One tile at a time

Visual Arts Professor Jeremy Fineman helps diversified studies major Leah Farrier on a project for her ceramics course. To find course descriptions for the various pottery courses offered at OCCC, visit www.occc.edu/catalog/pdf/coursedescriptions.pdf.

Many employers look at Facebook profiles

Job-seekers cautioned about making social media sites public

Facebook is a place where people go to connect with others, share pictures, brag about accomplishments, make their political and religious feelings known, and, often, go off on rants about others, including employers.

Some local businesses said they check social media when hiring. Local advertising and media agency Ackerman McQueen is one.

Employee Sheena Karami said although her department does not require checking social media sites, she checks them out of curiosity. Karami is the Vice President in the Office of the Chief Operating Officer.

"It’s nice to know how people present themselves, and what they really are like," she said.

"What you put on your résumé isn’t always necessarily indicative of who you are. If I have the opportunity to look elsewhere to see, it’s a much more encompassing picture of who the potential candidate is. It’s nice to have all the information.

Karami said social media sites are important outlets in media industry companies, such as Ackerman McQueen.

"It’s amazing how people will kind of lay it all out there and complain about things, or rant about things and they don’t realize ‘oh maybe my profile is not private,’" she said.

Karami said she wants to know who the company is really hiring, because, she said, they only want top-notch candidates.

"If the best-of-the-best is not going to put their best foot forward in how they represent themselves on their personal site, then that’s not someone I’m interested in hiring.

Other employers worry about the implications of using social networking sites to make hiring decisions.

OCCC’s Human Resource Employment and Employee Relations Specialist May Moon said while a background check is required on applicants, that doesn’t include a social media check.

"OCCC does not practice researching social media," Moon said.

"It’s not recommended by our department, because it just opens up a whole can of worms..."
OPINION

EDITORIAL | Oklahoma ranks a low 48th nationwide for the number of adults suffering with mental illness

Mental illness like any other

Oklahoma ranks 48th overall nationwide for the number of adults suffering with mental illness and access to care. Substance Abuse Commissioner Terri White said the only state with a higher proportion of mentally ill people is Utah and the only state with more serious mental illness is West Virginia.

Twenty-two percent of Oklahomans have a mental illness, 5.24 percent have a serious mental illness such as major depressive disorder or bipolar disorder, and 70 percent of all mentally ill people in Oklahoma go untreated.

According to Executive Director Traci Cook of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, it can take up to three months to get an appointment with a counselor, psychologist, or psychiatrist — and Oklahoma is actually decreasing the number of available psychiatric beds. In addition, the state government has refused federal health care dollars so it is not surprising that Oklahoma has problems with prescription drug abuse, smoking and narcotic use, rivaling West Virginia in painkiller overdoses, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In one CDC study, it was found that roughly 75 percent of adults believe people with mental conditions receive sympathy and care from society. Only 25 percent of people with a mental illness who were asked the same question agree with that statement.

In the same study, Oklahomans actually ranked near the top for responses on how valuable mental health care is, so one could argue the issue is largely systemic, and that it is indeed a real challenge for people to get the help they need.

At OCCC, students have free and confidential access to licensed mental health counselors Jenna Howard and Janey Wheeler. They can quickly see students who are in the throes of a personal crisis. If long term help is needed, they can make a referral.

However, others in the state can’t get free mental health care and, for those with no insurance, the cost is prohibitive. Many people don’t even realize they have a mental illness as it is a poorly understood topic. Others suspect it but don’t want to admit it to themselves or discuss it with anyone out of fear they will be judged.

Just know if it feels like you cannot push yourself to do things or stay organized, with the urge to be wherever you’re not, you may have ADHD, which is well understood and treatable.

If you often feel tense, overly conscious, if sometimes you start to feel panicked, and your chest gets tight, you might have an anxiety disorder, very treatable.

If you think about killing yourself or believe other people would be happier without you, those thoughts likely stem from major depressive disorder — also treatable.

Psychiatry and psychology are not bunk, scams, or hooey. It is medicine, and you can access it. The current situation will not improve as long as people refuse to understand or admit there is a problem.

If you have a heart problem, you see a cardiologist. If your brain is working against you, see a psychologist or psychiatrist.

Student Support Services is a good start.

—GRANT SWALWELL
PODCASTER

LETTER TO THE EDITOR | State Health Department says there are a number of ways to get involved in child abuse awareness

Oklahomans invited to build Blue Ribbon Trees in April

To the editor:

The Child Abuse Prevention Action Committee invites every community to take action for children by participating in their seventh annual “Build a Blue Ribbon Tree for Kids” campaign.

The blue ribbon is the international sign for child abuse prevention and serves as a constant reminder that all of us have a responsibility in helping to protect children. Communities are invited to participate by displaying blue ribbon trees during April.

However, to have your tree showcased in the blue ribbon tree slideshow during the Child Abuse Prevention Day Mini Conference, Tuesday, April 14, trees must be completed and registered by April 8.

Blue Ribbon Trees will be blossoming throughout Oklahoma communities in April, which is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. The goal is to get 2,015 childcare programs and licensed childcare homes to build blue ribbon trees in Oklahoma for April 2015.

Tree photos will be highlighted in the Child Abuse Prevention Month “official” scrapbook, on the OSDH Family Support and Prevention Service website, and on various social media sites.

