

# KNIGHTLINE

OLNEY CENTRAL COLLEGE



December 2015

## Upcoming Events

### December

**10** OCC Music Department  
*Fall Recital, 7:30 p.m.*  
Theatre

**11** *Last Day to Withdraw  
from Fall Semester Classes*

**13** OCC Theatre Auditions  
for "South Pacific," 2 p.m.  
Theatre

**14** OCC Theatre Auditions  
for "South Pacific," 7 p.m.  
Theatre

**14** Spring Semester  
Textbook Sales Begin

**14-17** OCC Bookstore  
Buyback, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
& 5 to 6:30 p.m.

**14-17** Final Exams

**17** Music Department  
*Holiday Concert, 7:30 p.m.*  
Theatre

**18** *Last Day of Fall  
Semester Classes*

**21-31** College Closed  
*Winter Break*

### January

**1** College Closed

**4** College Reopens

**6** Faculty/Staff Workshop

**11** Spring Semester Begins

### College Visits

Tables will be located  
outside the Student  
Services Office.

**Dec. 8** Franklin  
University, 10 a.m. to 1  
p.m.

## Theatre Director Ruth Henry left her mark on OCC and community

In her 42 years at Olney Central College, Ruth Henry touched countless lives. Whether training generations of vocal and piano students or producing 69 shows as the OCC Theatre Director, Henry left a lasting legacy that impacted not only OCC, but the entire community.

For Henry, the hours spent reading and selecting scripts, rehearsing scenes and fashioning costumes was always a labor of love.

"It's been hard work and I'm always exhausted at the end of a run, but it is what makes the world go around for me," Henry said when she was honored for her 30-year service to the theatre in 2006. "I feel like what we do here is one of the most positive things the college has to offer the community. We have a large following here and in the surrounding communities. It is really a joy to me to hear people say how much they enjoy coming out to see what we do."

At an age when many have long since retired, Henry, OCC's longest-serving employee, was still busy preparing her "theatre family" for their next big show. This fall she had selected the classic comedy "M\*A\*S\*H" as the OCC Theatre prepared to celebrate its 40th anniversary.

Just prior to the October performances, Henry underwent heart surgery in Evansville. She remained there until she passed away on



**Ruth Henry is pictured with retired OCC President Dr. Jackie L. Davis during a reception held in Henry's honor in 2006.**

Nov. 19 at the age of 82.

As the OCC Theatre prepares for its first show without Henry at the helm, veterans Jon Wright and Jessica McDonald are overseeing the spring production of "South Pacific."

"Ruth was an irreplaceable piece of the col-

lege and more importantly the community," Wright said. "People will try to do her job, but they never can. Our community doesn't have a lot of legends, but Ruth Henry is right up there with them. Our job is to continue her legacy. All the tens of thousands of people her shows touched and the smiles she brought to people's faces — our job is to keep that going. Her work will continue. Every time I, Jessica McDonald or Sherry Brauer are doing things in the theatre we are going to be doing them as Ruth taught us and we'll be teaching them to another generation."

Wright knew Henry for nearly 20 years and the two forged a strong friendship over the last decade, often meeting to brainstorm for upcoming productions.

"I really liked talking to her," Wright said. "We would talk about the theatre. We spent hours dreaming of ideas, talking about people everything you do as friends. Theatre is a class for students, but the theatre people aren't here and leave two years later. Most of them have been here 20 to 25 years."

**See Henry, Page 3**

## South Pacific auditions set for Dec. 13-14

The Olney Central College Theatre will host auditions for "South Pacific" at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 13 and at 7 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 14 in the Dr. John D. Stull Performing Arts Center.

Individuals auditioning will be required to give a cold reading from the script and to sing from memory 16 measures from any Broadway musical song. Adults as well as college, high school and eighth grade students are invited to audition.

Parts are also available for two children. Girls and boys in Grades 3-7 may audition.

Performances are scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on March 11, 12, 17, 18 and 19. Afternoon shows will begin at 2 p.m. on March 13 and 20.

## Student Senate Craft Show Dec. 12

The OCC Student Senate will host a craft show from 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Dec. 12 in the Student Union.

