

PANTHER PRIDE

School Principals: Shawna Coplen, Lynn Cragg

website: http:/osb.k12.ok.us/

1. Qtr. Honor Roll

"A" Honor Roll

1. Qtr. (Elem. & MS only)

Elementary (3-5 Gr.)

Elijah Cervantes-Phipps Haidyn James LaShae McGuire Khup Tuang

Middle School (6-8 Gr.)

Stephanie Glynn Kelton Jordan Macey Millar

2. Qtr. / 1. Sem. Grades were not available in time for this edition.





"B" Honor Roll

1. Qtr. (Elem. & MS only)

Elementary (3-5 Gr.)

Austin Heffley
Gabriella Henderson
Katie Hoyl
Kennedy Sullivan

Middle School (6-8 Gr.)

Payton Crum
Noah Dougan
Braylen Fuller
Garrett Hillshafer
Austyn Lawler
Douglas Lee
Genevieve Owens
Braydon Roberts
Kesslee Travis

Students of the 1. Semester

Elementary: Haidyn James & Elijah Cervantes-Phipps
Middle School: Macey Millar & Stephanie Glynn
High School: Erikson Lopez & Julia Cisneros

What's YOUR favorite Christmas Song?

By Tera Webb

Mrs. Webb's awesome Geometry class created a Christmas Songs data collect project. We talked to 90 different people on campus about their favorite Christmas song out of our selections.



Rudolph the Red-Nose Reindeer

was the absolute favorite!

You can check out the data collection graph outside of Mrs. Webb's classroom!

Oklahoma School for the Blind

2023 - 2024, Issue 2 December 20, 2023

Editor: Maggie Mattox

Next Edition: March 7, 2024 (tentative)

Special points of interest:

- Space Camp
- · Stack Up Days
- ESSER Grant Update
- The Saga of John Timith Gibbles I
- FCCLA Updates
- DRS 30th Anniversary

Inside this issue:

Caught being Good	2
Blood Drive Update	2
Blessings/Donations	2
Space Camp	3
Forensic Science, etc.	4
Stack Up Days - World Record	d 5
NSU Optometry Field Trip	6
r/Sr. Fundraiser Updates	6
Habitudes (Oct. & Nov.)	7
Mini Grants	8
Goalball Nationals	8
Greenhouse Update	9
White Cane Awareness Day	9
Cane Quest Update	10-11
Elem. Pumpkin Patch Trip	11
Elem. Trick or Treat	12
Fall Festival Update	12
ESSER Grant Update	13-14
Panther Pride 5K	14
Saga of John Timith Gibbles I	15
Recreation Activities	16-17
Christmas Play	18
Santa Visit pictures	18
Wrestling Pictures	18
CCLA Update	19
ORS 30th Anniversary	20
Going the Extra Mile	21
Birthdays (JanMarch)	22
Staff Changes	23
Jpcoming Events	23
Rload Drive Flyer	24

Social Services Department - News, Tips, etc.



It's never too late to be caught being good....
So keep up the good work students!!
We are proud of you all!

"Caught Being Good"

- Leah Sailors & Piper Conner for assisting other students at Space camp.
- Ryan Williams for loaning his IPad to a class so that they were all able to watch a video.
- Jacob Cantù for helping me with a computer issue.
- Treysen Radick for reaching out to another student who was having a hard time.
- Ryan Williams, Emileigh Jackson, Angel Cozort, Piper Conner, Macey Millar, Braylen Fuller & Kairi Husmann for stepping out of his or her comfort zone and talking to business owners, whom he or she did not know, explaining their fundraiser (Panther Pride 5k) and asking for sponsorship money. Each student leader demonstrated people skills, determination, and perseverance!
- Lane Sutterfield for helping a new student get to his next class.
- Emileigh Jackson for working hard on the potato bake.
- Ryan Williams for getting all of the potatoes for the potato bake.
- Scott Moore for always being helpful.
- Lorie Cox for having been a big help these last couple months with transporting Anicka to all of our many outings.

Blood Drive Update & Upcoming Drive Dates

By Allison Garner



Great news to share regarding our recent blood drive!

Our goal was to collect 15 units, and we did 17!

Thanks to all who donated or encouraged others to do so!

Our **next drive** will be on

January 23rd

and the Bloodmobile will be back!

(Please see the **official flyer - last page -** for more information and for sign up op-

tions.)

We also have a spring drive scheduled for **April 16**th.

We appear to be on track to award one of our graduating seniors a scholarship from OBI.

Thank you for your support.

Allison Garner

Blessings

By Mickie Johnson

Boulevard Christian Church blessed our personal hygiene closet with all the products the kids always need. THANK YOU Boulevard Christian Church. We really appreciate your support.



SCIVIC Space Camp 2023 - Huntsville, AL

By Cheryl Daniels-James



This past October, four 9th Grade OSB students traveled to the US Space and Rocket Center in

Huntsville, Alabama to attend SCIVIS, Space Camp for Interested Visually Impaired Students.

Two students were awarded national scholarships to attend.

Piper Conner received the Delta Gamma Scholarship for \$560 and Leah Sailors received the Northrop Grumman Scholarship which was for full tuition + airfare (about \$1700)!

Congratulations to those two young ladies!



From Left: Leah S., Justin M., Evy K. and Piper C.

Other students attending were **Evy Kizzia** and **Justin Millar**.

In all, around 200 students from around the world attended - they came from Belgium, Israel, Costa Rica, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Romania, and all over the U.S.



Leah the astronaut

SCIVIS is a weeklong camp where students experience astronaut training simulations, work on team building skills, and participate in high and/or low ropes courses.
All campers during this week are either blind or visually impaired.



Students even have a **Q&A**Session with NASA employees
who are visually impaired / blind
where they explain what accommodations make their careers
possible! How cool is that?!

During this special week, the camp counselors undergo special training and have mini lessons in orientation & mobility, sighted guide techniques, and how to make presentations as accessible as possible for our students. The simulators also have braille and the scripts are available in braille and large print as well.

Students are chosen to attend space camp based on their independent living skills, interest in the program, grades, attendance, and behavior. They are asked to write an essay, have a teacher recommendation letter, and meet standards in an independent skills checklist.

The campers had a great time and made lots of new friends.

We are planning a presentation in the spring to tell everyone more about the SCIVIS experience!