A “Tree Registry” form is provided for people and organizations to register their trees with the OSDH Office of Child Abuse Prevention. The registration form is also available to print from the OSDH website at www.ok.gov/health2/documents/2015Build.

To “Build a Blue Ribbon Tree,” select any materials you choose. If using a living tree, choose a highly visible location and secure needed permission. Creativity is encouraged. Decorate the tree with blue ribbons to represent any of the following:

• The number of new babies born in your community;
• Something significant to your agency, program or community (i.e. number of families served by your program/agency);
• Or use the ribbons to show your community support for children in general (benefit of this selection — NO counting ribbons).

Mail, fax or email a completed form to: Sherie Trice, OSDH Community Based Child Abuse Prevention Grant Coordinator, Oklahoma State Department of Health, Family Support and Prevention Service, 1000 NE 10th Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73117-1299, or fax to 405-271-1011, or e-mail SherieT@health.ok.gov.

—OKLAHOMA STATE HEALTH DEPARTMENT
COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

PRODUCT REVIEW | Reviewer has love-hate relationship with allergy medication

Zyrtec has too many side effects

Let me start this review by stating one thing: I have a love-hate relationship with Zyrtec allergy medication. Springtime is the season of Satan’s pollens and other dusty particles — and when my life transforms into an actual never-ending sneezing hell.

With the sneezing, sniffing, not breathing, headaches, still not breathing and foginess, taking allergy medication is almost a necessity for me to be even somewhat functional. But, in spite of the miracle pills, there’s always repercussions.

Zyrtec cures me of my foggy brain, sensitive nose and non-stop sneezing — but it makes me ridiculously sleepy and confused. The bottle may say “non-drowsy” on it, but little did I know that Zyrtec is a complete liar.

More than making me pass out around 8 p.m., it also makes me act weird. If you saw me while on the medication, you would think I’ve been up for the past two days, staring at a wall.

According to everydayhealth.com, the side effects can include: dizziness, drowsiness, dry mouth, sore throat, cough, nausea, constipation and headache. Oh, and confusion. I didn’t see “laughing hysterically at own jokes” listed in there, but it should be. Because I laugh hysterically at my own jokes.

I’ve done more research on user reviews, which has opened my eyes to my current condition. One user’s review on rxlist.com said her son’s attitude toward life had completely changed because of the medicine.

“Within three weeks of beginning this drug, my son went from a happy, curious teenage athlete, who made good grades to being depressed, with no interest in anything, even his favorite sport. Getting him out of bed to go to school became an unprecedented battle daily. He became easily agitated, but his overall outlook on everything was total hopelessness.”

Hmmm, total hopelessness.

I can relate with that. Maybe I, along with many other people, should avoid taking this allergy medicine. Sure, it may cure me of really annoying symptoms, but is the depression worth it?

Also, it’s like $20 for 30 tablets. But I guess that’s the price for being depressed, sleepy all day and allergy free.

Rating: C

—BRYCE McELHANEY
EDITOR

ORIGINAL PROGRAMMING REVIEW | Originally on A&E, mystery show available on Netflix

‘Longmire’ series requires patience

With some TV shows, the appeal is obvious. What keeps us coming back each episode is our favorite actors, a gripping drama, romance, mystery, or maybe the way it makes us laugh every time we watch.

“Longmire,” based on the “Walt Longmire Mysteries” by Craig Johnson, at first seems to provide none of these obvious reasons to keep watching.

Centered on Absaroka County, Wyoming Sheriff Walt Longmire (Robert Taylor), the show is a modern serial crime drama dressed up like a Western.

There are predictable elements of both. Sheriff Longmire is the honest cop in a corrupt world, and the stoic cowboy with a tragic past. He has a Native American best friend, and contends with a young deputy with ambitions to replace him. Just like you would expect, in each episode Walt Longmire solves the crime and nabs the killer.

What makes the show worth watching despite its predictability is the slow build-up of a longer narrative.

We are told at the beginning that Longmire’s wife died of cancer about a year before. Eventually we discover she was actually murdered, a fact which Longmire hides from everyone, even his daughter.

Longmire’s reasons for the deception provide narrative tension that holds the show together through some otherwise boring episodes.

The show picks up as we learn about the pasts of other characters, but not everyone will have the patience to keep watching long enough to see the show pay-off.

The series is available on Netflix and at the A&E website. To learn more, visit www.aetv.com/longmire.

Rating: B

—AMAR MOLINAS
WEBMASTER

APPLICATION STATION

Online gaming app future looks bright

Most people know Blizzard Entertainment through their popular online game, World of Warcraft. What people may not know is that Blizzard launched their own online card game, Hearthstone, a few years ago.

While the app is on the Google Play and iTunes store, I have an iPhone 6, so I had to resort to some jailbreak trickery to get it to work.

The concept of the game is to attack your opponent’s life (they have 30) while simultaneously playing monsters and spells to gain the upper hand.

The only real problem I’ve run into so far is mishcks, but this is only really because of my having large hands and the screen being so small.

The actual content of the app/game is really impressive for a free-to-play game. With a little hard work and perseverance, you can earn gold by completing daily objectives. Use this gold to buy packs of cards to increase the size of your collection.

There is a bit of a catch with this game though. If you don’t fork over a little bit of money (one pack is 100 gold; however, there are options to buy 7 packs for $10, etc.), you may find that you don’t have powerful enough cards to compete in the game.

