

People in Our Community

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MY STARVING LION

DECATUR COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL graduate Adam Spanier recently released his new album, "Odyssey," through After Eight Records-MSL of McCook.

Oberlin graduate releases music CD

By MARY LOU OLSON
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A new compact disc, "Odyssey," created by Decatur Community High School graduate Adam Spanier of Oberlin, was released internationally by After Eight Records-MSL of McCook last month.

Quality over quantity or expediency has been the force behind the album from its inception, Mr. Spanier said.

"My website, 'My Starving Lion,' as a project is nothing more than an itch that needed scratched. I've always been involved in music. My mom is a music teacher. My brother started as a pianist in the Marine Corps and now plays piano in the Air Force.

"I grew up on jazz and classical music, started learning piano at age 6 and studied instrumental and choral music as well as in-depth music theory and composition. It just makes sense for me to do this.

"I started high school in Atwood, then after graduating from high school in Oberlin, attended McCook Community College, finalizing my recording degree in 2007 after a jaunt in Lawrence. I graduated from the Conservatory of Recording Arts and Sciences in Tempe, Ariz., then worked through the studio scene before entering the manager position at KNGN Christian Radio in McCook.

"After making my way through the industry, doing some serious personal rediscovery and changing more than I ever wanted to, I finally came to the conclusion that this was not something I wanted to do; it was something I needed to do, something I was called to do. And so, My Starving Lion was officially founded over 18 months ago with nothing more than an itch and an idea.

"Odyssey," a 132-track journey, began as a totally different vision than the finished product you can hear today. Over 18 months of recording, rerecording, scrapping and rewriting songs, the project took on a life of its own. I am just a tiny part of the experience.

"As a Christian, the album is also a testament to the grace and power of God. His leading is always the

best path in life. You can only run away for so long before that whale swallows you up. The project itself is secular, but it is geared to touch those who truly need someone to understand them, for those who need to know Christians are approachable, loving human beings just like them."

"Odyssey" speaks to the humanity that exists in all of us, said Mr. Spanier, the singer, songwriter and musician of the project.

"There is a part of us that needs to move forward, that is, constantly challenged," he said. "'Odyssey' does that with music that is enjoyable, catchy and radio friendly, but also is filled with painful revelations, enchantment, excitement, ecstasy and deep sorrow."

"'Odyssey' is artistically and musically honest," said David Sandman of McCook, one of the commissioned promoters for After Eight Records, "but also very marketable. I could barely contain my excitement about the project. I was absolutely blown away by the quality of the sound."

Mr. Sandman said they are starting local, but want to create a "big awesome buzz" and then launch the album from coast to coast.

Mr. Spanier has documented his struggles of the past year on his blog on the My Starving Lion (MSL) website, noting that as the year progressed, the dream that Odyssey would one day be heard at times seemed tantalizingly close, only to fade under the realities of life.

He and his wife, the former Andrea Marshall, also an Oberlin graduate, and their daughter, Evelyn, live in Oberlin.

"I truly appreciate everyone who buys an album and contributes to this amazing dream," he said. "I hope the music touches your life and changes you in some way, even if it's just making you smile."

Listen online at the My Starving Lion website or on YouTube.com. My Starving Lion is also on Facebook. The album can be ordered off the website at www.mystarvinglion.com or from iTunes.com, AmazonMP3, Zune, Napster and many other digital distribution outlets.

Student earns scholarship

Karli Fredrickson of Oberlin has won the Citizens Medical Center Health Care Scholarship, a \$1,500 award sponsored by Citizens Medical Center in Colby and the hospital's auxiliary.



Fredrickson

Miss Fredrickson, daughter of Dr. Gary and Sarah Fredrickson of Oberlin, has been accepted to the Northeast State University School of Optometry in Oklahoma.

She is a graduate of Kansas State University. "It is with pride that the Citizens

Foundation is able to make such quality awards possible to area graduates for those who are beginning or furthering their careers in health care," said Tama Unger, spokesman for the hospital.

"The quality of applications we receive every year is a prime example of what quality health care will look like in the coming years.

"Health care is not about organizations; it is about people and the privilege to serve the needs of others."

Grandson receives honor

Brock Baxter, a grandson of Jackie Votapka of Oberlin, is one of 36 students chosen for a national study program offering college credit for study of our Constitution and system of government.



B. Baxter

A 2011 graduate of Smith Center High School, he completed five weeks of distance study, then left on July 24 for a week in Washington as part of the Bill of Rights Institute's Constitutional Academy.