A huge thank you to two organizations who have supported our space camp program here at OSB: The Oklahoma Foundation for the Education of Blind Children and Youth, Inc.

and The **Anne & Henry Zarrow Foundation** from Tulsa. The program couldn't exist without their support.













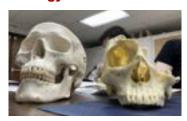


Page 3 Panther Pride

Forensics Solves Manner of Death at the Museum of Osteology

By Cheryl Daniels-James

On October 30th, students in the Forensic Science class traveled to Oklahoma City to visit the Museum of Osteology, where they took the "Forensic Osteology: Human Skulls"



course, which is a crime labbased program that focuses on the forensic investigation of various types of trauma to the human skull.



Each of the groups had an exact replica of a real human skull that had succumbed to some type of



trauma which resulted in the death of that person.

Students learned how to distinguish

between male and female skulls and also how to discern the



average age of the person.

After that, they had to try to figure out what type of trauma had occurred to the person.



The cases were all real.

In addition to the class, the students visited the museum area which has over 450 real skeletons from around the world.

The displays include Oklahoma

Wildlife, human anatomy, primates, whales, and much more. There are also hands-on exhibits of various animal skulls to identify.

A big thank you to Miss Jeannie and Susana Jackman for traveling to Oklahoma City with us and for assisting me with the class!



Biology, Physical Science, and Forensic Science

By Cheryl Daniels-James

Random Classroom Pictures:



Biology



Biology Cellular Respiration lab



Biology measuring CO2 production while



Biology - Hunter exhales for the cellular respiration lab



Biology - Treysen exercises before we measure his vitals and CO2 production.



Biology - Fermentation Lab



Biology in the greenhouse



Physical Science - Friction Activity



Physical Science studying electricity



Physical Science Thermal Tower



Forensic Science class studying fiber and hair evidence



Forensic Science class studying fiber and hair evidence.

Page 4 Panther Pride

Stack Up Days

By Tera Webb

November 14, 15 and 16, the OSB family helped to break the current world record for Cup Stacking.

Last year the total number of stackers was 737,863 and OSB had 53 stackers.

This year the goal was 750,000! OSB had 70 stackers participate over the 3 days this year.

See below the results of this year's Stack Up Days...











Congratulations! - 746,698 stackers is the new STACK UP! World Record

A huge thank you to each of the 746,698 stackers and 2,242 schools / organizations who took part on November 14th, 15th and/or 16th to help set a new WSSA World Record for the "Most People Sport Stacking at Multiple Locations".

You and your schools came through to help push us past the previous record of 737,863!

Share this link with Parents so they can see how your school helped set a new World Record!

 Oklahoma School For The Blind helped set a New World Record: https://www.thewssa.com/stackup/2023/the_sport/?rid=40342

We would like to congratulate our top 5 Schools in this year's STACK UP! Check out thewssa.com/stackup/ for full list of participants.

- ◆ 1,524 stackers from Brecksville-Broadview Heights Elementary School, Brecksville OH
- ◆ 1,464 stackers from Jenks East Elementary, Jenks OK
- ◆ 1,260 stackers from Sand Hill Elementary, Summerville SC
- ◆ 1,235 stackers from Chelsea Intermediate School, Frankfort IL
- 1,090 stackers from Woodland Elementary School, Milford MA

We'll see you next fall for the 2024 STACK UP!

Lisa Berman
Director of USA Sport Stacking
thewssa.com

World Sport Stacking Association 15550 Arfsten Rd Larkspur, CO 80118



Page 5 Panther Pride

NSU Oklahoma College of Optometry - MS annual Field Trip

By Faye Miller

On Monday, November 27, the OSB Middle School made a trip to the NSU Oklahoma College of Optometry. This trip has been an annual event since 2008 and gives us all an opportunity for positive interactions between the 3rd year optometry students and our students. OSB students get to practice public speaking skills and can learn about college life as they talk with the optometry students and tour the NSU campus.

We learned about the history of braille, including the War of the



Dots. then practiced braille using College & OSB students practicing Body Braille body braille.

The finale was a game of Braille Jeopardy where the top prize was getting first in line for the pizza



Braille Jeopardy

lunch.

This lunch was provided through a generous donation from Patsi Nix Smith.



Winners first!

If you recognize that name, you may also thank Patsi and the Nix Foundation for sunglasses and reading glasses you receive from the NSU OCO Low Vision Clinic, the awning from the East Lobby to the new gym, and the renovations in the FACS kitchen.

The top scoring team in Braille Jeopardy was Macey Millar's group and close behind was Stephanie Glynn and her group.

We went for a walk across campus to see the statue of Sequoyah.



The weather cooperated with us and it was sunny and almost

warm.

Then, Ms. Patsi invited us to see her log cabin.



It was built in 1833 which makes it 190 years old.





She told us about her family who traveled to Oklahoma on the Trail of Tears in 1830 and lived in this house. We learned a lot of history.



Ms. Patsi enjoying the time with students

Ir / Sr Potato Bake Fundraiser

By Cheryl Daniels-James

A HUGE THANK YOU to everyone who donated to and supported the potato bake last month. The junior / senior classes made \$443!



Jr / Sr Dessert Fundraiser

By Maggie Mattox

Every December, the junior / senior classes enlist talented dessert chefs for their annual Christmas Dessert Silent Auction.

A HUGE THANK YOU to all our chefs, as well as to all our bidders (even if you did not win). The junior / senior classes made \$477 this year!



Page 6 Panther Pride

Habitude - October

By Laci Goins

In October our Habitude focused on making sure we are taking care of ourselves. This time of year we start to focus on the people we love and tend to forget that we need to make sure we are taking care of our own physical and emotional needs. The students and staff discussed the story of the **Starving Baker**.



The story of the Starving Baker illustrates the importance of taking care of our own needs in order to serve others.

The story is about a man who opened a bakery in a small town. The bakery was very successful and had a line waiting on it to open each morning and sold out each evening. The baker felt the love and gratitude from the townspeople and wanted to always provide them the best product, for that reason the baker did EVERYTHING himself. The baker ran the shop all day and baked the goods all night. Slowly the baker became ill because he did not take any time to take care

of his own needs and the shop had to close.

Most of us are so busy that we fall into **starving baker mode**. We get so wrapped up in our jobs, the house, errands, and everyone else and their matters that we never push "pause" and take the time to feed ourselves.