Vendors are being sought for the event. Tables are \$25. For more information, contact Allan Alldredge at 618-395-7777, ext. 2019, or [alldredgea@iecc.edu](mailto:alldredgea@iecc.edu).

## Spring Registration

Have you put off registering for spring semester classes? Don't wait any longer.

You can schedule your appointment online at [www.iecc.edu/rqst\\_OCC.php](http://www.iecc.edu/rqst_OCC.php) or stop by Student Services.

Spring classes start Jan. 11.



Former players for Coach Gene Duke, including members of OCC's first basketball team, were recognized during halftime of the men's basketball game on Nov. 21.

## OCC honors first basketball coach

Olney Central College is recognizing the lasting contributions of its first basketball coach by naming the gym floor Coach Gene Duke Court in his honor.



A dedication ceremony was held during halftime of the Blue Knights' Nov. 21 game. Several of Duke's former players attended, including members of the initial 1965-1966 team. All were recognized during the event.

A plaque commemorating the dedication along with a photo of Duke will be placed outside the gym entrance.

Duke came to OCC in 1964. He led the Blue Knights to the Region IV Championship and the NJCAA National Tournament in 1973.

While at OCC, Duke also taught physical education and served as OCC baseball coach.

Duke left OCC in 1975 to accept a coaching position at Coffeyville Community College in Kansas. He ended his career at OCC with a win-loss record of 166-87.



OCC President Rodney Ranes and Gary Cardinal, right, display the commemorative plaque that will be placed outside the entrance to the OCC gym. Cardinal was a member of OCC's first basketball team.

## Nursing program accepting applications for 2016

The Illinois Eastern Community Colleges: Olney Central College Associate Degree Nursing Program is currently accepting students for Fall 2016.

Individuals wishing to apply should schedule an ap-

pointment as soon as possible to meet with Nursing Program Advisor Linda Horn to discuss program requirements.

Horn may be reached at 618-395-7777, ext. 2246, or call toll-free 1-866-622-4322.

The application process must be completed by Feb. 16, 2016.

For further information about nursing at any of the IECC colleges, please visit [www.iecc.edu/page.php?page=NURS](http://www.iecc.edu/page.php?page=NURS).



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Wright said Henry was someone who wasn't afraid to speak her mind if she felt it was needed.

"She was a spitfire," he added.

Henry was dedicated not only to her students and theatre family, but to those who returned year after year to watch the performances.

"She was always talking about the gift we gave to our audience through our hard work," Wright said. "She would talk about how we gave the audience a couple of hours where they could forget the world and their problems. We will continue to do that."

Henry joined OCC in 1972 as a part-time vocal instructor.

"I was the director of the choir at First Presbyterian Church at the time and someone called and asked if I would be interested in teaching," Henry later recalled. "It just grew from there."

Henry organized OCC's first choir, which included 25 students, who met every Tuesday at 5 p.m. in a home that had been converted into the Student Union.

In 1976, now retired music instructor Steve Marrs approached Henry about staging the college's first musical. Henry, who had theatre experience in high school and college, agreed and in the spring an all-student cast presented "The Fantasticks."

"The theatre wasn't even built yet so we used a portable stage in the Student Union," Henry said earlier this year. "We had no sound and no lighting, just a little combo that included a piano, a bass and percussion."

During the OCC Theatre's infancy, Henry and Marrs were responsible for all aspects of the productions.

"Steve would build the sets and I would make the costumes," Henry remarked. "We would rehearse until 10 p.m. and then I would sew costumes until 1 or 2 in the morning before going to work. We even had to get our own props and advertising."

Henry and Marrs served as co-directors for three shows until the band grew and Henry was left to stage the productions on her own.

In 1977, the OCC Theatre found a per-



**Ruth Henry directing the OCC Chorus in the late 1970s.**

manent home with the completion of the Dr. John D. Stull Performing Arts Center. The building would become a special place to Henry.

During a reception in Henry's honor, retired OCC President Dr. Jackie L. Davis referred to the theatre as the "house that Ruth built."

"Through her work, she has been instrumental in bringing thousands of visitors, both from within and outside the Richland County Community, to the OCC Campus," he added.