There is an option to practice against the computer AI, but there are also “adventure modes” where the player is able to attain new cards through difficult and slightly rigged matches. The most popular method of playing, however, is player vs. player matchups.

One of my favorite things about what is called ranked play is the potential to play mind games with your opponent. For example, if you play a card that is well known for being played with another card in a powerful combo, your opponent may just outright forfeit, even if you don’t have the corresponding card.

Hearthstone player and personality Amaz was recently on the front page of the New York Times in an article about online games. If this is any indication of Hearthstone’s future, the future looks bright indeed.

Rating: B

—SPENCER GRANT
ONLINE WRITER
Elemental coffee the best in a world of not-so-greats

The search for a decent cup of coffee has pushed me to the edge. I would much rather be tweaking on a delicious beverage over the far more cost-efficient caffeine pill — however, even that soulless industrial white capsule is preferable to the false quality of almost every coffee house in Oklahoma City.

Not Elemental Coffee.

Many factors go into the quality of a coffee house: atmosphere, hours, clientele, cost, refill policy, customer service. Elemental scores poorly in all of these categories, but they are still top dog, because their espresso and pour overs taste how coffee is meant to taste: like coffee, not bile and dirt water.

Their rival in market, location and demographic, Coffee Slingers, seems to cost more while giving less, plus their customers are loud and rude. Their noses touch the ceiling.

The situation in Elemental is similar, but the customers are more reserved, and subdued. They quietly enjoy you noticing them drinking their $5 coffee on their iPads or MacBook Pros.

While the attractive and skilled baristas dutifully mop up the pools of privilege that seep out from the walls, there is only so much they can do. Sadly Elemental Coffee is not for everyone. You must have a will of iron to survive the miasma of elitism. I am only capable of relaxing on the patio and sinking into my book by my conviction of the fact that I am not there because it is trendy. I am there because I want a decent cup of coffee.

Two tablespoons of beans, roasted within the last two weeks, ground coarsely and brewed to a smidge over two minutes, at a smidge under 200 degrees, stirred softly a couple of times.

That is how to get a perfect cup of coffee. Why is that so hard?

It’s not hard for Elemental, and they let you know that, by having their fancy equipment out in the open, and charging you almost an hour of minimum wage work for a latte with an extra shot of espresso.

But since Starbucks will charge you the same or more for a frappucino (a milkshake with some coffee in it, about 600 calories), Elemental is the best there is.

Rating: A-

—Grant Swalwell
Podcaster

Apple earpods out-perform yurbuds

Every morning, I stumble out of bed, get on the treadmill and attempt to run while I’m still halfasleepe. Because I’m highly unmotivated to do anything in the morning, much less run, I need music blasting in my ears the entire time.

As I step onto the treadmill, I put the Apple earpods into my ears. I am then able to start my routine. The music is clear, the earpods are comfortable and I feel like my legs could carry me forever.

I get halfway through my run and I realize things are too good to be true. My headphones start slipping out of my ears, I notice I’m out of breath, and I feel like I could collapse at any moment.

But, I am unwilling to give up, so I keep pushing the earpods back in my ears approximately every five seconds and praying I can make it to the final beep of the treadmill.

About a week ago, I attempted to find a solution to this problem. I bought some $20 yurbuds Inspire 100 earbuds for women. The package claimed they are “specifically designed for smaller ears,” sweat proof, and won’t fall out.

On Monday morning, I woke up with a new energy, ready to try out my new earbuds. I started running, and turned up my music.

These were comfortable, perhaps as comfortable as my trusty old Apples. However, they did not sound the same.

The sound quality was not great and because they let in ambient sound, I had to turn my music up extra loud, making my poor ear drums wish I would stop running immediately.

I got to the second-to-last lap of my run and I could feel the yurbuds starting to fail me. With every step I took, my left earbud was slowly coming out of my ears. By the last lap, it had come out numerous times.

Instead of focusing on my workout, I was focused on earbuds, who ended up being full of meaningless promises.

Yurbuds are not my “buds.” As far as I’m concerned, we barely know each other.

Rating: C-

—Lauren Daniel
Online Editor
Professor’s article inspired by college alum

LAURA CARTER
News Writing Student

Author LeAnne Howe's baseball novel "Miko Kings" stands at the heart of a scholarly article published by OCCC English Professor Michael Snyder.


Snyder said he has a passion for the Beatles.

He became interested in Native American literature while attending the University of Oklahoma. His mentor at OU recommended a class about global fiction and Snyder read the book "Miko Kings" for his class.

He said he became thoroughly interested in this novel and wanted to research it more.

Howe is an enrolled citizen of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

She serves as Edison Distinguished professor of American Literature in the English Department at the University of Georgia.

The prize-winning author once walked the campus of OCCC, attending in the 1970s during the second and third year the college was open, then called South Oklahoma Junior College.

Her most recent novel "Miko Kings" was published in 2007. It tells the story of the turbulent days before statehood when white settlers and gamblers were swindling the Indians out of their land.

This novel connects Native American heritage to baseball and is based on America's first moving picture, "His Last Game," according to LeAnne Howe's weblog.

Being an avid Beatles fan, Snyder found some unusual references in Howe's novel and was curious about how they related, starting with the main character named John Lennon.