During this busy time of year it is important for everyone to

remember to fill their own cups first because you cannot pour from an empty cup.



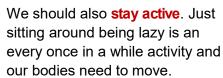
Habitude - November

By Laci Goins

The Habitude for the month of November was all about beating those "winter blues".



This time of year the change of the season can cause feelings of sadness, which is known as the "winter blues". There are several things that we can do to help us feel better and enjoy this time of year instead of letting it bring us down. One of the most important things we can do is to keep to our routines. Just because you can't get out of the house, it doesn't mean you have to change your routine.



By eating healthy we will be putting good fuel in our bodies. When a car gets bad gas it doesn't run right and the same thing goes for our bodies.

Staying social and having some fun is also very important as well as sharing your feelings with someone you trust.

There are so many different ways to beat the winter blues this season.

Don't forget that we are all here to help each other and to reach out if you are feeling down.





Page 7 Panther Pride

Mini Grants

By Faye Miller

Oklahoma Foundation for the Education of Blind Children and Youth, Inc. announced the recipients of the 2023 Mini Grants.

This Foundation was founded in 1997 and since its founding, the Foundation has given away over \$95,000 in mini grants.

This year, OSB received \$4460.79 awarded to 4 teachers.



Ms. Page will use her mini grant money to purchase new flower pots so when the students sell plants next year, they will be

in beautiful pots.

Mr. Jackman will use his mini grant to purchase new maps and a globe for his classroom. This will help students learn where current events - that they hear about - are happening.

Mr. Miller is excited about continuing his robotics program. His materials include Raspberry Pi's his students will get to keep when their class is completed.

Finally, **Mrs. Daniels** received money to help 3 students go to Space Camp next year.

Congratulations

to our OSB teachers that obtained mini grants from the Oklahoma Foundation for the Education of Blind Children and Youth!

Thank you to all of the teachers that applied for this grant.

I appreciate your efforts.

Rita J. Echelle, Superintendent



Goalball Nationals at Austin, TX

By Shelby Gamble



Let's go PANTHERS !!!

On November 2nd, 2023, the OSB goalball team headed to Austin, Texas to experience nationals for the first time.

Along the way we had to stop at **Buc-ee's** of course ...



The students showed up and represented OSB, and what it means to be a panther, well.

It was a great opportunity to compete, learn, and grow.

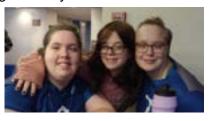




There were teams from across the nation such as: Florida, Louisiana, Georgia, Alabama, Utah, New Mexico, Washington, Kentucky, Virginia, and Texas.



It was great for students to be in an uplifting space to play a game they love.



The team is looking forward to continuing practicing and applying the lessons we learned to get better.



Page 8 Panther Pride

Greenhouse Update

By Ann Page

October was National Farm to School Month, Schools all over the nation were celebrating being able to provide fresh produce for their students.

Our students harvested all our sweet potatoes and the fantastic cafeteria ladies cooked them for a lunch time treat.

Our students have also harvested chard, romaine lettuce, arugula, cilantro and other greens for the cafeteria salads.

Students have been busy working. Planting, repotting, watering, and harvesting are just a few of the jobs they are doing. They have also been working on propagating

various houseplants from cuttings.

Some classes are working on a few informative videos that will be shared on Facebook and OSB's website.

Below are some images of a few of our tasty plants.



Romaine Lettuce





Sandy Lettuce



Thyme



Cilantro







Thai Basil



Carrots



Parsley

OSB marks White Cane Awareness Day

Students gather in Downtown Park to mark event



Muskogee - Oklahoma School for the Blind staff hosted white cane users and sighted supporters for **National White Cane Safety** Awareness Day on October 12, walking through Mural Park on Broadway Street.

White Cane Safety Awareness Day is traditionally celebrated worldwide on October 15, but

OSB organizers rescheduled this year because that date fell on a Sunday.

Oklahoma law requires drivers to completely stop their vehicles 15 feet away from pedestrians who are visually impaired and identified by use of white canes, white canes with red tips or dog quides.

People who violate this law are guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for up to three months or \$100 fine or both.

Oklahoma law also stipulates that only blind people may carry white canes with or without red tips, which are internationally recognized as mobility aids for people with vision impairments.

White Cane Safety Awareness Day was first established by presidential proclamation in 1964. The first white cane laws were drafted around the same time. Today, similar laws exist in all 50 states and in the District of Columbia.



Page 9 Panther Pride

Cane Quest - Update



Cane Questers bring competition downtown.

By Cathy Spaulding, Muskogee Phoenix – Nov. 10, 2023 (Pictures added by Maggie Mattox)



Ketchum high school sophomore Angel Cozort waited for just the right times to cross different intersections in downtown Muskogee Wednesday

afternoon.

She listened for cars along Second Street, shielded her eyes to glimpse the lighted "pedestrian crossing" icon on a Broadway traffic light.

Angel was one of 32 visually impaired students competing in Oklahoma School for the Blind's 11th Oklahoma Regional Cane Quest. Contestants use their white canes to identify obstacles such as changes in surface or stairs, in a quest for prizes.

OSB orientation and mobility instructor Faye Miller said Cane Quest offers "a great opportunity to show the community all the skills our students have."

"It's also a great opportunity to get the community involved with our students," she said. "We have volunteers from all over Oklahoma. Some of them are certified orientation mobility specialists, some of them are teachers of the visually impaired. Some are community volunteers, like from the Oklahoma State

University HOP (High Obesity Program), Connect Muskogee, and Muskogee County Health Department."

Cozort said the easiest part of her challenge was identifying intersections, such as the T-intersection, Y-intersection and roundabout.

"I think I did all right," Cozort said after she finished her quest. "But I forgot the name of the two point touch, where you take your cane and tap it on the left side and you put it up an inch then you tap it to the right and you constantly do that."

She demonstrated her ability to do the two-point touch, as well as the three-point touch when she tapped twice on a sidewalk and once on a wall.

Josie Cox, a sophomore from Lawton, also had trouble remembering the two-point touch.

"Also crossing the street when it's very noisy," Josie said.

Miller said 22 contestants competed in the downtown quest. Downtown challenges included five different street crossings: Stop signs with heavy traffic, stop signs with light traffic, traffic lights with and without pedestrian buttons and driveways.





