

KNIGHTLINE

Olney Central College



March 2021

Upcoming Events

March

15 *Mid-semester Classes Begin*

18-20 *Smokey Joe's Cafe, OCC Theater, 7 p.m.*

21 *Smokey Joe's Cafe, OCC Theater, 2 p.m.*

26-27 *Smokey Joe's Cafe, OCC Theater, 7 p.m.*

28 *Smokey Joe's Cafe, OCC Theater, 2 p.m.*

Summer & Fall Registration

OCC will open registration for summer and fall classes beginning March 16. Schedules are available online at www.iecc.edu/schedules.

Advisement appointments are now available. Stop by Student Services or call 618-395-7777.

Graduation Application Forms

Graduation application forms are due ASAP.

Contact your advisor with questions or for more information.

Virtual College Visits

OCC is hosting virtual college visits for students who plan to transfer after completing an associate degree.

For additional information and links to events, visit www.iecc.edu/advisingtours.

OCC graduate among finalists for Golden Apple Teaching Award

Zeb Holder wanted to stay connected with his music students when the COVID-19 pandemic forced school closures last spring. While he couldn't be with his students in person, the Olney Central College alum began recording and sharing video lessons three days a week through Youtube and his Facebook page, Mr. Holder's Music Room.

"I saw a fellow music teacher was posting 30- to 60-second videos and I got the idea to put the whole lesson on Facebook," said Holder, who teaches kindergarten through second-grade music at Lovejoy, Eunice Smith and Lewis and Clark Elementary in the Alton School District. "It gave the students a friendly face to watch when they couldn't be at school. It was a way to continue music education not only with my students, but students across the U.S. Even if their school didn't have a music teacher or their teacher wasn't doing lessons virtually, I thought this would give students a place to come and learn about music. A lot of teachers are doing amazing things online. I just got in at the very start."

Holder's dedication and creativity led to his nomination and subsequent selection as one of 32 finalists for the Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching. A record-setting 708 nominations from 67 counties in Illinois were received for the prestigious awards, which are presented annually by Golden Apple, the leading Illinois nonprofit committed to preparing, honoring and supporting educators who advance educational opportunities for students.

"I was humbled and excited to learn I had been nominated for the award," Holder said. "K through second music teachers can sometimes be forgotten as high school bands and choirs are more visible. It felt nice to be noticed."

Holder says the videos are similar to his face-to-face lessons.

"We have movement and we focus on pitch and singing," said Holder, who plays a ukulele and encourages students to sing along. "Everything that would go into a normal classroom lesson is in the video."

With engaging visuals and his uplifting voice, it's easy to see why Holder has attracted viewers from across the country.

Holder's viewers include a former student, from his student teaching experience at Red Hill High School who watches with her children, and a former foreign exchange student Holder met at OCC who shares the videos with her students in Denmark.

"The videos have been well received," Holder said. "People I don't even know are watching them. In the early days of the pandemic, parents were looking for things for students to do at home. It seems people really appreciated that someone was out there creating content like this."

Holder enjoys sharing his passion for music with his students.

"Working with kindergarten through second grade is so much fun," he said. "We get to sing and play together just for the pure joy of music. Their energy feeds you as a teacher."

Holder chose to attend OCC and begin his path toward a music education degree after meeting former vocal instructor Paul Sainer during a recruitment visit to East Richland High School.

"He encouraged me to come to OCC and I received a two-year vocal scholarship," Holder said.



See Holder, Page 3

OCC Theater brings music back to the OCC stage

The Olney Central College Theater was just a week away from presenting *Mamma Mia* last spring when the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown not only its performances, but shows across the country.

"I feel so sorry that our audience didn't get to see all the hard work the *Mamma Mia* cast put in," said OCC Theater Director Jon Wright. "That will be the first production we do once everything returns to normal and we are able to do our shows with a normal size cast."

In the meantime, Wright is excited to bring *Smokey Joe's Café* to the Ruth Henry Stage.

"We are obviously very excited to perform a musical," Wright said of the upcoming production sponsored by First National Bank in Olney. "It has been quite the challenge as we try to follow all of the CDC and Illinois Department of Health guidelines."

Added safety measures have included frequent COVID-19 testing for all participants.

"The cast and crew have been amazing," Wright said. "They have been tested weekly if not more with very few complaints. They're willing to do anything to get back on stage."

