

Highlighter

Issue 4 April 2012

From the Principal's Desk- April 2012

Dear Parents and Guardians:

This is a fun time of year to be at ORHS. There are many special events taking place, spring sports are well under way and our graduating seniors are in the home stretch of their high school careers. Every day I hear from another graduating senior as to what their post graduation plans entail. It is inspiring to see the passion that our students have for their future plans. Oyster River High School is truly an exciting place to be these days.

In the recent past we have had a number of exceptional successes by our school and students. I would like to start by recognizing Coach Andrea Drake and the ORHS Math Team for winning the NH State Championship on Tuesday, March 13th at Plymouth State University. Our team of 12 did us proud.

The ORHS drama club under the direction of Meredith Freeman-Caple competed in the One Act Play competition on the weekend of March 23rd and 24th. They advanced to the regional competition on March 30th and 31st.

The ORHS First Robotics Team competed in the regional championships at WPI in Worcester, MA on March 8th and 9th. First year Coach Nate Oxnard and his team did an amazing job as they finished 21st overall. It is obvious that the Oyster River student body is a multi-talented group.

On Wednesday, March 21st Oyster River High School was visited by the Excellence in Education Awards Committee. A visiting team of 12 educators from across the state visited our school and spent the day with us. ORHS is a finalist for an Excellence in Education Award. The process of getting to this point has been rewarding and inspiring. As a first year principal I would just like to say how proud I was of our school on the day of the visit. It was absolutely inspiring to see our students and staff pull together in order to present to the visiting committee what we think makes our school special. Regardless of the outcome of the awards process it was a great experience and one that I would definitely do again. We anticipate hearing from the awards committee before April vacation. I will keep you posted.

Heather Machanoff our guidance director reports that things are going very well with our seniors and their post high school plans. We have had over 800 transcript requests sent to colleges to date with more to come. Clearly our kids are aggressively pursuing their college options. The class of 2012 is the first graduating class to be required to produce a digital portfolio in order to graduate. It is great to see that well over 90% of our seniors have already fulfilled the requirement and we are working with the small number of students that have not to help make sure that they do so before graduation.

By now all of our underclassmen have had the opportunity to meet with their guidance counselors to plan out next year's schedule. This year for the first time we did the class registration process

through Powerschool. Over the coming weeks we will finalize plans for next year and begin building the schedule. If you have any questions or concerns about course offerings or your child's course selections please contact our guidance department and your child's counselor.

Finally, I would like to thank Pam Carr for creating an Oyster River High School Facebook page. You will find a link to our page on our school web site at <http://www.orcsd.org/school/orhs/>. All school announcements and important information can be found there. Please "Like" us on Facebook to stay up on school events.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns about anything at ORHS please do not hesitate to call or email. My email is tallen@orcsd.org and the phone at ORHS is 868-2375.

Sincerely,
Todd Allen

Important upcoming dates from the guidance department:

- April 2nd is the date that all local scholarship information will be available.
- April 6th is the registration deadline for the May SAT.
- May 4th is the registration deadline for the June ACT.
- May 25th is the 2nd Annual ORHS Career Day

Some other very important dates at ORHS:

- April 5th is the Relay for Life Prom Fashion Show at 7:00 PM
- April 18, 19 and 20 is "This I Believe" (An exhibition of student essays and artwork)
- May 10, 11 and 12 at 7:00 PM is the spring musical CHICAGO
- Tentative: May 25th Senior Follies
- June 4th is Award Assembly
- June 7th is Baccalaureate
- June 8th is ORHS Graduation
- Finals week for underclassmen is June 11-14

World Language Festival

World Language students impressed parents and friends at the most recent World Language Festival held at ORHS on March 22. Students from level 1 and 2 used their language skills to present such plays as Hansel and Gretel, Fric and Frac and Cinderella. Thanks to all who attended and thanks to our wonderful students who prepared delicious, authentic Latin and French dishes and who worked hard to prepare for this wonderful evening!

Fundraiser

The French and Spanish Clubs are having a fundraiser to support their various activities throughout the year. In conjunction with Wentworth Gardens, we will be selling floral hanging baskets just in time for Mother's Day. The choices are Wave Petunias, Ivy Geraniums, New Guinea Impatiens and Fuchsia for \$18.00 each. Orders can be given to Mary Beaton (mbeaton@orcsd.org) or Stephen Lord (slord@orcsd.org) on or before May 2nd. A check made out to ORHS or cash must be received before sending in the order. You will need to pick up the plants on Wednesday May 9th between 2:30 and 3:30 PM.

