

Fall 2008 Newsletter

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Mrs. Butler Wins ACBO Award

Lauri Kaplan, Parent Mentor

OSSB's Mary Butler was awarded the **Arlene Cohen Art of Teaching Award** in early November at the American Council of the Blind of Ohio's annual conference. This award was created in memory of Mrs. Cohen, past president of the Ohio chapter of the American Council of the Blind.

According to ACB-O members, Mrs. Cohen was a "popular educator and a true advocate in the blind community." This certainly parallels the way the entire OSSB community feels about Mrs. Butler, who has been teaching blind and visually impaired children at OSSB for 50 years! On hand to celebrate with Mary and her husband Howard were OSSB Principal, Jerry Marcom, Interim Superintendent, Cynthia Johnson and teachers; Ceil Peirano, Annie Tolle and Sue Conrad. Congratulations, Mrs. Butler, and thank you for all you have done and continue to do for the children.

Lynd's Fruit Farm Trips

Mrs. Young-Dove, Teacher

On a beautiful September day, the Elementary students traveled to Lynd's Fruit Farm in Licking County to go apple picking. The sun was shining as we got off the buses. We all enjoyed finding the trees and reaching for the crisp apples. Once our bags were full we tasted the apples we had picked. Upon returning to school Mrs. Young-Dove's class made applesauce, apple crisp and fried apples! Mmmmm.

In October we returned to Lynd's to try our hands at picking Indian Corn, gourds and pumpkins.

We loaded up on the hay wagons and headed off to pick Indian corn. We waded out into the corn field in search of the most beautiful ears of Indian corn. It was worth every step. We got back on the wagons and rode off to the gourd field to find the most interesting gourd shapes in a variety of fall colors. There were so many shapes and sizes, and we all searched for the best pumpkin we could find! Once picked and bagged up, we were treated to apple cider made there on the farm! It was a sweet ending to an event filled day.

Marching Band News

Carol Agler, Music Director

The BIG news is that the OSSB Marching Band has been invited to march in the 2010 Tournament of Roses Parade! They were informed in a whole-school National Anthem Project assembly October 21st. Gary DiSabo, president of the Tournament of Roses parade committee phoned Mrs. Agler and she put the call over the sound system so that all students heard the invitation. The next day the students' reaction was pictured on the front page

CBS Evening News did a story about OSSBMB on CBS News 6:30-7:00 p.m. Nov. 7. The link to it is posted on our website at www.ossb.oh.gov. We are still in the process of discovery as far as handling fund raising for the 2010 Rose Parade trip and we welcome any and all donations. Cost will be approximately \$1500 per person, not including new uniforms.

Halftime Magazine featured OSSB trombonist Sam Shepherd in their recent issue. There is a link to the article entitled [Overcoming Obstacles](#) on the OSSB website.

The OSSBMB is now a pep band for the Ohio School for the Deaf home basketball games. Come out and root for the Spartan's and cheer on the pep band!

Wednesday, January 7 – vs. St. Rita, 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, January 8 – vs. Columbus Horizon Science Academy, 7:30 p.m.

Monday, January 12 – vs. Liberty Christian 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, January 14 – vs. Muskingum Christian Academy 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, January 15 – vs. Columbus Torah Academy 7:30 p.m.

Monday, January 26 – vs. Veritas Academy, 7:30 p.m.

Computer Artist Extraordinaire

Lauri Kaplan

Among the many talented students at OSSB, staff recently discovered Robert Thompson, senior from Southeastern Ohio. Robert's specialty is computer generated artwork. We enjoy his use of bold colors and geometric shapes. Thanks for sharing your talent, Robert!

New Student Recreational Center

Erica Cooper, Residential Rec. Coordinator

Joe Gehres and I have been placed in charge of residential recreation for this school year. Our main focus has been to revitalize the downstairs activity space. This fall marked the beginning of the new and improved OSSB student recreational center. Many old items were taken out and new items were added to the mix. Special features include two large screen televisions, leather furniture, ping pong, pool and air hockey tables, a Nintendo Wii game system, new karaoke music, a talking dart board, and skee ball. Also, students have been operating the canteen in the evenings for their fellow students to enjoy.