Challenges at Muskogee Civic Center included going up and down stairs, seeking assistance, and demonstrating cane techniques.

Another 10 competed at the school.

They are the ones who don't have downtown travel skills in order to cross streets independently," she said.

Cane Quest is a national program of the Braille Institute of America, based in Los Angeles.

11th ANNUAL CANE QUEST WINNERS

Trailblazer B1:

Gold - Kolten Pennington, Ada;



Silver -Delilah Howell, Westville;



Kolten

Lilith

Delilah **Bronze** - Lilith Pedersen, Anadarko.



Gold - Piper Conner, Perkins;

Silver - Leah Sailors, Sand

Springs:

Bronze - Angel Cozort, Ketchum.



Leah (Left) & Piper

Explorers B1:

Gold - Stephanie Glynn, Tulsa; (no picture available) Silver - Quanté Sellers, Oklahoma City;

(no picture available) **Bronze** - Hunter Pugh,
Talala.



Hunter

Explorers B2: Gold - Macey Millar, Muldrow;

į.



Macey

(Continued on page 11)

Cane Quest - Update (continued)

(Continued from page 10)

Silver - Kairi Husmann, Oklahoma City; Bronze - Elli Montgomery, Shady Point. (no picture available)



Kairi

Top Scouts:

Justus Hoover, Alva;



Justus

Blaze Calger, Duncan;

and Gabriella Henderson, Muskogee.

(no picture available)

https://

www.muskogeephoenix.com/news/canequesters-bring-competition-downtown/ article b65b1d40-7e72-11ee-9581b76871df49ea.html

We would like to express our gratitude to all our sponsors by saying **THANK YOU** for your ongoing support.



Braille Institute of America
Donations in Memory of Bud Holder & George Isbell
Frank Dirksen
Jeri's House
Lawton Council of the Blind
Liberty Braille
Muskagee County Health Department
NanoPac
Oklahoma Chapter of AERBVI

Oklahoma Council of the Blind Oklahoma State University - HOP Ruth Kelly Studios Sapulpa Llons Club Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired Transcribing Mariners Tulsa Downtown Llons Club

Elementary Pumpkin Patch Field Trip

By Beth Stanfield

The morning of October 23rd started with a fun ride on the "big bus" for the elementary students as we headed to the Rocking R Pumpkin Patch in Tahlequah.

The students began the day by visiting with and feeding the goats,

rabbits, and chickens in their pen. We heard some giggles as the animals tickled the kids' hands while nibbling food.



The kids then separated to different activities with the most popular



seeming to be the giant jump pad.
Xane, Austin, Neal, Elijah, and Hunter did huge jumps and even some flips making for a fun time.

Avree and Tali had fun sliding

through the giant tubes on feed sacks while others rode the barrel



train, pulled by Mr. Richard's fourwheeler, through the pumpkin patch.

Some of the older kids found their

way through the corn maze as
Blaze and
Ronaldo rode the bucking bronco



barrel and kept Mrs. Gamble on her toes "helping" the barrel to buck.

Katie, Gabby, Liam, Deegan, and Dawson enjoyed swinging higher and higher on the **big swings**.

Khup, Kennedy, Shae, Haidyn and Nina rode the bikes around and around the hay bales in the bike area.

Everyone also visited the **pumpkin patch** to pick out their very



own mini pumpkin to take home with them.

We all gathered for lunch at the picnic area before taking a hayride through the spooky forest where we saw ghosts and skeletons and tried to keep up with the farmer's dog. She also had a good time with the kiddos!

Before leaving, we took some great pictures of the kids on the big hay bale couch and Mr. Richard surprised us by giving back a donation covering the cost of our entry fees.

We appreciate him and Mrs. Kim so much! It was a fun day at the Pumpkin Patch!



Page 11 Panther Pride

Elementary Trick or Trick

By Jennifer Eckerson & Shawna Coplen

On October 26th OSB hosted the elementary with a Trick-or-Treat event around the school.

The older students and the staff dressed in costumes that day for Red Ribbon Week and the elementary students went around the school for their annual Trick-or-Treat.

Every year the Elementary Student's enjoy parading around all the different places here at school: the offices, ILS, clinic, cafeteria, middle school, high school and maintenance. The students always end up with a bag full of candy and we all enjoy seeing everyone's costumes!















Fall Festival

By Shawna Coplen

The Fall Festival was originally scheduled for October 24th, but due to a great chance of rain that night, the festival committee decided to move it to Monday, October 23rd. They pulled together and made all of the necessary last -minute changes to make the move. The weather was perfect!

We had the traditional hayride, inflatables and many new festival games for the kids to enjoy. We had a pumpkin sweep, photo booth, pumpkin ring toss, coffin punch-a-prize, candy corn balloon pop, bowling, face painting, duck pond, and many more.

The students enjoyed funnel cakes, nachos, snow cones, kettle corn and cotton candy.

The Speech and Drama Class once again hosted the spook house for a scary walk through a deserted old prison.

The Dunk Tank was a new event added this year and the most popular! The student council members stepped up to be the 'dunkees." Fortunately the weather was nice and the water was tolerable.

Former teacher, Mr. Butler came from an hour and a half away to bring his train for the kids to enjoy. It was a great surprise and treat for the students.

We had a record attendance and a great time was had by all!















Page 12 Panther Pride

Esser Grant Update

By Laci Goins

October through December were jam packed with after school activities provided by ESSER grant funding.

OSB participated in the annual "Lights On Afterschool" event sponsored by the AfterSchool Alliance which is the only nationwide event celebrating after school programs and their important role in the lives of children. families and communities.

This year the theme was "Lights On for Literacy" and OSB hosted events every Tuesday in October beginning with a Braille Scavenger hunt where students teamed up to follow braille clues around the school to gather ingredients to make a haunted trail mix.

The second Tuesday the students and staff traveled to the Muskogee Public Library where they listened to a story and explored what their local libraries can do for them.

On the third Tuesday we had a Frontiersman storvteller come tell his life story by the fire. The older



boys had to demonstrate their skills at fire building the night before and are now pros at it.



We also had the privilege to retire some flags and honor many

family members and friends who had died while serving our country.

We finished off the event with

spooky crafts and treats in our very own Library Media Center. Having access to such a wonderful collection of large print and braille books is what makes our library stand out from the rest and we are very proud of it.