If you have any questions, please feel free to e-mail us. slord@orcsd.org, mbeaton@orcsd.org.

English Department News:

Macbeth on the ORHS Stage-On March 21st in the high school auditorium, the travelling acting troupe, Shakespeare and Company, performed one of Shakespeare's most famous tragedies for the freshman class, students from Drama and Acting classes and the English department's Shakespeare elective. After the performance, Mrs. Engstrom's freshmen, along with Meredith Freeman Caple's students from Drama and Acting, participated in a workshop with the actors from the performance.

Advanced Seminar in Literature Students Get Off to a Great Start – Oyster River High School seniors participating in Advanced Seminar in Literature (commonly referred to as Senior Sem) have been challenging themselves this semester. Thus far, the class has completed the following works of literature: Kafka on the Shore by Haruki Murakami, Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card and Lolita by Vladimir Nabokov. Students are just starting two additional novels: Everything is Illuminated by Jonathan Safran Foer and A Clockwork Orange by Anthony Burgess. In addition to these novels, students have also read a selection of short stories and worked on independent "Enrichment" projects, which often entails reading outside works, studying an author or researching an issue pertinent to the class assignment.

"Poetry in Silhouettes," An Interdisciplinary Poetry Project: Mrs. Engstrom's Essentials of English students recently finished a project called "Poetry in Silhouettes" featuring students' original works of poetry and art. Students created a silhouette and design that complemented the tone of each of three final poems, put the set together in a visual display, and wrote a reflection on all of their work. This project is one example of the efforts of art teacher Mari Rosi, along with other classroom teachers, to encourage arts integration at the high school. The silhouettes are currently on display in the hallway outside Mrs. Engstrom's classroom.

Oyster River Student Participates in Poetry Out Loud Regional Competition: It was an exciting evening at the Rochester Opera House on Wednesday, March 21st. Students from the Seacoast Region of New Hampshire gathered to compete in the final of four New Hampshire Regional Poetry Out Loud Competitions. Oyster River High School senior, Michaela Wiberg, represented ORHS well. Michaela's poetry recitations included: "Love Armed" by Aphra Behn, "Revenge" by Letitia Elizabeth Landon, and "So We'll Go No More a Roving" by Lord Byron. Oyster River English Department members, Shawn Kelly and Kara Sullivan, attended the evening of excellent poetry recitations.

Journalism Students Prepare for Broadcast Journalism at UNH: Students in Journalism 1 have collaborated with students in Video Production to create a piece of broadcast journalism on the student experience at UNH. Sources include freshmen through senior male and female students, professors of various departments, and staff from food services, residential life, and career counseling. Students are wrapping up their pre-production work, and will be in the field on April 5th and 6th. Look for the final video in the coming weeks.

Lit to Publish Spring Issue: This year's one issue of the Lit Mag, ORHS's literary arts magazine will come out in late April or early May. The spring issue will feature submissions of poetry, fiction, essays, art, and photography from students and staff at ORHS. Copies will be available in the library.

Save the Date:

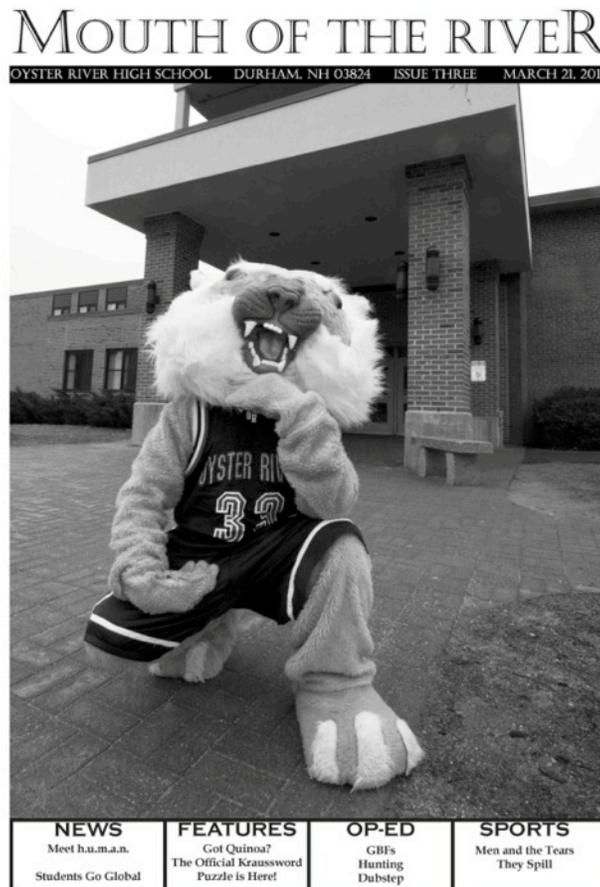
Poetry Night at Durham Public Library-Mark your calendars for April 18th! Students from Oyster River High School English classes are invited to share their original poems at a Poetry Night hosted by the Durham Public Library. The evening's events will be emceed by ORHS's own poet laureate, Daniel Belshaw. There will also be special appearances by the 2012 Poetry Out Loud

