

Activities director works hard

Science teacher keeps busy

By KIM WESSEL

If you've been to a high school or junior high activity, you've probably seen Randy Olson, who has been teaching for 31 years now.

Currently Mr. Olson is the junior high science teacher, and junior and senior high activities director, at Decatur Community High School. He is one busy man with two jobs at school plus his farming and ranching responsibilities.

Mr. Olson grew up on a farm in Rawlins County, where he and his wife Sharon now live. While in high school Mr. Olson participated in football, wrestling, and track all four years. He was also in vocal, plays and musicals, and was a DCHS Singer for three years.

Graduating from Decatur Community High in 1971, he headed straight for college. Mr. Olson attended Fort Hays State University where he wrestled for the Tigers and was a three-year letter winner. He majored in biology with a minor in wildlife management.

Mr. Olson began working for the Kansas Fish and Game Commission while his wife taught school. He made the choice to teach when he took over the family farm. There were also some great teachers and coaches at Oberlin that influenced his decision: Buzz Matson, Jim Stoddard, and Robert Jensen.



Randy Olson

He began his teaching career at Stockton where he taught for four years, then taught at Herndon and Atwood for two years each. He has been teaching at Oberlin ever since.

At Decatur Community High School he has taught several subjects including high school science, biology, and chemistry. Now he teaches seventh and eighth grade science.

"I enjoy teaching when kids catch ahold of science," said Mr. Olson, "also when kids get enthused about science and make progress."

One of the challenges of teaching junior high is that the kids are constantly changing, but the biggest challenge is finding a way to help them learn and get motivated about science.

"Junior high kids are a lot of fun to teach," he continued. "They are always willing to try new things."

Mr. Olson said he decided to become the activities director when his kids were getting involved with athletics. He didn't want to coach his own kids, but wanted to stay involved.

"What I like most about being the A.D. is that I get to work with a lot of great officials, coaches, and athletes. Also, I get to watch the athletes develop from when they first started playing until they graduate," said Mr. Olson.

He added, "Being the athletic director has its challenges, too. I am always involved with almost everything, and it is very time consuming. I spend lots of time getting things organized. The hardest part is meeting all the time commitments."

Teaching at his alma mater has its advantages and disadvantages, according to Mr. Olson. He knows some of the local people better and he knows most of his students' family history.

Since he first started, Mr. Olson said, teaching has changed some: "The students are more sophisticated when it comes to electronics and the computer age. The kids are a lot better at finding information and using it, rather than getting spoon-fed all the information."

Outside of school, you can find Mr. Olson spending a lot of time with his family. He has been married to Sharon for 31 years, and they have three children.

Their daughter, Kristy, graduated from Decatur Community High in 1998 and is married to Matt Ostmeyer. They have a seven-month-old baby named Jace, and live in Ellis.

Son Brent also graduated from

Decatur Community High School, in 2002, and is now a senior at Fort Hays.

Their youngest daughter, Kerrie, graduated from Oberlin in 2004 and is a junior at Fort Hays State University.

Other than spending time with his family, Mr. Olson likes to farm. His hobbies are fishing and hunting, and he enjoys horseback riding and likes to read as well as watch National Football League, and junior high and senior high athletics.

Mr. Olson belongs to the Faith Lutheran Church in Oberlin. He says he likes Oberlin because "the people are great, it's a nice community, and the people are really helpful."

"My goal for the future is to expand the family farm and spend time with what I enjoy the most - my family," Mr. Olson said.

"Mr. Olson joined our district the year after I started here. I had the honor to work side by side with him for ten years before going into administration," said Duane Dorshorst, principal of Oberlin Elementary.

"Mr. Olson is one of those rare teachers that can get everyone excited about science. Whether it was life science or physical science, he had all students intrigued about the scientific world. As a high school science teacher, I knew the students would come into my classroom with knowledge they needed to tackle advanced concepts.

"Science has always been one of the strengths of our school, and it is because of the foundation that Mr. Olson gives the students in the junior high."

Voice of Decatur Community High School

Decatur Dictator

By the DCHS Dictator Staff

Students attend Fort Hays program

By KAITLYN GILLESPIE
Science teacher Caleb Howland and 18 students attended Fort Hays State University Science Days.

Oberlin students who went were Lacie Alstrom, Chantelle Beneda, Kasia Bryan, Andrew Dempewolf, Colt Diederich, Royal Fisher, Kaitlyn Gillespie, Rebecca Helm, Heather Glodt, Kierstyn Johnson, Ace Manning, Alyssa Montgomery, Jennifer Ploussard, Gage Reichert, Macy Rouse, LeAnna Sheaffer, Kayla Zodrow, and Nathany Lourenson.

Mr. Howland said, "The students got to see Fort Hays State and the different science departments, and they got to see college experiments conducted by Fort Hays State stu-

dents majoring in science fields."

The students were able to view some fun science experiments such as a pendulum and a hovercraft. They also learned how to use science technology on the computer, robotics, MRI scans and brain waves, laser-guided bombs, and biology with microscopes.

"The pendulum was cool and explained the rotation of the earth," said junior Kierstyn Johnson.

Alyssa Montgomery, also a junior, said, "The hovercraft was neat and very fun to ride."

The students were definitely able to learn about some different majors at Fort Hays, and even get some idea about college and their future education.

Eight musicians chosen for honor band

By SARAH MURRAY
Eight students from Decatur Community High School were chosen for Kansas Music Educator's Association district honor band.

Flute players are Alyssa Rippe, Marci Metcalf, and Rebecca Helm; clarinet players, Chris Larson, Jessica Bremer, and Ashley Horton; and trumpet player, Chenaniah Langness. Makenzie Nelson is baritone saxophone alternate.