On November 29th, the ESSER grant allowed us to travel to historic downtown Muskogee to the Muskogee Little Theater where students and staff enjoyed a special performance of this year's Christmas play "A 1940s Radio Christmas Carol".



Everyone was excited to go and it was the first live theater experience for many of us. Many of the staff volunteered to sit amongst the students in order to provide a description of the on stage action when it was needed. The staff enjoyed spending time with the students outside of their normal iob duties and it allowed for the students to see them in a different light. There were also several parents who were able to attend, which made the event even more special. After the play the students were able to visit with the actors and express their gratitude for taking the time to have a performance just for them.

The month of November also brought a "naked turkey" to the 5th floor of the classroom building. The students and staff were tasked with helping the turkey

"get dressed" for a Thanksgiving party by decorating feathers and writing on them things they are thankful for. Not only was the turkey the best dressed turkey at the party, but the 6th grade students wrote a backstory for him. You can read the story of John Timith Gibbles I (the first) on page 15 in this newsletter.

December is always a busy month at OSB, but the girls were able to have a night out at "Creative Soul". an arts and crafts shop in downtown Muskogee, where they made holiday banners.

We had a lot of fun expressing our artistic sides while having a girls night.



















Mrs. Jackman also extended library hours once a week in

(Continued on page 14)

Page 13

Esser Grant Update (continued)

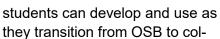
(Continued from page 13)

order for the students to take advantage of our awesome library resources and interested students were able to visit the Muskogee Public Library on occasion.

ESSER continues to provide early morning enrichment time for our students, where they can get extra support from mentor

teachers, and after school clubs such as 3D Printing, Braille Club, Crafty Creations, Game Club, and Leadership Club.

Each of these activities promote skills that our





Crafty Creations



Crafty Creations

lege or career, as well as lifetime leisure and healthy lifestyle.

The mentor teachers for ESSER are looking forward to the next semester where we will continue to offer morning enrichment classes and other activities for the students to participate in after school.

2023 Panther Pride 5k

By Susan Young Mock

OSB Student Council partnered with the Leadership Club to host the **annual Panther Pride 5k** on Saturday, December 9, 2023.



Even Santa came.

Unlike last year's near-freezing race, this year's race was perfect. There was no wind against which runners had to brace and the upper 40* temps made exercise

comfortable.

Last year's winner, 18 year-old Tucker Friend from Tahlequah, ran away with the win again this year and beat his time to stay below 18 minutes! Five kilometers is 3.21 miles, so Tucker averaged about five and a half minutes per mile!

The Leadership Club and Student Council members appreciate

our OSB family help procuring sponsorships: Shelby Gamble, Laci Goins, Maggie Mattox, Melissa Smith, and Rita Echelle.

Thank you to OSB volunteers, Robert Miller, Faye Miller, and Jason Jenkins for getting up extra early on a Saturday morning, traveling to OSB, and working hard all morning.

Congratulations to OSB participants Beth Stanfield, Chris Parisotto, and Jayla Riley for completing a tough course. Chris even ran back on course to encourage other participants and cheered them on to the finish line!

The Student Council and Leadership Club members have spent the past month organizing the various activities leading up to the race and getting sponsorship money. Those involved were Ryan Williams, Emileigh Jackson, Angel Cozort, Piper Conner, Macey Millar, Braylen Fuller, Kairi Husmann, and Stephanie Glynn, with the help of Susan Young Mock, Student Council and Leadership Club Advisor.







Page 14 Panther Pride

The Saga of John Timith Gibbles I - The Naked Turkey of OSB

By Eric, Garrett, Kairi, Ellie, and Douglas

Hatched in a lab of Fort Sill, OK, a tiny turkey was lavished with everything he wanted. I mean, this guy was rich! He had nice, luscious, soft, golden-amber feathers for his relatives from the Circus and his care-takers fed him well. Allow us to introduce John Timith Gibbles I (the first) also known as Johnny.

One day, the scientist responsible for Johnny wanted to test him. They brought Johnny to a large and tall maze. The scientist said if he completed the maze, Johnny would get all the corn he could eat! Johnny was happy, for he delighted in the glorious taste of delicious sweet corn. Johnny strapped on his running shoes and was prepared to eat.

He entered the maze, a tall, white, entanglement of walls, and smelled the enticing aroma of the sweet corn. Johnny dashed towards the corn but tripped on a vent. The vent cover popped off and our clumsy hero got sucked in.

Poor Johnny! As he fell further into the vent tube, he felt his feathers being ripped out of his body. Finally, he stopped falling and gathered his wits about him. In pain, he slowly climbed back out of the devilish vent. At the same time, his feathers flew into the generator like a thousand arrows. With a mighty BOOM, the generator exploded, igniting the chemicals in the science lab. Fortunately, the scientists made their way to the safe room in the nick of time. However, they had

to traverse the maze of underground tunnels which run for miles and miles. Johnny jumped out of the window and escaped the blast. As you well know, thanks to Mr. Carlson and Les Nessman, turkeys can't fly; thankfully, the WKRP radio van broke his fall. Our hero was now all alone, bleeding, battered, and torn. John Timith Gibbles I (the first) decided to flee the town but no one would help him for now he was ugly.

What will happen to our naked turkey? Will the scientists make it out of the tunnels before Thanksgiving? Will Johnny ever find love? Will Johnny need a sweater? Do turkeys wear pants? Is Johnny doomed to wander around alone forever?

Poor Johnny traveled the land in his depressed state. He had no food, water, home, or friends. What ever will he do? He was lost and crying soft turkey sobs; however, being the hero that he was, our Johnny persevered. He stumbled into a quaint town called Muskogee, where he saw people waving and calling out, "Okie! Okie!" and they sang an endearing song by Merle Haggard to greet him. These fine neighbors gave our starving friend food, including his favorite, SWEET CORN! Johnny ate his fill and slept contently for the first time in weeks.

I wonder what Johnny is up to today? Is he still naked? Will Johnny need bail money? Let's catch up to Johnny and see for ourselves how this delicious...I mean tantalizing turkey is fairing. As Johnny was given the royal treatment in Muskogee, he waddled past the Oklahoma School for the Blind. All the students raced out to greet Johnny and there was dancing, and singing; dogs were kissing cats, cats were kissing mice, and all was right with the world! The 6th grade Student Council Representative, Kairi, felt sorry for the poor naked turkey so she made an announcement: "Kids, our new friend has no feathers. Please go to Ms. Goins' room on the 5th floor and help him out." When Johnny heard this, he threw up his little naked wings and cheered! All the kids and staff rushed upstairs and made him feathers of many different colors.