finalist and semi finalist, Michaela Wiberg and Lydia Beller-McKenna. All students, parents, and community members are invited to attend.

Community Members Invited to Attend and Participate in the **Fourth Annual This I Believe Exhibit** at Oyster River High School-Oyster River Philosophy, Art, English and Computer Science classes are holding a Community Exhibition of Art, Writing and Video from April 18th through the 20th during school hours and until 5 PM on Thursday the 19th. Students from throughout the district, along with a variety of community members, will be exhibiting artwork and essays that reflect an important personal core belief.

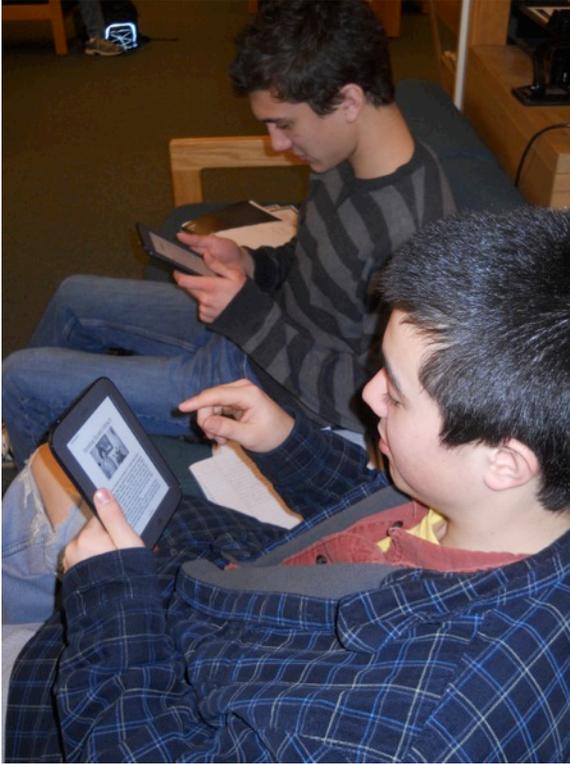
This project was inspired by the NPR series This I Believe, which acclaimed journalist Edward R. Murrow began in 1951. Murrow sought "to present the personal philosophies of thoughtful men and women in all walks of life...who need have nothing more in common than integrity—a real honesty—to talk out loud about the rules they live by, the things they have found to be the basic values in their lives." Any community members interested in submitting artwork, essays, or other contributions for display should contact Kara Sullivan in ORHS English department(kasullivan@orcsd.org) by April 13th.

The Mouth of the River Publishes Third Issue: The student-led newspaper staff has continued to build on its success, as the most recent issue is now in circulation. The staff's goal has been to engage student and community interest as they present and investigate the interests and concerns of Oyster River students. With only one issue left for the school year, students look forward to an excellent fourth issue. Please contact Mr. Kelly – skelly@orcsd.org - if you are interested in getting a delivery of issue three or four.



A NEW KIND OF READING NOOK

We recently purchased six Nook e-readers for the library and so far, it has been a huge success. Each Nook is loaded with the same collection of books including popular series like The Hunger Games and Song of Ice and Fire, titles from this year's Flume Teen Readers' Choice Award list, and classics like Dracula and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Students may sign out a Nook for two weeks at a time, and may place holds or renew just like a regular book.