Through research and reading more into the novel, Snyder quickly realized the main character's name sparked a sense of comparison to the rest of the story.

"My path that I took in trying to solve this mystery kind of parallels the main character in the novel because she is trying to figure out the mystery of this Indian territory baseball team," Snyder said.

The connection and reference to the "sun" brought the comparison to Snyder's attention.

The Beatles have a variety of songs that reference the sun such as "Sun King" and "Here Comes the Sun."

"It's almost like they are sun worshippers and Howe made it part of the connection," Snyder said.

Throughout the novel there are different references from the characters to the scenes that can link the Beatles to the novel and use Lennon to call attention to Native American issues.

"All of the characters in 'Miko King' reflect John Lennon in some way," Snyder said. After meeting with Howe, Snyder nominated her for the OCCC Alumni Hall of Fame.

On Nov. 18, 2014, Howe was inducted into the Hall of Fame.

"She is absolutely one of my favorite living writers, even though she has only had a handful of books," Snyder said. Her first book, "Shell Shaker" received an American Book Award in 2002, from the Before Columbus Foundation.

It then became a finalist for the 2003 Oklahoma Book Award, and Howe was named Woodcraft Circle Writer of the Year in 2002.

Howe said she was impressed with Snyder's article when she first read it during their meeting.

"Professor Snyder's article is well researched, well written," Howe said.

"It was accepted in an international peer-reviewed journal with very high standards," she said.

"In other words, Snyder's article was competing with scholarly articles from around the world for a place in the NAIS journal — a stunning achievement."

"I'm not saying that because I'm saying that the article twists the Beatles and Native literature."

LeAnne views the journal article written by Snyder as a unique view of 'Miko Kings.'

Professor Snyder’s article inspired by college alum

Bone Marrow drive set for March 10

JAELEN BROCK
News Writing Student

OCCC’s nursing program is partnering up with Delete Blood Cancer DKMS to host a bone marrow donor drive on campus for faculty, students and staff Tuesday, March 10, said Nursing Program Director Deborah Myers.

Delete Blood Cancer is the largest bone marrow donor center in the world.

This drive aims to increase awareness and help patients battling blood cancer by teaching participants the process of donation and how they can become registered to save lives.

Myers said OCCC volunteers from the nursing program will be onsite to assist in registration and donation.

"Participants will be swabbed with a cotton swab to sample saliva," she said.

Nursing Professor Karen McCauley said the swabbed cotton ball will be put in an envelope and sent to a donor bank until someone needs it.

"Then you will be contacted to see if you would want to donate," she said.

"Most people think with the bone marrow drives that they are painful, but what we want people to know is that there will be no needle in bone, they are just registering."

Those between the ages of 18 and 55 in good health are eligible and highly encouraged to participate.

Participants can even register for a donor kit to be sent to their house.

Myers said the drive will last from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the OCCC Campus Dining Hall and the coffee shop area in the Main Building.

She said registration is quick and easy and for anyone who cannot attend, but is interested in the donor drive, registration also is offered online at www.DeleteBloodCancer.org.

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Spring break travel deals fading quickly

KATIE AXTELL
Community Writer
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Students hoping to use their tax returns to pay for a spring break trip will likely pay top dollar this late in the game. Oklahoma City travel agents said almost all travel deals for spring break are booked solid.

“It’s a little late for spring break travel as far as getting any great deals,” said Toni Caldwell from Breakaway Travel Agency. “We can still do trips, but they’re not going to be a really great price.

“It’s just one of those things that you have to book early. Spring break is such a limited time and the whole state plus Texas has the same timing … therefore things just book really fast.”

Marketing and group specialist at Bentley Hedges Travel, Bonnie Hedges, said cruises are the best time to get great deals on travel packages is between the months of September and November.

Judy Reinauer from Big Sky Travel said Mexico and Cancun are the most chosen destinations.

She said those who plan to travel outside of the U.S. will need a passport and be older than 18.

According to travel.state.gov, it can take weeks to get a passport so travelers would need to plan ahead. Reinauer said those who are traveling need to have a safety plan.

“If you go to Mexico, don’t leave anyone by themselves,” she said. “Always have a buddy plan.”

“Right now there’s not even any space available on the airlines unless they want to pay full top price.”

Caldwell said a driving vacation would probably be the best bet at this point.

“You can maybe find some condos if you want to drive down the Alabama sun coast or some Florida areas because a lot of east coast [has] spring break later,” she said.

Caldwell and Hedges said the best time to get great deals on a cruise we can probably get most likely the only trip left.

Bonnie Hedges, said cruises are ally fast.

“Texas has the same timing … time and the whole state plus Spring break is such a limited time that you have to book early. Spring break later,” she said.

It’s just one of those things that you have to book early.

In-state destinations

Looking for an affordable spring break getaway? There are plenty of places in the state to explore March 16 through 22.

“Discover scenic byways and back roads that beckon you to get off the beaten path and explore Oklahoma’s charming hometowns, interesting attractions, authentic culture and destination dining spots across the state. Whether you take your road trip in a vintage car, on a motorcycle, or in the family mini-van you’ll find plenty of ideas that fit your style.

“Point your vehicle toward adventure and drive yourself to peaceful outdoor recreation spots, local wineries, small town main streets and big city attractions. It’s Oklahoma, it’s authentic and it’s fuel for your soul,” according to travelok.com.