Some of the activities this fall included a pajama party for the girl cottages, cottage socials, craft nights, Nintendo bowling tournaments, and a large Halloween party! The new recreation center has been a place that students enjoy going for entertainment and/or relaxation. We hope to make it better and better for our wonderful students!

Joe and I would like to take time to thank all staff who helped make these changes in any way....you know who you are!

Residential Updates

Lisa Modena, Academic Enrichment Team

Academic Enrichment

This year we are fortunate to be able to offer Academic Enrichment to our residential students. The library doors are open after school, Monday-Thursday until 9:30 to allow students to utilize the library for research and get help from staff on homework. Students receive assistance from Doug Chavis and Lisa Modena – the Academic Enrichment Team.

Resident of the Month Awards

Residential students are recognized for all of their hard work through the “Resident of the Month” and “Academic Resident of the Month” programs. Cottage Youth Leaders nominate a student who is doing well getting along with peers, keeping up with their rooms, etc. for the Resident award, and Doug Chavis and Lisa Modena nominate the Academic students. On December 9, 2008 we had our first party for all of the winners to get together and enjoy pizza and a movie. Congratulations to these terrific students!

Mentor Club Gains Alumni Support

Evette Simmons-Reed, Vocational Coordinator

OSSB Mentor Club had its third annual kick-off on November 13th. Since the grant for the Way-To-Work E-mentoring project ended, the club has been without funding until the OSSB Alumni Association stepped in with a donation of \$1,000. These funds will be used to support mentor and mentee activities throughout the school year. Approximately 40 students and their mentors are members of the 2008 club. A big thanks goes out to the OSSB Alumni Association for their generosity!

Book Club News

Janell Brown, OSSB Librarian

Our OSSB Book Club finished the book ARTEMIS FOWL by Eoin Colfer, and did a live book chat with the Cleveland Library for the Blind on November 17th. We discussed likes and dislikes, and most of the kids enjoyed talking about an empowered, super smart twelve year old! It seems the holidays are upon us, and what better way to whip up anticipation than to read a wonderful holiday story?! Our OSSB library sponsored the annual elementary Holiday Book Chats with the Cleveland Library for the Blind throughout December. Our older students listened and discussed A CHRISTMAS MEMORY by Truman Capote on December 8th, and our younger students did the same on December 15th with THE POLAR EXPRESS by Chris Van Allsburg. Ms. Barbara Mates and Ms. Stephanie Combs hosted our discussions. Mrs. Brown reminds her readers to keep their eyes and fingers posted for the Winter Reading Contest that starts early next year!

Review of Verizon's LG EnV2 Cell Phone

Macy McClain, OSSB Senior

For my 18th birthday, I received the LG EnV2 cell phone. The EnV2 is an accessible cell phone made by LG electronics and is available from Verizon Wireless. The one big advantage that this phone has over other cell phones, is that it has Auto view and Readout, meaning it reads text messages out loud for you! The phone has a qwerty-style keyboard and while it is a bit small, it's very easy to use to send text messages. The LG EnV2 phone opens like a laptop and also features a built-in MP3 player for playing music. I give this phone a rating of 8 out of 10, and would highly recommend this pretty accessible phone for those of you who are interested in text messaging and particularly for those who are blind or have low vision. For more information about the LG EnV2 you can go to the Verizon Wireless website at www.verizonwireless.com.

OSSB Student Receives Special Award

Shannon Bonenberger, O&M instructor

On October 17, 2008, OSSB's own, Michelle Goon, was awarded the AERO Student of the Year Award at a lunch Banquet at the King's Island Resort and Convention Center in Cincinnati, Ohio. This award shows that Michelle has demonstrated the commitment to work hard and to achieve educational, personal, and social goals. Surrounded by nominators, Danene Fast, Rachel Smith, Ann Pilewskie and Shannon Bonenberger, as well as other OSSB staff, Michelle humbly thanked the AERO conference participants in attendance. Michelle greatly deserves this award; this was a special afternoon that she will always remember. CONGRATULATIONS MICHELLE!!!