Cast members include Dylan Reed, Keegan

Tucker, Derek Mason, Andrew Flynn, Summer Culpepper, Sophia Ranes, Ashlie Zwilling, Jessica McDonald and Warren Weitkamp.

"COVID has definitely changed the way we have to do things," Weitkamp said. "With the possibility of someone getting sick, out of rehearsal preparation is a must. I've really enjoyed the rehearsals. They are intense so they keep me on my toes. It's awesome working the production team. The harder they push me, the more I want to do my best."

Weitkamp, who serves as the Richland County High School Choir Director, has enjoyed working with such a talented group.

"This cast is amazing," he added. "I'm singing and dancing with some of Richland County's finest performers. I'm so blessed to be alongside current and former students from our choir and theater productions at RCHS. Performing with and seeing how much these students have grown is one of the highest honors an educator can experience."

Weitkamp said *Smokey Joe's Café* is a show area residents don't want to miss.

"There is so much talent. It's going to be amazing," he said. "Not to mention the music is so much fun."

For Wright, *Smokey Joe's Café* was an easy choice for this spring's production.

"Part of trying to put on a musical in a COVID world meant finding a show with a small cast," he said. "*Smokey Joe's Café* is perfect as it only has nine actors. It is a much smaller cast than most musicals and we are putting it on with a bare-bones crew. We feel this is an important opportunity for our cast as well as audience to feel normal again."

The longest-running musical revue on Broadway, *Smokey Joe's Café* features the music of Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller. The show is packed with familiar hits from the 1950s and 1960s including *On Broadway*, *Jail House Rock*, *Stand By Me* and many more.

"Leiber and Stoller wrote a lot of music in the doo-wop era as well as many of Elvis Presley's songs," Wright said. "*Smokey Joe's Café* is a two-hour show that is nothing but pure joy. I think people need a little joy in their lives and this should hit the spot. They're just songs that make you smile."

Tickets are going fast. The March 19, 20, 21 and 28 shows are already sold out. Tickets are still available for the 7 p.m. performances on March 18, 25, 26 and 27. Tickets are \$12 and can be purchased online at www.iecc.edu/occtheater or from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. weekdays at the OCC Box Office. Tickets are limited with only 50 available each performance. Masks and social distancing are required.

Wright said support from both the OCC administration and the Illinois Eastern Community Colleges District Office has been phenomenal.

"They have helped solve many problems throughout the process and given many solutions every step of the way," Wright said. "It is very exciting that in just a few weeks while not in the number we are used to, we will be able to entertain people again."

Like many performing art venues, Wright said the OCC Theater has faced challenges in the wake of the pandemic.

"We are beginning to recover financially, but we took a pretty big hit last spring," he added.

If you would like to contribute financially to the OCC Theater, please go to its website at www.iecc.edu/occtheater, or email wrightj@iecc.edu.



JJ Wright (left) administers a COVID-19 test to Lori Kilpatrick prior to an OCC Theater rehearsal for *Smokey Joe's Café*. All cast and crew members must undergo frequent COVID-19 testing under safety measures in place for the upcoming production.

Student Senate to host Spring Fling April 28

Student Senate members are gearing up for OCC's Spring Fling which will be held from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. on April 28.

Activities will include a few games and prizes will be available. Make sure to stop by and see your senate members.

Keep watching for Wacky Wednesday's your class could be next.

Student Senate members are joining Phi Theta Kappa and selling 50/50 raffle tickets. Proceeds will be donated to Claws and Paws in Olney. See a Student Senate member for your chance to win.

Applications will be posted soon for the 2021-2022 Student Senate members and officer positions.

PTK, Senate sponsor 50/50 Raffle

Phi Theta Kappa and Student Senate are hosting a 50/50 Raffle Fund-raiser now until April 1.

Money raised will be donated to Claws and Paws Resale and Animal Rescue Center in Olney.

Tickets are \$1 each or six for \$5. The drawing will be April 1 during PTK's meeting at 12:15 p.m.

Purchase your ticket from a PTK member or see Advisors Amie Mayhall or Kaitlyn Weger.

Holder *Continued from Page 1*

"My birthday is in July. I was young for a high school graduate. I wasn't ready to go to a university so OCC was a good opportunity for me."

While attending OCC, Holder was active in student life, participating in choir, band, pep band and Phi Theta Kappa.