WITHIN 50 MILES OF OKC:
• Jasmine Moran Children’s Museum:
  1714 OK-9, Seminole, 405-382-0950, jasminemoran.com.
• Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History:
  2401 Chautauqua Ave, Norman, 405-325-4712, snomnh.ou.edu.
• Science Museum Oklahoma:
  2100 NE 52nd St, Oklahoma City, 405-602-6664, sciencemuseumok.org.
• Tatanka Ranch:
• Double J Ranch:
  47600 River Rd., Shawnee, 405-997-3166.
• Arrowhead State Park:
  918-339-2204, state_parks.com/arrowhead_state_park_in_ oklahoma.html.

WITHIN 100 MILES OF OKC:
• Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge and Visitor’s Center:
  32 Refuge Headquarters, INDIANAPOLIS, OK-580-429-3222, fws.gov/refuge/Wichita_Mountains/visit/contact.html.
• Leonardo’s Children’s Museum:
• Lake Murray State Park:
  13528 Scenic State Highway 77, Ardmore, 580-223-4044.
• Double J Ranch:
  47600 River Rd., Shawnee, 405-997-3166.
• Arrowhead State Park:
  918-339-2204, state_parks.com/arrowhead_state_park_in_ oklahoma.html.
• Nuyaka Creek Winery:

WITHIN 100+ MILES OF OKC:
• Little Sahara State Park:
  101 S Main St., Waynoka, 580-824-1471, oklahomacampers.com/little.sahara.
• Alabaster Caverns State Park:
  217036 OK-50A, Freedom, 580-621-3381, stateparks.com/alabaster_caverns_state_park_in_ oklahoma.
• Great Salt Plains State Park:
  OK-38, Jet, 580-626-4731, stateparks.com/great_salt_plains.
• Beavers Bend & Hochatown State Park:
• Robbers Cave State Park:
• Greenleaf State Park:
  101 S Main St., Waynoka, 580-824-1471, oklahomacampers.com/greenleaf.
• Tenkiller State Park Lodge:
• Lake Tenkiller State Park:
  26247 Hwy. 82, Park Hill, 918-465-2565, stateparks.com/lake_tenkiller.
• McGee Creek State Park:
• Lake Eufaula State Park:
• Arrowhead State Park:
  918-339-2204, state_parks.com/arrowhead_state_park_in_ oklahoma.html.

Sam Noble Museum is one nearby destination many people will visit during OCCC’s spring break March 16 through 22.
Social media has employers looking at legalities

Jorge Krzyzaniak
Senior Writer
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Can employers use social media content to not hire, fire or take someone to court? Under the National Labor Relations Act of 1935, American workers are protected in their expression about working conditions.

With an explosion of social media use though, understanding whether employees can be threatened or terminated for things they do or say online has proven difficult.

Employers and employees have clashed in court over the consequences of social media activity several times since its inception.

A report from the National Labor Relations Board detailed the outcomes of 14 social media cases from 2009 to 2011.

In four cases, employees were found to be engaged in “protected concerted activity” because their Facebook posts discussed employment terms and conditions with fellow employees.

Five other cases that centered around Facebook and Twitter posts were ruled in favor of the employers as the posts were not deemed to be protected.

One case declared a union to have engaged in unlawful activity by posting edited footage to YouTube of workers at a non-union worksite being interviewed about their immigration status.

Another case involving a company’s policy that restricts employees’ contact with the media ruled in favor of the employer.

And segments of employers’ social media policies were judged to be unlawfully overly-broad in five cases “as employees could reasonably construe them to prohibit protected conduct,” according to the report.

The National Labor Relations Board clarifies the protections of social media use on their website: “Even if you are not represented by a union, federal law gives you the right to band together with co-workers to improve your lives at work — including joining together in cyberspace.

“Using social media can be a form of ‘protected concerted activity.’ You have the right to address work-related issues and share information about pay, benefits and working conditions with co-workers on Facebook, YouTube and other social media. But just individually griping about some aspect of work is not ‘concerted activity’: what you say must have some relation to group action, or seek to initiate, induce, or prepare for group action, or bring a group complaint to the attention of management.

“The United States Small Business Association recommends that employers protect themselves by creating employee handbooks. Employee handbooks might contain a “Courtesy Rule” or code of conduct that may outline certain behaviors that employees cannot engage in even in their personal time. It is an employee’s responsibility to know if such policies exist. And such policies cannot infringe upon protected conduct.

Professors say Facebook creates false perceptions

Katie Axtell
Community Writer
communitywriter@occc.edu

With just about anything there are pros and cons. Psychology Professor Jennifer Allen said the same applies to social media, but more specifically Facebook where, she said, the bad outweighs the good.

Allen said while research shows Facebook has been shown to help with communication, social connection, involvement within a community and charity, she said it is hindering the ability to carry on conversations in person.

“There’s two different types of communication: asynchronous communication, which, basically, there’s not an immediate feedback, and synchronous,” Allen said. “Synchronous is us having a conversation. “I think [social media] can connect you with friends and family members that aren’t directly there.

“It can help with that kind of connection, but I do think it is definitely impairing younger students’ ability to carry on a conversation. They just don’t know how to do it.”

Political science Professor Markus Smith said a positive outcome of social media is the increase in students who are aware and more engaged in discussions on current topics and issues. However, he said, students often neglect to delve into the topics, and get the background and facts.

