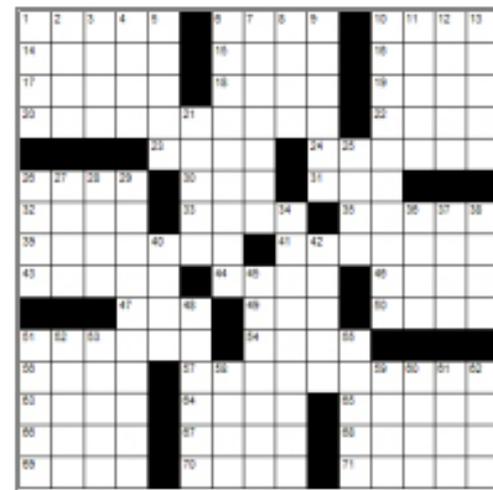
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 - Not under
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 - Roman emperor
 - Brother of Jacob
 - Disarrayed
 - Collections
 - Female chickens
 - Main course
 - Grasped
 - French for "Summer"
 - Comes after Mi and Fah
 - Wings
 - Desserts
 - Discourage
 - Biggest
 - Captive
 - Ceased
 - 365 days
 - Colored part of an eye
 - Excluding
 - Actress Lupino
 - Outlay
 - Movie house
 - Devil tree
 - Smell
 - A type of craftsman
 - Of higher order
 - A period of discounted prices
 - Dish
 - Shopping place
 - God of love
 - Female demon
 - Away from the wind
 - Focusing glass
 - Construct



DOWN

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Valuable metal | 13. Entertain | 42. Give a speech |
| 2. 57 in Roman numerals | 21. Oceans | 45. An apparition |
| 3. Horse feed | 25. Gestures of assent | 48. Anagram of "Steals" |
| 4. Chocolate cookie | 26. Fit | 51. Punctuation mark |
| 5. Gift of the Magi | 27. Distinctive flair | 52. Something to shoot for |
| 6. A person of no influence | 28. Piecrust ingredient | 53. French for "Our" |
| 7. Supervise | 29. Pervert | 55. Enough |
| 8. Arid | 34. Of questionable legality | 58. Container weight |
| 9. Wears away | 36. Tropical tuber | 59. Winglike |
| 10. Painkiller | 37. Auspices | 60. Identical |
| 11. Unsuccessful person | 38. A musical pause | 61. Ear-related |
| 12. Grille | 40. Biblical kingdom | 62. Tidy |

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Poetry reading, salsa dancing highlight gathering

GLENN FLANSBURG
News Writing Student

Emotion, rhythm and beat are critical if poetry is to convey its meaning, said learning skills Professor Carlotta Hill at a reading on campus Oct. 28.

Then she delivered a spirited rendition of a poem by Gwendolyn Brooks, entitled “We Real Cool.” The audience clapped out a beat as Hill recited the words of a narrator who bragged about being “too cool for school,” but perhaps is destined for an early grave.

The event commenced with Professor Abra Figueroa welcoming everyone and introducing Hill, who is a published poet. More than 40 people, including both students and faculty, attended the poetry reading in the World Languages and Cultures Center.

International students followed Hill by reading their



ETHAN COOPER/PIONEER

Student Edgar Tita reads a poem at poetry reading in the World Languages and Cultures Center.

favorite poems from their native literature, and then speaking briefly about the poems’ content and meaning.

There was poetry in Farsi, Chinese, Arabic, Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Cambodian, Japanese, French, Tamil, Russian and English.

Of special interest was the poem “Shui Diao Ge Tou,” by Chinese poet Su Shi. Student

Shengwen Zhang was quite animated in his presentation. He had the audience engaged and laughing with his theatrical antics.

Zhang, who is from China, said the poem is about loneliness from being separated from loved ones during the Mid-Autumn Festival.

In Chinese culture the Mid-Autumn Festival, or Moon

Festival, happens on the 15th day of the eighth month of the lunar calendar. The moon is a carrier of human emotions, and its round shape symbolizes family reunion.

“I really found the poetry interesting,” said Talia Luu, a Diversified Studies major from Vietnam. “I wasn’t able to understand it all, but listening to the melody gave me different emotional feelings, like love and life.”

Students moved chairs off to the side after the poetry reading to clear space for Adjunct Spanish Professor Marilyn Krell’s salsa dance lesson.

Her interactive session introduced students to the basic steps. It began with a short lecture about the history of salsa.

Kress said salsa was created when emigrants from Latin and Caribbean cultures, such as Cuba and Puerto Rico, during the 1970s, combined their

Latin sounds with the rhythmic African American music of New York City. She then jumped right in to teaching the steps. About 20 dancers took the floor and practiced their newly learned salsa rhythms.

Afterward Krell switched it up and showed the participants the Merengue dance as well.

More than 25 people stayed to learn the dance. Among them was biology Professor Nathaniel Abraham.