The kids invited Johnny to join them for Thanksgiving Dinner! Never fear, it's a different turkey! Johnny didn't care because he was busy eating the sweet corn! Thanks to everyone at OSB, Johnny was the best-dressed turkey at Thanksgiving. Most important, Johnny was grateful for all that he had: the food, his new clothes, his friends, and family, and his new home.

It's great being grateful!

THE END



Page 15 Panther Pride

Recreation Activities

By Jill Gill

The month of October was a busy one. We filled our Sundays with special treats to welcome everyone back to school followed by open rec.

The first Sunday we had ice cream sundaes followed by open rec.



Monday we played **Family Feud** - matching the boys against

the girls. Let me tell you it was a heated game to 10 that was closely tied the entire game to the very end when it was 9 to 9. Delilah on the girls' side came up with the final answer to the following: "Name Something that has to be licked". She cleverly answered envelope for the win!



On Tuesday the library had a Braille **Scavenger** hunt. The kids

Scavenger Hunt read their Braille directions and then had to find a special treat. At the end all the treats were combined to make a tasty trail mix.

On Wednesday - we were supposed to go Bowling, but unfortunately a big thunderstorm kept us from making the journey. Instead we headed to the rec to watch movies and enjoy snow cones and the kids still got to order food "to go" from the bowling snack bar.



The next week we kicked off Sunday with snow cones followed by open rec.

On Monday we headed outside for a special movie event on the lawn. Everyone enjoyed watching Tim Burton's "The Nightmare Before Christmas" under the stars on a beautiful night.

On Tuesday we had open rec.

Then Wednesday we all enjoyed a night of swimming at Muskogee



Swim & Fitness.

I was thrilled to notice some of the kids are really getting to be good

swimmers with practice.

The week of the 15th the kids came back on Sunday and enjoyed special ice cream treats as they socialized.

Then Monday the younger kids got to make **Tie Dye T-shirts**.

Tuesday they got to have a **cookout** outside in the pavilion.







This was followed by a bon fire with a special American Native Story Teller. (See Esser Grant article on page 14 for more details.)

Wednesday everyone went home early for Fall Break.

The week of the 22nd they were welcome back to school with S'mores followed by open rec.

The next Monday was our **BIG FALL FESTIVAL** - complete with two hayrides, a train for the little ones, a spook house in the old gym, two inflatables, a dunk tank and a variety of fun carnival games. For food we had nachos, funnel cakes, cotton candy, kettle corn and snow cones. We had a very nice turnout and the kids had fun playing to collect prizes & candy. (see Fall Festival article on page 12 for pictures.)

On Tuesday we had an entertaining night listening to the kids

belting out their favorite songs at **Karaoke**.



Then on Wednesday we had a Halloween costume parade and contest.

Delilah got first place;

Anika got second and

Scott, Mykel and Leah tied for third place.

The last week in October we came back to school with special ice cream treats and plenty of time to socialize with open rec all night.

Then on Monday we celebrated all October

birthdays with some special Halloween decorated cupcakes.

(Continued on page 17)

Page 16 Panther Pride

Recreation Activities (continued)

(Continued from page 16)

On Tuesday we turned the lights down and got out the disco ball and had a big Dance.



Special snacks were served along with overflowing buckets of cotton candy, kettle corn and Halloween

candy!

And on Wednesday we had an open rec night again.

In November we came back to school on Sunday the 5th and enjoyed snow cones as we socialized.



Then the next day we made special cards for veterans that I dropped

off at the VA Hospital. There sure were some very neat cards in that stack that I am sure the veterans enjoyed.

Then on Tuesday the A3 girls got to make **tie dye t-shirts**.

On Wednesday night we watched "Home Alone" in the auditorium, and everyone had big laughs as they enjoyed popcorn.

The next week we came back to school on November 12th and enjoyed sundaes with all the toppings followed by open rec.

The next night we made "fall sun catchers".

Then on Tuesday the B3 boys got their turn to make tie dye t-shirts.

Finally on Wednesday, just before we let out for break, we had a big night out at cicis pizza.

The kids enjoyed the all you can eat buffet, and each got a game card to play games in the arcade.



No.

The kids had a blast, so this is an event we want to do again in the future for sure.

We returned from break on Sunday, November 26th and enjoyed hot chocolate while we socialized and talked about our Thanksgiving break.

Then on Monday, we celebrated **November birthdays** with Little Debbie special treats.



On Tuesday, Lowery Hall got their turn to make tie dye t-shirts, and they sure made some colorful ones.

Finally on Wednesday we all headed to the **Muskogee Little Theater** to enjoy a live
"Christmas Radio Show" play.



Sunday, December 3rd we came back and got to devour some ice cream Sundaes with all the toppings.

On Monday we had fun singing our favorite Christmas & holiday songs for a special **Karaoke** Night.



Then on Tuesday the B1 Boys got to try their hand in tie dying t-shirts followed by open rec for everyone.

Wednesday evening the 9-12th graders got to go **shopping at Woodland Hills Mall**



in Tulsa. Where is Sant



Each student got \$50 cash to spend.

On Sunday, December 10th we came back to make some delicious S'mores.

On Monday, December 11th we went to see the **Muskogee Christ-mas parade** (our Student Council and some staff even walked in the parade). It was a lot of fun with lots of really nice floats.

Tuesday we enjoyed some open rec again.
And on Wednesday we finally enjoyed a night of bowling.



On Sunday, December 17th we had our **December birthday party**, followed by open rec.

On Monday we had another Christmas movie night and on Tuesday the dorms held their Christmas parties before leaving for our long break on Wednesday.

I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday spent with people they love.

Page 17 Panther Pride

How the Penguins Saved Christmas

By Maggie Mattox

This year's Elementary Christmas play is provided by Composer: Jennings, Teresa.

Our Elementary students, teachers and teacher aids worked daily on getting this play put together under the direction of our awesome band director, Chris Ferrell. THANK YOU all for your hard work.