“They just don’t have time is what I hear,” he said. “Anything that is fast-paced and can give them a snapshot of what’s going on is enough for them.

“From a professor standpoint, it’s not enough because when they bring these issues up in class, I may pose certain questions and they can’t tell me the background, key information, or facts regarding said events.”

Both professors spoke about cyber bullying.

“I feel that social media basically provides a platform for certain individuals to attack or bully others,” Smith said.

Allen agrees.

“I think [cyber bullying], in my personal opinion, is one of the largest social detrimental impacts that social media has had,” she said.

“… There’s no immediate repercussion for [cyber] bullying somebody. If I’m going to call you a name to your face there’s an immediate and instant reaction that I have to deal with. I post something online and it has no immediate effect on me,” Allen said.

“It’s a bigger issue than we put on and unfortunately, the focus becomes more on the victim not the bully,” Allen said.

Social media also plays a large part in women’s perception of reality, Allen said.

“… We think we are getting to know people on this intimate level when, let’s be honest, you can’t intimately know 5,000 people. That’s just not realistic.

“You also have to be careful about [opening] up Pandora’s box to other relationships we shouldn’t be having,” she said. “My attention is now being drawn from this real-life person sitting next to me to people who are virtually all around the world.”

Social media has employers looking at legalities

Professors say Facebook creates false perceptions
**SPORTS**

**Going for three**

Broadcasting major Kenny Lopez shoots baskets in OCCC’s gym on Feb. 19. Earlier that day, Lopez won a three-point basketball competition. “I won with 16 points,” he said. All classes, facilities and equipment in the Wellness and Aquatic Centers are free to any OCCC student with a valid ID.

To learn more about OCCC’s Wellness Center and intramural sports, visit www.occc.edu/RF/index.html.

**Clayton Mitchell**
Sports Writer
sportswriter@occc.edu

Students wanting to get in better shape can now do that through free group fitness classes offered at OCCC. OCCC Health and Fitness Specialist Carole Valentine, who oversees the group fitness classes, said there are 15 different types of classes offered at various times throughout the week in areas such as yoga, cardio, weightlifting and dancing. In all, she said, 31 classes are available.

Valentine said all of the classes are held on a drop-in basis. “On any given day, someone who’s a regular to the class may or may not come because they have a meeting,” she said. “It’s a very flexible type program.”

She said class size varies as well. “We are a college, so based on the class schedules and work schedules, there is always an ebb and flow as far as how many come.”

Valentine said an improved, healthy lifestyle can lead to better mental health. The fitness classes are great for those students who want to get active and improve their lifestyle, she said. All that’s needed is a valid OCCC ID.

“Obviously everyone knows that health and fitness go hand in hand,” she said. Our programming seems a little bit small, but for those individuals [who] come once or twice or three times a week, that acts as a stress reliever for them, be it a student or be it an employee.”

Nursing major Rachel Hare said she is taking advantage of the free program with fellow nursing students Kerry Curtis and Ginnifer Fenwick. “We love yoga, but we wouldn’t have been able to afford it before,” Hare said.

Fenwick said she, Hare, Curtis joined the Flow Yoga class soon after OCCC decided to make them free of charge. She said the trio have seen steady improvements in their school work since taking part in the class. “I would go as far as to say our test scores have even gotten a little bit better because of this class,” Fenwick said. “We were far less stressed when we went in to sit for our exam Tuesday than we were the last time we sat for a test.”

Curtis agreed. “It’s like we’re going to pay to be stressed out but at least they give us therapy,” she said.

Community members must still purchase a four-month group fitness pass for $125. For more information about the classes and programming, contact Valentine at carole.m.valentine@occc.edu, or 405-682-1611 ext. 7662.

For more about enrollment, contact Recreation and Fitness Secretary Laura Swain at laura.a.swain@occc.edu.

**Fitness classes free to all OCCC students**

**CLAYTON MITCHELL**
Sports Writer
sportswriter@occc.edu

**Spring 2015:**

• 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. Classes are free to OCCC students with a valid ID. 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.

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All event news is due Monday by 5 p.m. for inclusion in the next issue. Email your news to sportswriter@occc.edu.
Facebook: Businesses weigh in on social network question

Continued from page 1

that you do not want to get into. “It could potentially provide information that may lead to discrimination.”

University of Oklahoma Human Resources Representative Bernita Woolfolk said her office also doesn’t check applicants’ social networking sites. “It is not something that we have made a decision to do here,” Woolfolk said but didn’t provide further explanation.

In the past, some employers have gone as far as to ask applicants for login information to their social networking sites.

That prompted Oklahoma Sen. Kyle Loveless (R-OKC) to author a bill that prohibits employers from requesting or requiring access to employee social media accounts in Oklahoma. According to openstates.org, HB 2372 was signed into law May 21, 2014.

Loveless said he had heard of some instances where employers had asked for social media logins and passwords.

He said he has a social media account and it seemed unusual to him that a person’s private site would be open to scrutiny when an employer doesn’t have the right to look through personal U.S. mail.

Loveless said the law was not designed to change the background checking process on possible employees, meaning searching an employee’s Facebook is not prohibited.

It just means an employer cannot ask that social networking login and password information be revealed.

Loveless said social networking sites already offer privacy settings. Therefore, he said, “we didn’t feel that the bill that we had needed to address that specifically.”