“I’ve taken art and music classes in the past. I might take a salsa dance class now.”

WLCC and Student Life sponsored the festival as part of Humanities Month. Student Life provided refreshments.

For more information, call the WLCC at 405-682-7560, or email wlcc@occc.edu. Check out their website at www.occc.edu/world and Facebook page at www.facebook.com/OCCC-WLCC.

Developing good eating habits important for students

MELISSA HOMSEY
News Writing Student

One of the hardest tasks for busy college students is healthy eating, especially as the semester grinds on toward final exams.

Counselor Jenna Howard said some college students have good eating habits while others struggle.

“From my experience working with students, students vary on whether they choose a healthy or unhealthy diet,” she said. “Some students I see eat healthy and exercise regularly.”

Time also seems to become an issue with many students.

“Students tend to juggle work, school and family responsibilities, so it may be easier to eat fast food than prepare healthy meals,” she said.

Ultimately, the choice is yours.

In August, Huffington Post had an article called “How College Students Order Food.” The top three picks were pizza, french fries and chicken wings.

Also according to Huffington Post, Energy drinks are 88 percent more commonly ordered by college students.

“The energy drinks, and too much coffee, can really heighten anxiety and lessen focus ability,” Howard said. “Drinking some caffeine is OK and can help, but some of the energy drinks contain the same amount of caffeine as six cups of coffee.”

Kids Health Website posted an article titled “Beating the Freshman 15.” The article suggests that college students do not know how to eat properly.

Howard offered some tips for healthier eating.

“It’s important to eat enough protein, like making sure you have some protein for breakfast. Nuts, eggs and lean meats are all good proteins.

“Too much sugar can cause a crash in energy and focus,” Howard said.

For more information about healthy eating, or for help with other issues facing college students, contact Howard by email at jhoward@occc.edu or by phone at 405-682-1611, ext. 7621.

Give yourself the fuel you need to stay focused and absorb what you learn

Milk and yogurt. Low-fat dairy products are packed with protein and B vitamins that may help you concentrate and work efficiently. Non-fat Greek yogurt is super-high in protein and has no added sugar. Milk and yogurt are fortified with vitamin D, which also supports brain health.

Oats. It’s hard to beat oatmeal at breakfast. Oatmeal is a whole grain, which you digest slowly, giving your brain and body steady energy. And you get a bowlful of B vitamins and fiber as well as potassium, zinc and vitamin E.

Blueberries. One of nature’s perfect foods, blueberries are packed with nutrients that give them their deep-blue color. One study links blueberries to improved learning and memory. Two servings (about 1½ cups) of fresh or frozen blueberries a day is recommended.

Salmon. Salmon — both wild-caught and farm-raised — is one of the best sources of omega-3 fatty acids, healthy fats that are good for the brain. The American Heart Association recommends two 3.5-ounce servings of fish per week.

Walnuts. While all nuts provide brain fuel in the form of protein and both omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, walnuts are best. One study found that students who regularly ate walnuts were better at deductive reasoning. The healthy fat in nuts is still fat, don’t eat too many. Stick to a daily 1-ounce serving.

Hemp seed. Hemp seed is a real superfood. It provides brain-powering protein, omega-3s and -6s, and a variety of antioxidants and other nutrients. Often packaged as a powder, the seeds of Cannabis sativa are totally versatile. Stir a couple of spoonfuls into oatmeal, mix with milk or yogurt, sprinkle on cereal, or bake into muffins.

Chocolate. Chocolate is brain food. It increases blood flow to the brain. But not all chocolate is created equal. Milk chocolate has too little cocoa to provide benefits, and white chocolate — which is not really chocolate — has no cocoa at all. Stick to dark, bittersweet chocolate and no more than a few squares a day, about half an ounce. Or stir a teaspoon of cocoa powder into your Greek yogurt. Avoid alkalized or Dutch processed cocoa, which has fewer antioxidants than regular cocoa.

Dark green vegetables. Spinach, asparagus, broccoli, and Brussels sprouts all provide folate, which appears crucial to brain function. Eat a good mix of veggies, so you get a variety of nutrients.

Beans. Bring on the burritos. Beans supply high-quality protein, magnesium and B vitamins, all of which help your brain work. Because beans also have lots of fiber and complex carbohydrates, you’ll digest them slowly and benefit from them over the course of the day. Across the board, all beans provide about the same amounts of protein and fiber. They also are good sources of omega-3s and antioxidants, particularly kidney beans. Try to eat one-half to two-thirds cup of beans every day.

Coffee. Caffeinated coffee gives you a dose of early morning energy, and in small doses, it can help you concentrate. Stick to 8-ounce cups instead of grande-size portions to avoid caffeine jitters — and extra calories, if you’re a latte, mocha, or cappuccino drinker. Don’t like coffee? Choose green tea, which has many of the same health benefits.

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