After graduating in 2006, Holder transferred to Eastern Illinois University where he earned a bachelor's degree in music education. In 2009, he started his career in Chester, Ill., where he taught K-8 music for six years.

In 2013, Holder earned a master's degree in educational administration from McKendree University and met his future wife, Lexi. Holder accepted his current position in Alton in 2015 to be near her and the couple married the following June. The Holders are expecting their first child later this month.

Holder says he would encourage others to attend OCC.

"It did a fine job getting me ready. I have no regrets whatsoever," he said. "At OCC, there was a sense of community. It was a smaller environment where I felt comfortable. I knew the people around me were interested in my success. When you feel someone has your back, that is a great feeling."

Holder is especially thankful for the opportunity to work with and learn from Sainer, who passed away in 2008.

"Paul Sainer was an amazing man and an inspiration to his students," Holder said. "His light and dedication continues to shine on in his students."

Sports Schedule

Men's Basketball

March 13 — OCC vs. Lewis & Clark, 3 p.m. at home

March 17 — OCC at Kaskaskia, 7:30 p.m.

March 20 — OCC vs. Southwestern Illinois, 3 p.m. at home

March 24 — OCC at Wabash Valley, 7:30 p.m.

March 27 — OCC vs. John A. Logan, 3 p.m. at home

March 30 — OCC at Lake Land, 6 p.m.

April 1 — OCC vs. Lincoln Trail, 7:30 p.m. at home

Women's Basketball

March 15 — OCC vs. Lake Land, 5:30 p.m. at home

March 17 — OCC at Kaskaskia, 5:30 p.m.

March 20 — OCC vs. Southwestern Illinois, 1 p.m. at home

March 24 — OCC at Wabash Valley, 5:30 p.m.

March 27 — OCC vs. John A. Logan, 1 p.m. at home

March 30 — OCC at Rend Lake, 4 p.m.

April 1 — OCC vs. Lincoln Trail, 5:30 p.m. at home

Baseball

March 13 — OCC vs. Shawnee, noon & 3 p.m. at home

March 16 — OCC vs. Vincennes, 2 p.m. at home

March 25 — OCC vs. Rend Lake, noon & 3 p.m. at home

March 27 — OCC at Rend Lake, noon & 3 p.m.

March 30 — OCC at Southeastern Illinois, noon & 3 p.m.

April 1 — OCC at John A. Logan, noon & 3 p.m.

April 2 — OCC vs. John A. Logan, noon & 3 p.m. at home

Softball

March 13 — OCC vs. Wabash Valley, noon & 2 p.m. at home

March 15 — OCC vs. Lincoln Land, 2 & 4 p.m. at home

March 18 — OCC at Kaskaskia, 2 & 4 p.m.

March 20 — OCC at Frontier Community, noon & 2 p.m.

March 23 — OCC vs. Highland Community, 2 & 4 p.m. at home

March 25 — OCC vs. Lincoln Trail, 2 & 4 p.m. at home

March 27 — OCC vs. Rend Lake, noon & 2 p.m. at home

April 1 — OCC vs. Shawnee Community, 2 & 4 p.m. at home

April 2 — OCC at Southeastern Illinois, noon & 2 p.m.



Phi Theta Kappa inducts new members

Olney Central College's Phi Theta Kappa chapter held its new member induction ceremony on Feb. 18.

Those installed include Luke Allen, Jack Bettis, Timia Butler, Camden Cowger, Drew Dillon, Blake Donnan, Tristan Elder, Allison Harris, Katelyn Hawkins, Ellie Hill, Bailey Lewis, Daniel Lewis, Melissa Lindley, Gabrielle Lyell, Lexi Marshall, Katelyn Miller, Tonya Moseley, William Newby, Shantel Nichols, Siera Nichols, Blaine Niebrugge, Kasondra Ninness, Tristen Payne,

Emilia Rose, Sydney Rudolphi, Renae Russell, Shelby Scarborough, Shane Seessengood, Molly Sheehan, Danae Sowers, Ethan Steber, Marcus Stennett, Caleb Thomas, Melissa Townsend, Gabriell Weber, Ryan Wilborn, Tayler Wilson, Jenna Zumbahlen and Nicholas Zwilling.

Phi Theta Kappa is an international honorary society for students attending two-year colleges. To be eligible for membership, a student must have a 3.5 GPA or higher.

PTK Food Drive

Phi Theta Kappa wrapped up its spring food drive on March 4 with donations surpassing expectations.