“We kind of struck a balance,” he said. “We wanted to try to balance both the needs of the employee, as well as the needs of the employer.”

Even working college students may find themselves under a microscope.

O’Connell’s Bar in Norman is one business that looks at Facebook pages.

Manager Jeff Stewart said he randomly checks potential employee’s Facebook accounts. He said it’s a precaution before hiring somebody he doesn’t know.

“[Facebook] is an added bit of information,” he said. “I think it’s fair to look at it, but I also think it’s fair to question the applicant about it.”

Stewart said he looks at what activities someone may be involved in.

“Maybe something demonstrates to us [what] we interpret as a lack of responsibility — something along that line,” he said.

Victoria’s Pasta Shop Manager Griffin Miller said he also checks Facebook before hiring someone.

“It’s overall things,” he said. “People put all sorts of crazy things on the Internet.”

CareerBuilder.com reported that the most common reasons to pass on a candidate included:

• Job candidate posted provacative or inappropriate photographs or information – 46 percent.
• Job candidate posted information about them drinking or using drugs – 41 percent.
• Job candidates badmouthed their previous company or fellow employee – 36 percent.
• Job candidate had poor communication skills – 32 percent.
• Job candidate had discriminatory comments related to race, gender, religion etc. – 28 percent.
• Job candidate lied about qualifications – 25 percent.
• Job candidate shared confidential information from previous employers – 24 percent.
• Job candidate was linked to criminal behavior – 22 percent.
• Job candidate’s screen name was unprofessional – 21 percent.
• Job candidate lied about an absence – 13 percent.

The website went on to report that, in some cases, social networking may actually help someone get a job.

“… One third of employers who research candidates on social networking sites say they’ve found content that made them more likely to hire a candidate.

“What’s more, nearly a quarter found content that directly led to them hiring the candidate, up from 19 percent last year.”

“Some of the most common reasons employers hired a candidate based on their social networking presence included:

• Got a good feel for the job candidate’s personality; could see a good fit within the company culture – 46 percent.
• Job candidate’s background information supported their professional qualifications for the job – 45 percent.
• Job candidate’s site conveyed a professional image – 43 percent.
• Job candidate was well-rounded, showed a wide range of interests – 40 percent.
• Job candidate had great communication skills – 40 percent.
• Job candidate was creative – 36 percent.
• Job candidate received awards and accolades – 31 percent.
• Other people posted great references about the job candidate – 30 percent.
• Job candidate had interacted with my company’s social media accounts – 24 percent.
• Job candidate had a large amount of followers or subscribers – 14 percent.

Robin Cross, biology major, said she believes employers should look at someone’s Facebook.

“I think that it’s kind of like another way they can see who you really are as a person, because I feel like people can really put on a front in an interview and [while] that can help you get a job, it might just be a waste of the employee’s time …,” Cross said.

Art and pre-education major Kelsey Rice said she agrees.

“I think it’s fair, because people on Facebook show exactly what kind of person they are and if you’re a responsible person who could be doing something very inappropriate for a work environment, your employer should know about that,” she said.

Mechanical engineering major Kale Harper said Facebook can give employers insight.

“It gives them an idea of their character, tells them who they’re going to be working with and what kind of person they are,” Harper said.

Computer science major Peter Hodgen agreed that employers should check Facebook.

“Whoever is applying for the job shouldn’t have anything to hide,” Hodgen said.

“If they’re lying about something, then obviously that’s an issue.”

Monica Neri, pre-education major, said she does not think employers should look at Facebook.

“It’s personal,” she said.

Rachel Dely, fashion marketing major, said she is indifferent.

“Honestly, I don’t think it should matter,” she said.

“Personally, it just depends on how much they trust their employee before they hire them.”

For more information about social networking and jobs, visit www.careerbuilder.com.


Turn to page 7 for more about Facebook.

Employers are watching

Jobs.aol.com reports that a 2013 study from market analyst firm On Device Research found that “one in 10 young job seekers have lost a job opportunity because of their social media profiles.

In the U.S. alone, the total was 8 percent among those 16- to 24-years-old and 5 percent for those 25- to 34-years-old.”

A 2014 survey from CareerBuilder discovered “51 percent of employers who research job candidates on social media said they’ve found content that caused them not to hire the candidate. That’s up from 43 percent in 2013 and 34 percent in 2012.”

The trend seems to be growing according to the site.

“Forty-three percent of employers use social networking sites to research job candidates, up from 39 percent last year and 36 percent in 2012. Additionally, 12 percent of employers don’t currently research candidates on social media but plan to start, according to the national survey, which was conducted online by Harris Poll on behalf of CareerBuilder from Feb. 10 to March 4, 2014.”

“The poll included a representative sample of 2,138 hiring managers and human resource professionals, and a representative sample of 3,022 full-time, private sector workers across industries and company sizes.”
LAUREN DANIEL  
Online Editor  
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Wagging tails and barking can be seen and heard from 7 to 8 p.m. March 11 in the Visual and Performing Arts Center during a screening of “Bassett Tales,” a film about how a dog training program was started at Mabel Bassett Correctional Center, a state maximum-security women’s prison. Dr. John Otto, a veterinarian at University Animal Hospital, produced the film.

“It’s a collection of stories — or tales — about how you start a dog program at a prison . . . ,” Otto said.