Vocational Workshop Makes Ceramic Ornaments

Rick Geyer, Voc. Instructor

Hello from the vocational workshop! This past fall we have been working on ceramic holiday ornaments for the Winter Concert. Each vocational student helped participate in making the ornaments. We started with the raw clay, rolled it out and cut it with cookie cutters. We fired them, glazed or painted them and fired them again. The results were wonderful, and we've sold dozens of ornaments in support of the vocational workshop and made a donation to the PTSO. The students in the vocational workshop will each take one home for the holiday!

We will also be making and selling ceramic Panthers to help support the OSSBMB for their trip to the Rose Parade. Stop in the workshop when you can, and we'll be happy to share information about our program, and the many activities in which your sons and daughters are involved.

2008 Home Economics Bake-Off

Sheryl Fraley, Home Ec. teacher

Students and staff really enjoyed the fun and friendly competition at this year's annual Home Economics Bake-Off. The themes this year were, "Country Cooking", "Cookies", and "Snacks". In addition to the student competition, we decided to have a staff competition in the cookie category as well, judging for 1st place only. Students judged the staff competition. Judges for the student competition were Mrs. Fast, Mr. Wetli, Mrs. Kaplan, Miss Brewer and Miss Mozell. Following judging, all participants were invited to the Home Economics room to taste a little of everything. All of the food was delicious! Congratulations to all participants and helpers for another great year of food and fun. Winners were as follows:

Country Cooking Category:

1st **Billy Peterson** with Alabama Pulled Pork and Blackened Green Beans, 2nd **Robert Thompson** with Frogmore Stew, 3rd **Nathan Johnson** with Bubba's Jambalaya

Cookie Category:

1st **Brittany Perman** with Chocolate Kiss Peanut Butter Cookies, 2nd **Michelle Goon** with Mechelle's Chocolate Cookies, 3rd **Macy McClain** with Macadamia Lemon Bars

Snack Category:

1st **Genene Blackwell** with Feta and Honey Spread, 2nd **Kaylee Arthurs** with Cream Cheese and Pepper Jelly Appetizer, 3rd **Nathan Yoder** with White Chocolate Snack Mix

Staff Cookie Category:

1st **Tammy Hupp** with White Chocolate Pecan Toffee Cookies

OSSB Goalball News

Katie Robinson and Kim Picard

After a whirl-wind six weeks of practice, the OSSB 2008 goalball teams headed to St. Louis, Missouri in mid-November for conference. The boys team this year consisted of Nathan Johnson, Chris Harrington, Robert Hooper, Cody McFarland, and Sam Shepherd. Katie Robinson, Kayla Rollison, and Jerricka Williams made up the girls team. Our talented manager Chris Cifone accompanied us, and he even remembered the hockey pants. We began play on Friday night, and resumed Saturday morning. The Ohio boys finished Saturday morning and placed sixth overall.

The Ohio girls played late into the afternoon and made it to the championship game against Missouri. We kept the score tied 0-0 for the fourteen minutes of regulation play. The game went into overtime, and then into sudden death overtime. Missouri scored, ending the game with the final score at 1-0. The girls took a hard-fought close 2nd place. It was the most exciting game of the conference!

Though the season was short, we all enjoyed it. Seniors that will not be returning to the team next year are Nathan Johnson and Katie Robinson. Remaining team members look forward to our next season. Finally, special thanks to coaches Kim Picard, Dan Kelley, and Ralph Maravola (who drove the bus and ran the entire meet) for a great season.

OSSB Cheerleaders visit Indiana

Laurie Brevick, Cheer Coach

Small but mighty, our two cheerleaders and team manager braved cold weather, haunting spirits of cellblock C (Indiana School for the Blind, formerly a prison), and two days of spandex-clad boys, to represent The Ohio State School for the Blind.

It was my first school trip as cheer coach, and I wasn't disappointed. Yes, the bus could have been a little warmer, the food could have used a little Tabasco sauce, and the beds actual mattresses, but we had wonderful bonding moments, elaborate photo shoots, videotaping evidence of ghostly inhabitants, shouting at the tops of our lungs above the crowds, singing holiday carols, and playing Trip to the North Pole board game with a few cheerleaders from Kentucky. Personally, the highlight of the entire weekend was trekking through a blizzard (OK...slight exaggeration), to the school-sponsored tree sale where we taught Mr. and Mrs. Claus a winter cheer, feasted on hot chocolate and holiday sugar cookies, chatted with an elf, and met a reindeer named Fruitcake. Here's wishing you a little holiday CHEER! Have a wonderful and surprising winter break and new year!