His parents said he listened well in his senior government class, where his teacher encouraged her students to apply for the course,

offered through Ashland University. He received a scholarship from the institute.

He has been busy all summer studying and completing assignments in preparation for the trip.

Brock plans to major in political science this fall at Cloud County Community College, Concordia.

His parents are Janeil and Barry Baxter of Smith Center; his mother is a 1984 graduate of Decatur Community High School.

Susan Screen and Peggy Schramm of San Carlos, Calif., visited in the Phyllis Screen home and with other relatives and friends.

Three Decatur Community High School students, Darbi Rouse and Katie and Matt Glading, spent last week at the High Plains Band Camp at Fort Hays State University. Darbi was selected first chair oboe for the Honor Band and Orchestra and also played in a woodwind quintet. Katie was chosen for third chair trombone in the Honor Band, while Matt was selected first chair baritone in the Silver Band.

John and Sue Kump and Brianna of Lake Elmo, Minn., and Chris and Barie Erickson and Alaina of Oakdale, Minn., were weekend visitors of Cecilia Brown.

Larry and Louise (Hedrick) Richardson of LaRue, Texas, were in Oberlin on Monday seeking information about a plane crash in May 1952 which killed her father, Robert Wayne Hedrick, and a passenger, Wayne Reznier. They visited at the home of Dan and Vickie Lippelmann and checked information in the original story at *The Oberlin Herald*. Robert Hedrick's wife is the former Joan Lippelmann, a 1944 graduate of Decatur Community High School.

The couple said that they would appreciate it if anyone with any information would send it to them at 8194 CR 4515, LaRue, Texas 75750, or call (903) 675-1800. Wayne Reznier was a brother of Lois Carlson of Oberlin.

Jim and Linda Hollowell attended the 133rd Emancipation/Homecoming celebration in Nicodemus over the weekend. It included a home-

coming parade, Buffalo Soldier presentation, Flying the West Ballet, dancers from Atlanta, the annual fashion show and a gospel service at the First Baptist Church.

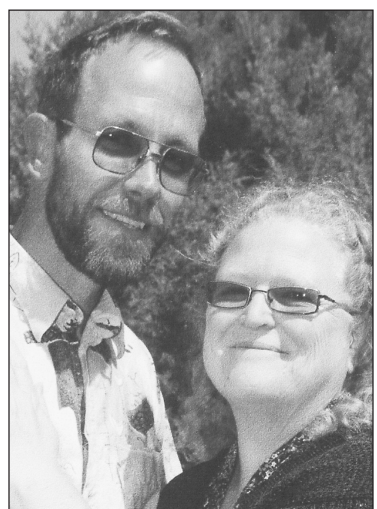
Weekend guests of Frances Vacura were Jeff and Gayle White and Josh of Goddard. Other callers were Rhonda Jennings of Oberlin and Tom Vacura of Jennings.

Margaret Vacura was honored with a surprise 93rd birthday party on Thursday evening at her home. Guests were Pat Fringer, Rhonda Jennings, Reta Barratt and Amber, Pat Wright, Jody Betts and Joy Russell.

Evan and Mary Jorn and Peggy Williams of Lawrence came Tuesday to spend the week at the Decatur County Fair and visiting Cecil Hess and Keith and Mary Lou Olson and other relatives and friends.

—Just Arrived: More Classic Cuisine, The LandMark Inn's second cookbook. Available at "The Oberlin Mercantile Co." Just \$14.95.

Winning highs in pinochle at the Golden Age Center last week were Max Carman, Dorothy Moore, Ardis Roe, Henry Edgett, John Cederberg and Kelta Dryden. Lows went to Kelta Dryden, John Cederberg, Neil Marshall, Henry Edgett and Doris Fringer. Carol Vesterby won first bingo and Gladys Geis won backout. Pitch highs were won by Dewaine Stapp and Mr. Edgett, with lows going to Mr. Cederberg and Max Carman. Bridge highs went to Cynthia Matson, Alice Shirley, Beth Sebaugh and Charlotte Meints.



Ralf Meister and Starla Russ

Couple plans fall vows

Starla Russ and Ralf Meister of Garden City plan to be married Friday, Sept. 23, in Garden City.

Parents of the couple are Richard and Clara Russ of Oberlin, and Günter and Hiltrud Meise of Wetzlar, Germany.

The bride-to-be works for the Garden City School District and her fiancé at American Implement, also in Garden City.