"I am the Theatre Mother," Henry said at the time. "I sweep, clean and mop. I care a great deal about that facility. I want it to be a nice place where everything is right when people come in. It's my second home."

Through the years, Henry's dedication to the theatre never wavered.

"A few weeks ago, she was still working with me on updating the curtain system," said OCC President Rodney Raney. "She was thinking about how it would improve the theatre for years to come. She was always thinking in the long-term of the theatre for the area. She did a lot of work to make sure this was the right system for the stage."

Raney said the new curtains will be installed during Spring Break, just in time for the upcoming musical.

Olney Arts Council President Andrew Flynn is one of the many students Henry impacted in her career. As a seventh-grader, he began both voice and piano lessons with her. Flynn also became active in the OCC Theatre begin-

ning with the 1997 production of "Oklahoma."

He remembers vividly the day he accidentally fired a prop gun during rehearsal.

"I had the gun in an area where it wasn't supposed to be. I knew she was going to kick me out of the show," Flynn said. "But, Ruth just walked up to me and said, 'Sweetie, did we learn a lesson from this?' That was the moment when I stopped being scared of Ruth, but I didn't tell her that."

Today, Flynn is the choral director at Robinson High School and First Presbyterian Church in Olney. He helped organize the joint choirs of Trinity Lutheran and First Presbyterian churches, which sang during Henry's funeral service.

"Ruth inspired what I did and what I continue to do," Flynn said. "I think the impact she made can be seen in the amount of people who have been contacting me and sharing stories and posting to Facebook. It speaks volumes about how she touched people's lives."

"Ruth was very dedicated to the arts in Olney and the surrounding area," he continued. "She devoted a lot of her own time at school and was always giving back to the community in some form. It's a big loss to our community."

For OCC graduate Kristin Cotterell Arlyn, Henry's lessons extended well beyond the stage. The Sumner native, who now resides in Texas, participated in four shows while attending OCC.

**See Henry Page 4**

## HENRY

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When she moved home briefly in 2006, Arlyn decided to audition for "The Sound of Music." Arlyn who says she "had an ice-cold, crippling fear of singing" chose the role of Baroness Elsa Schraeder because she thought it wouldn't require her to sing.

"Only when I auditioned did I learn that the stage version has Elsa singing, not one, but two songs," Arlyn said. "To my eternal shock, Ruth cast me as Elsa, and I'm sure she second-guessed that decision more than once."

Throughout the difficult rehearsals, Henry encouraged and reassured Arlyn that she could do it. Arlyn wasn't so sure, but with Henry's help persevered.

"As I remember that show from 10 years ago, I'm sure there were still people in the pit, cast, crew, or audience — maybe even Ruth herself — who thought giving me that singing role was ultimately a poor choice. And it may have been. Heck, it probably was," Arlyn said. "There was no ugly-vocal-duckling turning into a swan in this story, and at best, I was OK. But I will never, ever forget the feeling I got from Ruth over that show that I still carry with me today: just because something cripples me with fear doesn't mean it's not worth trying. I may succeed, I may fail, and I may hobble by just enough to be OK, but some things are still worth taking a chance on."

OCC instructor and longtime theatre regular Lisa Benson first worked with Henry as a cast member in the 1979 production of "Cinderella."

"I cannot begin to count the number of hearts and lives that Ruth has touched in so many ways through the years," Benson said. "We have all been blessed by her presence, her love of music, her love of theatre, and her love of life. May we continue to do her credit in the years to come."

Costumer Ruth Coleman has been a fixture in the OCC Theatre since 1985 when she contacted Henry about joining an upcoming production.

"I had missed auditions, but I called Ruth. She invited me to come because they needed more people and that is how it all started," Coleman said. "It



**Ruth Henry preparing for OCC's production of "Mame" in 1978.**

changed my life. My life wouldn't be the same if I hadn't done it."

Through the years, Coleman and Henry became close friends. Theatre member Michael Balding affectionately referred to them as Big R and Little R and to the children, Henry was always Miss Ruth and Coleman was Miss Ruthie.