OSSB-OSD New Schools Timeline*

Cynthia M. Johnson, Interim Superintendent

Schematic Design (completed and signed)-----November 24, 2008

Design Development Phase-----December-March 2009

Existing Dorm Demolition and Abatement-----January-April 2009

Early Site Work Design and Construction Bids-----April-October 2009

Construction Phase-----November 2009-December 2010

**These are projected times and subject to change.*

OSSB/OSD Sign Schematic Design

Shown signing the schematic design documents on November 24th are; Michael Shoemaker, Executive Director of the Ohio School Facilities Commission (center) with Ms. Cynthia Johnson, Interim Superintendent of the Ohio State School for the Blind and Dr. Edward E. Corbett, Jr., Superintendent of the Ohio School for the Deaf. Meetings will continue in February to finalize "built-in" space and furniture. Stay tuned to the OSSB/OSD New Campus website for further updates.

<http://newcampus.ossb.oh.gov/>

Serotek Keys for K-12/System Access

Lauri Kaplan, Parent Mentor

Get ready for the new year with Keys for K-12, a new offering from Serotek Corporation. System Access is now available free to students in grades kindergarten thru twelve. Keys for K-12 is a free license to carry the System Access Mobile capabilities on a portable flash drive. With the SA Mobile Software, your student can plug his or her flash drive into any computer, anywhere, and have instant access -- through text-to-speech and/or magnification -- to all Windows-based applications already there. This software, similar in many ways to JAWS, is endorsed by OSSB's own Mr. Kelley! With help from NCR and the Ideal Group Inc., we will be able to secure the portable flash drives free of charge, but will need parental permission to enroll students in the Keys for K-12 program.

Mr. Kelley and I will be sending home a letter in early January, asking interested parents to fill out a permission form so that we may share contact information with Serotek. Shortly thereafter, your child will receive System Access and a brief overview. If you have questions, feel free to contact Mr. Kelley at dkelley@ossb.oh.gov or Lauri Kaplan at lkaplan@ossb.oh.gov.

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Ohio State School for the Blind Important Dates to Remember

January 2009

- 5 School Resumes
- 9-11 Wrestling & Cheerleading @ Kentucky
- 19 Martin Luther King Day **NO SCHOOL**
- 23-25 NCASB Meet @ Kansas City
- 26 Pee Wee Swimming Begins

February 2009

- 2** Pee Wee Wrestling/Cheerleading Begins
- 9** Forensics & Swim Practice Begins
- 16** Presidents' Day **NO SCHOOL**
- 27-28** Forensics & Swimming @ Wisconsin

March 2009

- 4** Pee Wee Meet @ Indiana

Summer Camp Survey and BSVI Program

Ann Pilewskie, Transition Coordinator

Parents, please take a minute to answer our survey regarding the summer camps. We need information from you to make decisions about what camps will best match student needs, when the camps will occur and if we have to charge a fee, how much that fee will be. You can access the survey on the front page of our website, by scrolling down and clicking on "summer camp survey". We really appreciate your input!

Also, look for the on-line application for the OSSB/BSVI Summer Work and Learn Program, coming soon. This program is open to 18-24 year old individuals who would like to work, as well as enhance their technology skills, daily living skills and mobility skills. This years' six-week program will take place June 29 until August 7, 2009. If you have questions, please call Ann Pilewskie, Transition Coordinator at 614-728-1961.

**Ohio State School
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OSSB Mission Statement

The Ohio State School for the Blind, a publicly funded educational facility, is dedicated to the intellectual, social, physical and emotional growth of students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities. Our mission is to work cooperatively with students, families and the community to provide an effective, enjoyable educational experience through specialized curriculum, equipment, material and individualized, disability-specific instruction to develop our students' unique potential.