Every student auditions by taping their best performance. These tapes are then judged the same day as junior high Kansas Music Educator's Association district honor band and choir.

All of the Oberlin students who tried out made honor band. Senior Marci Metcalf will receive

a medallion for being in the district honor band all four years of high school.

"It means a lot to make it all four years," said Marci Metcalf. "It's always a great experience to play with the best in the state."

Christie Morris is the Decatur Community High School instrumental music director.

Teachers to get rebate on insurance

Oberlin School District teachers who were part of the school's insurance plan last year will get at least a \$350 refund check.

Superintendent Kelly Glodt told the Oberlin School Board at a meeting last month that the district received a refund check from Blue Cross/Blue Shield for \$32,909, which should be given back to the staff. The refund is from what was paid for health premiums last year.

Each employee will get \$350, said Mr. Glodt. If the employee has coverage for themselves and children they will get an additional \$370, and if they have coverage for themselves and a spouse they will get an additional \$450 and if for them and a family an additional \$850.

Mr. Glodt said the blood drive on Wednesday, Nov. 8, at the high school was a huge success.

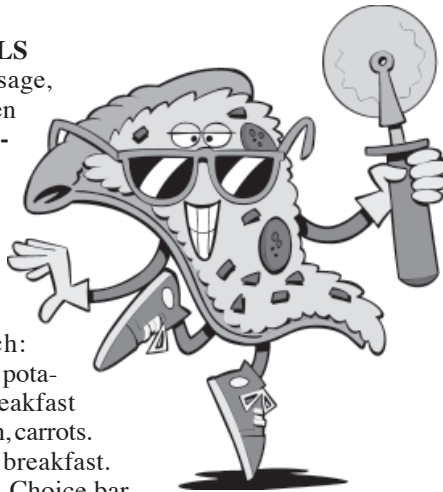
The board discussed future capital outlay projects, including putting a furnace split in the art room at the high school for the return ducts for \$495, new boilers at the high school for \$3,940 apiece and a pump at \$980. The high school has two old boilers, Mr. Glodt said.

The board approved the purchase of a motorized louver to help the existing exhaust to pull in cold air for the art room at the grade school for \$1,440.

The board also accepted a gift of \$50 from the Modern Woodmen of America for library books at the grade school.

School Menus

Dec. 4-8 OBERLIN SCHOOLS
Monday: Breakfast: sausage, bagel, cereal. Lunch: chicken nuggets, baked beans. **Tuesday:** Breakfast: oatmeal, fruit fritter. Lunch: Tater Tot casserole. **Wednesday:** Breakfast: pancake, ham patty. Lunch: pizza, corn. **Thursday:** Breakfast: cherry or apple turnover. Lunch: chicken fried steak, mashed potatoes. **Friday:** Breakfast: breakfast burrito. Lunch: fish sandwich, carrots. Juice and fruit served with breakfast. Milk served with all meals. Choice bar served with all lunches.



Grade-school students learn about agriculture

Third and fourth graders played a version of *The Price is Right* to help them learn about what grains and oils are in products sold today.

Kristin Goin, presenter for the Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom, talked with Oberlin Elementary Students on Nov. 15, about the five main grains grown in the state: wheat, corn, milo, soybeans and sunflowers.

The interactive presentation, she said, helps teach the kids that it takes math, science, business knowledge and other kinds of logic to be a farmer.

At the end of the program, the students play the game, where they pick items and then try to decide what kinds of grains are used in them.

Mrs. Goin said she uses different kinds of flour, processed foods like soy chips, a plastic mug made out of corn and ethanol fuel, made from various grains.

The presentation was brought to town by the Kansas Farm Bureau. Dianne Bremer, with the Decatur

County Farm Bureau, said even in a farm town, a lot of kids aren't familiar with agriculture or the impact it has on their lives. They don't know where their food comes from or what the crops grown in the area are used for.

Each year, Mrs. Bremer invites the presentation to come to town, finding businesses and agencies to pay for the trip. This year's program was sponsored by Nex-Tech Wireless dealer Gary Juenemann, Eagle Communications, the Kansas Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture and the Decatur County Farm Bureau.

Mrs. Goin said she does about 30 presentations a year, including the grains and oils for third and fourth graders, farm animals for kindergarten through second grade and natural resources for fifth and sixth graders.

Mrs. Bremer said she hopes to add the farm animal presentation next year and would like to get grants and support to have all three at the grade school the same day.

Angels have toys to give

Boxes and boxes of toys are waiting to be wrapped and given to kids in the area through the Blue Angels.

The problem is that the group, made up of women associated with law enforcement, has few children to give toys to. Bev Reiter, a county dispatcher, widow of a former police chief and a member of the group, said she and Sandy Zeigler, wife of Officer Scott Zeigler, passed out forms around town for parents to fill out for their kids, but they haven't received many back.

Ms. Reiter said she and Mrs. Zeigler started the program in 1995 when no other organizations were collecting toys for kids. The Oberlin Lioness Club stopped its drive in 1994 and a lot of children weren't getting anything for Christmas.

donate toys and wrapping paper, said Ms. Reiter. They match the toys up with kids on the forms. She said they try to give each child what they want or as close as possible, then they wrap and deliver the toys.

Ms. Reiter said they have forms at Raye's Grocery, Dollar General, the Corner Cafe and Ampride. She said anyone who wants a form can call her at 475-3706 or Mrs. Zeigler at 475-2975.

On the forms, the women ask for the ages and sex, what they might be interested in and where to deliver. The program is for any child up to age 12, the women said.

Ms. Reiter said the Blue Angels don't deliver until the week before Christmas, so there is still time for people who want to get their children on the list.

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