"She was my best friend," Coleman said. "She was there for me through thick and thin. I loved the woman dearly. She was always there in the hard or happy times. I miss her so much."

Coleman said Henry cared deeply for the people around her, nurturing both her students and the actors.

"During a production, Ruth always made it a point of telling everyone what a good job they were doing. It didn't matter whether they had the lead or they were in the chorus," Coleman said. "If someone was upset, she was always the one who comforted them. She was always the one who calmed things down. She was just amazing. We will carry on because she taught us well."

Bonita Balding initially met Henry through her son and daughter-in-law, Michael and Jennifer Balding, who were both actively involved in the OCC productions. Balding joined the theatre family in 2000, when she began assisting with ticket sales.

"We had a lot of talks when Ruth was in there and we weren't busy," Balding

said. "We would visit and talk about everything from politics to religion and even recipes. We were always trying to solve the world's problems. I'm going to miss that."

Balding said Henry was always concerned about others. When her husband, Lynden, was preparing for surgery in Springfield, Balding called backstage prior to a performance to let Henry know what was happening.

As the cast and crew gathered in their usual circle, Henry prayed for Lynden.

"She was a kind, loving person who always cared about other people," Balding said. "Not all she did was out in the open where people could see. She did costumes and helped people with their singing behind the scenes. She was an extraordinarily talented person. We are so fortunate she shared that with us. We'll miss her smile, her laugh and her generosity. She was such a special person."

Henry also knew how to bring out the best in others.

"She was good at getting people to do what she wanted them to," Balding said. "She knew who could do what and get it done. The community has lost a piece of the theatre. The theatre was her. She started it and kept it going."

Henry's desire to assist others will continue at OCC. Her family is working with the college to establish a Performing Arts Scholarship in Henry's memory. To date, \$2,000 has been raised through memorial contributions.

"This is a good way to honor her memory for many years of service," Raney added.

Those wishing to support the scholarship may send donations to the OCC Foundation, 305 N. West St., Olney, IL 62450. Please indicate the funds are for the Ruth Henry Performing Arts Scholarship. At OCC, donations may be given to Kathy Slichenmyer in the Student Services Office.

"I think the theatre is my true love," Henry once said. "There are many interesting facets in theatre and I love working with people and enjoy seeing how individuals, especially high school and college students, fall in love with theatre and want to be in every production."



## OCC & LTC combine for Holiday Concert

The Olney Central College Music Department will be hosting its sixth annual Holiday Concert at 7:30 p.m. on Dec. 17.

The choirs from OCC and Lincoln Trail College will combine to present Vivaldi's *Gloria*, in addition to other holiday favorites and Christmas carols. The concert will feature 80 choristers, a trumpet, oboe, string quartet, organ, and professional soloists.

The free concert is open to the public and will be held in the Dr. John D. Stull Performing Arts Center.

For more information, contact Andrew Pittman, Director of Choral Activities, at [pittmana@iecc.edu](mailto:pittmana@iecc.edu), or by phone at 618-395-7777, ext. 2252.

## Music Department fall recital Dec. 10

The Olney Central College Music Department will present its Fall Recital at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 10 in the Dr. John D. Stull Performing Arts Center.

The program will feature solo vocalists and instrumentalists ranging from classical guitar, to woodwinds and brass, to voice.

Selections will be from the art music realm as well as more popular songs from the Broadway stage.

Admission is free and open to the public.

## Lost & Found Items

If you have lost an item, please check with the switchboard desk in the Student Services Office.



## SNA DONATION

The Student Nurses Association at OCC presented a \$300 donation to Laura Powden and Anne Zuber for Burgin Manor's Enhancement Program. The funds will be used to purchase lotion, socks and other items for residents.

## Student Support Services workshop focuses on business etiquette

On Saturday, Nov. 21, the TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) program of the Illinois Eastern Community College District held its quarterly workshop.

The focus of the workshop was Business Etiquette, Essential Skills in the Workplace.

The TRIO SSS program mission is "To provide educational services and cultural experiences to under-represented students, empowering them to achieve lifelong success." Therefore, it is extremely important that these services include information regarding career success.