Synopsis:

Just as a pack of penguins are properly preparing for the pomp of a perfectly polite pageant, a stranger drops from the sky into their midst, knocking himself unconscious. Eventually reasoning that this stranger must be Santa Claus, the penguins find that once conscious again, the visitor has no memory whatsoever - and on Christmas Eve!

They try their best to help him recall his identity and mission, but

are unsuccessful until they bring in the Wise Old Emperor Penguin (heralded by the "Kazoo Fanfare For The Emperor") who hypnotizes Santa back to reality.

Thankfully, his loyal reindeer are not too far behind and, after chiding Santa for failing to fasten his seat belt, help him return to his mission. The penguins have indeed saved Christmas!

https://www.amazon.com/Penguins-Saved-Christmas -Teachers-Handbook/dp/B0121V233W

Cast:

Santa: Austin Heffley

Emperor Penguin: Katie Hoyl **Reindeer:** Elijah Cervantes-

Phipps

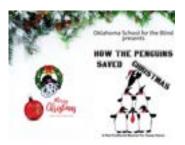
Penguins:

Xane Allen - Nina Cutler - Deegan Dobson - Hunter Farmer -Gabriella Henderson - Haidyn James - Shae McGuire - Liam Ritchie - Dawson Silva - Kennedy Sullivan - Neal Summerlin - Khup Tuang - Avree Wallace - Ronaldo Zamacona

Songs:

- This Elegant Christmas Time
- Who can the Stranger Be?
- Who, Me?
- RememberSoloists:
 - * Gabriella Henderson
 - Kennedy Sullivan
- Shout!

THANK YOU to everyone who helped with this year's Christmas program.



Santa visits OSB

Just a few random pictures of Santa's visit...







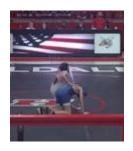






Wrestling Pictures

Here are some pictures from the Hilldale meet, for those who didn't see our "Panthers" in action yet.











Page 18 Panther Pride

Stephanie Glynn Takes First Place in FCCLA STAR Events

By Allison Garner

Stephanie Glynn has emerged as a winner during FCCLA District STAR (Students Taking Action with Recognition) Events.

This competition recognizes outstanding students who demonstrate their knowledge and skills concerning families, careers, or communities. Students develop and implement a project relevant to Family and Consumer Sciences. Stephanie's talent and dedication secured a first-place spot.

For the second consecutive year, Stephanie participated in the Children's Literature event, where she demonstrated her impressive skills in both writing and illustrating an ebook. To accomplish this, she was required to follow criteria outlined by an FCCLA rubric specific to the event. This included but was not limited to the number of pages, sounds, and pictures she could have in her book.

Under the captivating theme of the four seasons, Stephanie presented her ebook, Redbird and the Four Seasons of the Year, to a panel of judges. She not only showcased her storytelling talents but also answered thought-provoking questions regarding child development and the literacy components incorporated throughout her book.

With this achievement, Stephanie

now looks forward to regional competition scheduled for the end of January.

We wish her the best of luck as she advances to this next level of the competition, representing OSB with her talent and creativity.





Tahlequah High School Hosts Annual FCCLA District Leadership Meeting

By Stephanie Glynn

Tahlequah High School hosted the annual FCCLA District Leadership Meeting on October 10th.

Eleven members from the OSB FCCLA attended this important event. Participating members were Justin Millar, Ryan Williams, Hunter Pugh, Piper Conner, Emileigh Jackson, Julia Cisneros, Lilith Pedersen, Delilah Howell, Macey Millar, Angel Cozort, Nikki James, and Stephanie Glynn.



OSB FCCLA team

The students had a great time participating in fun games and learning about the significance of FCCLA.

Exciting Activities and Memorable Moments

The event began with members bumping beach balls through the crowd, followed by the opening ceremony. During this ceremony, four newly elected district officers were officially sworn into office, adding to the excitement of the event. Attendees took a hula hooping break and made time for a limbo contest.

Inspiring Speakers and Valuable Lessons

State Vice President Santana Scraper shared her personal journey to becoming an FCCLA state officer. Her speech was highly motivating, emphasizing the importance of FCCLA in her life.

Additionally, Jason Wetzler, guest speaker, inspired attendees to find their life's purpose and asked FCCLA members how they wished to live their life going forward.

A Memorable and Educational Experience

OSB FCCLA members had a fantastic time at the District Leadership Meeting. They not only had fun but also gained valuable knowledge and skills throughout the event.



Page 19 Panther Pride

DRS 30th anniversary

OKLAHOMA CITY



On October 17th DRS celebrated **30 years** of service to **2.45 million** Oklahomans with disabilities.

Since July 1, 1993, more than 2.54 million Oklahomans with disabilities have received lifechanging services offered by the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS).

The agency offers 25 employment, education and independent living programs and determines medical eligibility for Social Security disability benefits.

Present and former DRS clients, students and staff, the public and agency partners were encouraged to celebrate the 30th anniversary as an independent state agency with a Fall Festival on Tuesday, October 17.

The free event was held from 10 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at DRS' State Office parking lot in the east Landmark Tower building at 3535 NW 58th Street in Oklahoma City.

The theme was "Come Home to DRS: Celebrating 30 Years of Service to Extraordinary People."

DRS staff and event partners
Oklahoma Rehabilitation Council
and Oklahoma ABLE Tech had
combined plans for carnival
games and information about
DRS' programs with food trucks
and entertainment.

Program highlights included messages from Lt Gov. Matt Pinnell, Secretary and Executive Director of Human Services Dr. Deborah Shropshire, M.D., DRS Executive Director Melinda Fruendt, DHS Hope Ambassador Tammy Williams and performances by OSB Jazz Band, OSD cheerleaders and many more.

"We are proud to serve Oklahomans with disabilities at DRS, which was created in 1993 by the Oklahoma Legislature to unite a wide range of state disability services into a single agency with the support of the disability community," DRS Executive Director Melinda Fruendt said.

"This is an exciting time for all of us to celebrate Oklahomans who reached their goals because of their own initiative and hard work," Fruendt said. "We say DRS opens doors, but our clients, students, applicants and patrons deserve the credit for walking through those doors to success."

The Oklahoma Commission for Rehabilitation Services governs DRS under the leadership of Governor Kevin Stitt and the Oklahoma Legislature.

Governor Kevin Stitt appointed Teresa Flannery from Mustang as a Commission member. Vice Chair Wes Hilliard from Sulphur was appointed by Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives Charles McCall.