“The second half of the movie is a series of testimonial letters about how the program impacts different areas of our society and can help different areas of our society, including the offenders, the children of the offenders and that sort of thing.”

Otto said the idea behind “Bassett Tales” is to convince prisons across the state to adopt a program similar to the Friends for Folks program he helps run at Lexington Correctional Center.

Film and Video Professor Greg Mellott said the program pairs prisoners with “problem dogs,” which teaches them to love at a deeper level and work past the hurt in their personal lives.

“The dogs that go into this program . . . become healed and transformed, and are out to new lives,” he said. “As hard as it is to say goodbye to something you have loved and has loved you back, you’ve done a really good thing for that life form, and as a result, you have grown in your ability to feel for another living thing.

“That is a huge step forward in rehabilitation . . . . It really is a huge difference and you’ll be able to hear that and see that and feel that from the people, what a difference in makes in their lives.”

A film about that program recently was nominated for an Emmy, “The Dogs of Lexington,” produced by OCCC students and Mellott, heavily influenced the making of “Bassett Tales,” Otto said.

“Because that program was so successful, other prisons wanted to recreate the program,” he said.

“So, I decided it would be a good idea to make a film about how you start a prison dog program, to be inspirational and also somewhat of a how-to starter program showing how you get it going.”

Mellott said “The Dogs of Lexington” convinced the Department of Corrections to integrate the dog program into the Mabel Bassett prison.

“Oklahoma, as our first film pointed out, has the highest per capita incarceration rate for women in the world, in the entire world . . . .

“No one per capita puts more women behind bars than Oklahoma . . . and we’re third or fourth for men, so we thought, ‘OK, this would be the perfect place to take this program in and show what that’s like when a program comes into a prison and it’s a brand new experience,’” he said.

Mellott said, because of the first film, dogs also have been brought into Griffin Memorial Hospital in Norman, Norman Public Schools and paired with Veterans.

‘Bassett Tales’ screening March 11

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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.

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Signed album covers on exhibit through March 27

JAMIE KISLING
News Writing Student

A new art exhibit on campus features 59 works consisting of signed album jackets and music memorabilia from 1923 to 2003. Cultural Programs Assistant Scott Tigert said the show, "Tailored Jackets: Second Fitting," will run through Friday, March 27, in OCCC’s Inasmuch Foundation Gallery.

All albums were lent by a private collector, Tigert said. The albums range from blues singers like Bessie Smith to punk legends like The Clash.

Most of the albums are signed by the band members and have been framed for display — thus the name "Tailored Jackets."

Visitors will be able to discover the artists, photographers and designers whose work make up the jackets, Tigert said.

Many people may remember a similar exhibit last semester that featured 55 signed albums, but Tigert said this is a whole new exhibit with completely different albums to appreciate and discover. Visitors also will be able to enter a contest to win a "tailored jacket" to display in their own home.

The item that’s up for grabs is a poster of Bessie Smith featuring her 78 rpm recording of "Downhearted Blues," Tigert said.

The Inasmuch Foundation Gallery is open from 1 to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. It is located next to the theater atrium in the Visual and Performing Arts Center. Admission is free.

For more information, call the Cultural Programs office at 405-682-7576.

Third trespassing at off-campus location reported

JORGE KRZYZANIAK
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Trespassing and a student entering a restricted area were reported to campus police in mid-February.

For the third time in less than two months, a door at OCCC’s Capitol Hill Center was found open by police patrolling the area around 2 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 11. The door was secured and all other entrances checked by campus police.

Police Chief James Fitzpatrick said this is a common issue with vacant structures and construction sites.

"This is not an unexpected issue," he said.

Fitzpatrick said police will continue to patrol the area several times each day.

Police questioned a student who, for the second time this semester, entered a restricted area of the campus.

The unnamed student was discovered at around 2:30 p.m. Feb. 19 studying in a second floor conference room in the Main Building, according to the report. When asked by staff if he had permission to use the area, the student said he had followed the procedure for reserving the room. The student said he was "affiliated with Film and Video Production."

It’s reported that the student refused to give his name after being asked several times. Staff members said the man "ignored, deflected or refused to answer their questions."

According to the report, the staff members then contacted campus police.

Police Officer David Madden said he found the student in a corner of the room manipulating a tablet device on a tripod. He said the student was reluctant to provide identification but ultimately allowed police to view his ID and admitted he had not made a reservation for the room.

The man told Madden he worked at OCCC but later retracted that statement.

"He would respond to the questions with random other statements but never answer the questions," Madden said in his report.

The student was asked to accompany the officer to the police department on the first floor of the Main Building. He refused to cooperate and, at one point, "squared his body toward Madden."

The student was told his demeanor and his attitude toward campus officials would not be tolerated. He was then released without further incident.

Police then reviewed previous reports and found the same student had been contacted about a month earlier for causing a disturbance in the Wellness Center.

In that report, the student is said to have entered the area behind the Wellness Center desk and had been informed that he was not to enter restricted areas of the campus.

Some information was redacted from the reports under the direction of Marketing and Public Relations Director Cordell Jordan who said names are withheld. According to OCCC PD Standard Operating Procedures involving information released and information withheld.

To obtain a copy of the procedure, email cjordan@occc.edu.

To contact campus police, call 405-682-1611, ext. 7747.

For an emergency, use one of the call boxes located inside and outside on campus or call 405-682-7872.