Lindsey Miller, the keynote speaker, has more than 30 years of senior-level Human Resource Management experience with General Electric. Her assignments span four different businesses and include Education Grant Management, Organization and Staffing, Labor Relations, Manager of Recruiting, Ombudsman and Compensation. She also has extensive experience designing and delivering training on a variety of

subjects such as: Executive Coaching and Assessment, Performance Management, Conflict Resolution and Leadership Development.

Miller's strong experience as a seasoned HR professional coupled with her knowledge of business processes makes her an extremely valuable asset to her clients.

She is passionate about education and the underserved and enjoys being a catalyst for positive change — working with teams and individuals.

She provided the students with information spanning topics such as interview etiquette, dressing for success, and essential skills in the workplace.

The students were told to wear business professional or business casual attire and there was a fashion show after the keynote presentation in which students displayed their business wear and critiqued each other and offered suggestions.

There was a Business Etiquette luncheon at which sev-

eral dignitaries from Olney Central College and the Olney Chamber of Commerce were present to offer the students an opportunity to use professional communication skills.

Those in attendance from OCC were President Rodney Ranes, Assistant Dean of Student Services Adam Greathouse, Coordinator of Career Services Allan Alldredge and Speech Instructor James Tucker. Julie Hearing and Linda Brown represented the Olney Chamber of Commerce.

A team building activity was a part of the agenda as well as a presentation on Elevator Speeches. There was a very interesting session in Speed Interviewing.

The day ended with a presentation on writing thank you letters and cards for interviews and scholarships.

A canned food drive was the community service aspect of the workshop. Students also conducted a raffle. The proceeds will go to the local food banks in each of the district's college locations.



# Sports Schedule

## Men's Basketball

- Dec. 12** — OCC at Southwestern Illinois College, 3 p.m.
- Jan. 6** — OCC at John A. Logan College, 7:30 p.m.
- Jan. 9** — OCC vs. Lake Land College, 7:30 p.m. at home
- Jan. 13** — OCC at Shawnee Community College, 7:30 p.m.
- Jan. 16** — OCC vs. Southeastern Illinois College, 7:30 p.m. at home
- Jan. 20** — OCC vs. Kaskaskia College, 7:30 p.m. at home
- Jan. 23** — OCC at Vincennes University, 7 p.m.
- Jan. 27** — OCC at Rend Lake College, 7:30 p.m.
- Jan. 30** — OCC vs. Lewis & Clark Community College, 7:30 p.m. at home

## Women's Basketball

- Dec. 12** — OCC at Southwestern Illinois College, 1 p.m.
- Dec. 15** — OCC vs. Danville Area Community College, 5:30 p.m. at home
- Jan. 3** — OCC vs. Millikin University JV, 4 p.m. at home
- Jan. 6** — OCC at John A. Logan College, 5:30 p.m.
- Jan. 9** — OCC vs. Lake Land College, 5:30 p.m. at home
- Jan. 13** — OCC at Shawnee Community College, 5:30 p.m.
- Jan. 16** — OCC vs. Southeastern Illinois College, 5:30 p.m. at home
- Jan. 20** — OCC vs. Kaskaskia College, 5:30 p.m. at home
- Jan. 23** — OCC at Vincennes University, 4 p.m.
- Jan. 27** — OCC at Rend Lake College, 5:30 p.m.
- Jan. 30** — OCC vs. Lindenwood Belleville University, JV, 5:30 p.m. at home



## SNA DONATIONS

The Student Nurses Association at OCC presents Social Worker Roni Lambird with a \$300 donation for the Richland Memorial Hospital Longterm Care Unit.

At right, SNA members present Richland County Sheriff Andy Hires with a \$100 donation for the Shop with a Home-town Hero Program. Funds for this and other donations were raised through selling T-shirts and hosting a bake sale.



## OATHKEEPERS CLUB DONATION

The OCC Oathkeepers Club presents 20 gas cards valued at \$20 each to Roxanne Carson, Marion VA Medical Center nurse and case manager. The cards will be given to veterans who need assistance in traveling home from the facility. Members raised the funds to purchase the gift cards through their recent cookout.