DRS' program divisions are Disability Determination Services, Oklahoma School for the Blind, Oklahoma School for the Deaf, Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired and Vocational Rehabilitation.

For more information about Oklahoma Rehabilitation Services, visit <u>www.okdrs.gov</u> or phone 800-845-8476 during business hours.

The agency's Disability
Resource Guide at https://www.okdrs.gov/guide/home
provides information about
3,500 disability and social services resources.





Tonya Givens (L) and DRS director Melinda Fruendt

DRS HR -Marqueta OSB, Jammie Thomason-OSD, Tonya Holman-DRS, Paula Moon-DRS, Lizzy Chacko-DRS, Cynthia Williamson-DRS



OSB Jazz band performing





Evy K.

Chris S. & Leah S.



Enjoying the file weather ..



Any takers? Must be blindfolded to play!

Page 20 Panther Pride

GOING THE EXTRA MILE -



Following employees were nominated for their devoted support of our students, staff and school:

Ms. Goins for printing sub plans for me when I was out sick.

Cheryl Daniels-James

Susana Jackman for creating the amazing reindeers for our food collection project! She is incredibly talented!

Tammy Saccomano

Robert and Faye Miller for volunteering for the Panther Pride 5k and working hard all morning!

Susan Young Mock

Jason Jenkins for volunteering for the Panther Pride 5k and working hard all morning!

Susan Young Mock

Melissa Smith for helping to financially sponsor the Panther Pride 5k!

Susan Young Mock

Maggie Mattox for helping to financially sponsor the Panther Pride 5k!

Susan Young Mock

Rita Echelle for helping to financially sponsor the Panther Pride 5k!

Susan Young Mock

Shelby Gamble for getting a sponsor for the Panther Pride 5k!

Susan Young Mock

Laci Goins for getting sponsors for the Panther Pride 5k!

Susan Young Mock

Jayla Riley for participating in the Panther Pride 5k!

Susan Young Mock

Chris Parisotto for participating in the Panther Pride 5k!

Susan Young Mock

Beth Stanfield for participating in the Panther Pride 5k!

Susan Young Mock

Susana Jackman for helping the Forensic Science class with our podcast.

Cheryl Daniels-James

Faye Miller for speaking to a potential donor about space camp.

Cheryl Daniels-James

Allison Garner for speaking to a potential donor about space camp.

Cheryl Daniels-James

Carla Cotney for helping a lost dog find it's owner.

Cheryl Daniels-James

Jeremy Jackman for going above and beyond to find additional educational opportunities to better serve the students.

Rob Culie

Laci Goins for putting all her heart and soul into the

ESSER grant program. She always has the students' best interest in mind, but tries to use her creativity to make things fun at the same time. Great Job Laci!

Maggie Mattox

Thank you to All our "before school" teachers and staff that come in early to help students get caught up.

Also a huge Thank you to All the "after school" teachers and staff that put so much thought into coming up with fun and creative projects.

Maggie Mattox

Thank you Ms. Sandy for always helping out when a Spanish translator is needed. You are highly appreciated.

Maggie Mattox

A HUGE THANK YOU to our awesome kitchen crew for always taking care of us.

Maggie Mattox

Thank you guys for going the extra mile.

It is highly appreciated.



Page 21 Panther Pride

Birthdays

Students

FULLER, BRAYLEN	1 2
MOORE, SCOTT	1 4
COX, JOSIE	1 17
BROWN, JADEN	1 20
HOPKINS, SKYLAR	1 23
DOBSON, DEEGAN	1 28
HOLM, IAN	2 5
OWENS, GENEVIEVE	2 6
PEOPLES, DIESEL	2 6
HOWELL, DELILAH	2 8
HUSMANN, KAIRI	2 8
ZAMACONA, RONALDO	2 8
ANTOLIN, ALEXANDRA	2 11
CALGER, BLAZE	2 13
FARMER, HUNTER	2 23
DURAN, ADAN	2 25
GLYNN, STEPHANIE	3 1
PEDERSEN, LILITH	3 6
MCGUIRE, SHAE	3 7
WALLACE, AVREE	3 9
COZORT, ANGEL	3 18
MCDONALD, LILLIAN	3 26
WILLIAMS, ACE	3 31











Staff

SWEENEY, MELISSA	1 5
ISOM, AMANDA	1 15
ROUDEBUSH, CHERI	1 15
COWEN, BETTY	1 17
JONES, JEANA	1 17
MILLER, FYE	1 26
JENKINS, JASON	2 2
HUGGINS, REGINA	2 7
BRYANT, DAWN	2 13
FRITZ, SHEILA	2 15
HOLDER, SHERRY	2 21
GRAVES, MELISSA	2 29
LARUE, BECKY	3 4
CULVER, MARQUETA	3 20
THOMAS, KIM	3 28

Page 22 Panther Pride

Oklahoma School for the Blind

3300 Gibson Street Muskogee, OK 74403

Toll Free: (877) 229-7136 Voice/TTY: (918) 781-8200 Fax: (918) 781-8300

It takes more than sight to have vision!

Please check out our website at:



OSB Employee / Staff Changes:

New Hire/s:

Lacey Moran, DCS 3rd shift started December 1, 2023

Reassignment/s:

Howard Ashwood, Material Management Officer, effective December 1, 2023



Retirement:

Brent Webster, effective Jan. 1, 2024





UPCOMING HIGHLIGHTS !!! - Save the Date/s !!!

Jan. 15	Martin Luther King Jr. Day - NO SCHOOL / BUS ROUTES RUN
Jan. 16	Parent/Teacher Conference (4:10-7:10pm)

Jan. 23 OSB Blood Drive (10am - 3pm)

Jan. 25 - 28 SCASB at Mississippi School for the Blind, Jackson, MS

Jan. 30 FCCLA NE Region Star Events

Feb. 6 HOMECOMING

Feb. 8 Math & Engineering Design Competition at Muskogee Civic Center

March 5 People with Disabilities Awareness Day in Oklahoma City

March 6 Braille Challenge at OSB

March 18 - 21 SPRING BREAK - NO SCHOOL

March 27 Cap & Gown Pictures (8:30-9:30am)

PROM

Page 23 Panther Pride





Oklahoma School for the **Blind Blood Drive**

Tuesday, January 23 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Join us on the Bloodmobile!