New Arrival

Autry Jo Young

Cody and Danielle Young of Cheney are the parents of a daughter, Autry Jo Young. She was born at 7:23 p.m. on Saturday, July 9, 2011, at the Wesley Birthing Center in Wichita. She weighed 6 pounds, 11 ounces and was 19 inches long. She was welcomed home by brother Cash. Paternal grandparents are Allen and Corliss Young, Kingman. Maternal grandparents are Betty Hickert, Selden, and the late Rick Hickert. Great-grandmother is Doris Young, Cheney.



Autry Jo

Shower honors bride-to-be

A bridal shower honoring Jaime Sauder was held July 18 at the Sappa Valley Manor. Hostesses were Kim McConville and Brooke Nelms, Indianola, Neb.

Miss Sauder will be married to Shannon Metcalf on Friday at the Oberlin United Methodist Church.

Present were Cindi Sauder, Cheryl Metcalf, Eileen Grose, Pam Van Vleet, Connie Grafel, Melinda Grafel, Amanda Grafel, Missy Uehlin, Kelley May, Judy Shirley, Tillie Shirley, Karen Thompson and Merle Shirley, Oberlin; Cindi Shirley and Shelby, Norcat; Leanna Sloan and Jaylei, Hoxie; and Vicki

Schmidt and Daisy Schmidt, Achilles. Unable to be present was the bride-elect's grandmother, Doris Sloan, Oberlin.



CHECKING OUT HER chemo monitor at Wesley Medical Center in Wichita was Mikayla Hodgens, 9, who is being treated for leukemia.

—Photo by Rhonda Barth

Granddaughter is 'Pilot for a Day'

By MARY LOU OLSON
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Many children fill summer breaks with cartoon watching, trips to the pool and playing outside with friends, but summer for 9-year-old Mikala Hodgens of Wichita, a granddaughter of Mick and Rhonda Barth of Oberlin, included becoming an Air Force "Pilot for a Day" and honorary member of the 350th Air Refueling Squadron.

Diagnosed with leukemia in January, she was chosen for the program through a partnership with Wesley Medical Center in Wichita, where she receives treatment.

A setback came to the family last Friday, however, when her father took her to the hospital and learned that she needed a transfusion of blood platelets. The hospital didn't have the type of A-negative platelets she needed.

"They actually had to have some flown in from Omaha," he said. Her grandmother said some were found in Georgia, also.

That's why Mr. Hodgens spent Friday afternoon at the Wichita Red Cross Donor Center, donating platelets for the first time and urging others to join him.

"I don't want other parents to go in there and hear them say, 'Sorry, we don't have any blood,'" he said.

He said that before his daughter was diagnosed with leukemia, he was an occasional blood donor.

"I just wasn't a regular giver," he said. "I just gave whenever it came up. This is my first time being a regular."

He said that it takes about twice as long to donate platelets as it takes to donate whole blood. A Red Cross nurse told him that platelets are often needed by cancer and burn patients and are a crucial part of the agency's mission.

The Pilot for a Day program gives children with life-threatening illnesses the opportunity to visit an Air Force base, learn about what the crews there do, and most importantly, have a fun-filled day.

"Today was for the Hodgens family," said 1st Lt. Tyler Jackson, a navigator and Mikala's program coordinator. The 350th "Red Falcons" hosted Mikala, her parents and 6-year-old brother Brayden for the day, July 20, at McConnell Air Force Base.

To prepare for her mission as a pilot, Mikala got a flight suit to wear and received a mission briefing. Her McConnell experience included touring a KC-135 Stratotanker, donning fire-protection gear and riding in a fire truck, flying the KC-135 simulator and watching military working dogs perform their duties.

"It's been a wonderful day out here," said Mrs. Hodgens. "As a parent, I'm very grateful. It's wonderful that an organization like this can grant kids the opportunity to come out and just have a day of fun, a day of laughter, and a day to decompress from the medical aspects that they have to live every day."

Mikala said her favorite activities were flying the simulator and seeing the dogs chase and take down a person.

The day ended with a pizza party hosted by Lt. Col. Scott Thather, 350th's commander, who presented Mikala with a 350 ARS coin and honorary patches. She also received mementos from other flying squadrons.

As the day ended, the family and Mikala left McConnell with a greater understanding of the mission of the 22nd Air Refueling Wing, smiles on their faces and a one-of-a-kind summer vacation story to tell on the first day of school.

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Tricia Carney, ARNP - Thursday

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