Our Nook lending program has had several advantages, the first of which is cost savings. Barnes and Nobel allows one copy of an e-book to be loaded on up to six devices, and older titles such as My Antonia that are in the public domain, can be downloaded legally for free. Another advantage is that we are able to be more responsive to students' needs. When a young man came in looking for a book about firefighting in the 1800's, we were able find a newly published book and had it downloaded for him in minutes. Lastly, several students who checked out a Nook intending to read only one book came back and told us they had discovered other titles that they ended up reading too!

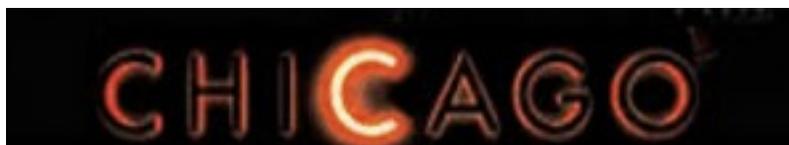
As with any of our equipment over \$100 in value, we do require students to read and sign an Equipment Borrowing Agreement. This spells out their responsibilities and the policies that they must follow when using school equipment. To see a slide show of some of the available titles, visit the library web site. <http://www.orcsd.org/library/orhs/>

PHOTO CAPTION: Seniors Ayan Imai-Hall and Reed Guerino try out the library's new Nook Simple Touch e-readers.

ORHS DRAMA DEPARTMENT News

ORHS DRAMA DEPARTMENT GOING ON TO THE STATE ONE ACT PLAY COMPETITION!!! The ORHS Drama Department performed the One Act Play "Booby Trap" at the Regional competition in Salem, NH on March 24th. They were chosen to move on to the State level March 29th and 30th.

ORHS DRAMA DEPARTMENT'S SPRING MUSICAL IS "CHICAGO." May 10, 11 and 12th at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are \$6.00 for students and \$9.00 for adults.



World Cultures

Bamboo brushes ... Chinese characters ... scholars from the Confucius Institute at UNH ... what's going on in Mr. Zottoli and Mr. Krauss's World Cultures classes?

Oh, just your everyday foray into the ancient art of Chinese calligraphy.

For two days in late March a group of World Cultures students got a crash course in how to paint Chinese characters. The first day was devoted to learning and practicing a few techniques, like how to properly hold a brush, which lines to draw first, and the importance of making sure one keeps good posture at all times.

The second day was devoted to students painting characters that described or reflected a theme or something going on in students' lives. (Students came up with the themes in advance and then they were translated.) Students were tasked with coming up with the concept and its opposite in an effort to capture the overarching theme of Taoism. One of three religions and philosophies that were part of an introductory unit to Asia and China, Taoism is based on the idea that the world contains a harmonious and natural balance between opposing forces and ideas.

Here's a sampling of what students came up with: Organized & Disorganized, Peace & War, Jaded & Engaged, Calm & Worried, Friendship and Individuality, and Thoughtful & Careless.

To make this an authentic learning experience, Mr. Krauss connected with the Confucius Institute and arranged for Yuexing Xu, the co-director, along with Chinese language instructors Yiqiao Zhou and Bei Yang to come in for two periods. They brought with them some supplies, including "magic" paper, and personal experience of living and working in China and with people locally learning the language. Ms. Rosi and art intern Ms. Johnson helped facilitate the workshop, opening their room to our guests and guiding students to a successful conclusion.

By the time it was done students had connected with an ancient art form, explored Taoist philosophy, and reflected on themes running through their own lives. Many of them said they found personal relevance in doing so. As one student said, "I found personal relevance because it made me start to think about my highs and lows. Hopefully I will be able to find the medium so that I won't find myself being too lazy or too energetic."

And that is likely music to teachers' ears.



Math Department News

The Oyster River Math Team competed in the 40th Annual State Math Meet at Plymouth State University on Tuesday, March 20th. The event, hosted by the New Hampshire Teachers of Mathematics (NHTM), attracted 54 schools from around the state and attended by over 600 students. After a very rigorous and challenging event, the team took first in the medium school division, and finished eighth overall. David Chen, a junior, was the sole perfect scorer of the event with a score of 36, while Christian Davis achieved a score of 28 of 36 in his three events. Congratulations!!

The math team also completed their season in the Southeastern Math League on March 15th at their final meet in Epping, ending with a very close fourth place finish in the league of eight area schools. On April 4th, the team will finish their season in the Tri-State Math League with the final meet in Amesbury, MA, looking to finish in third place and stave off Portsmouth. Jialin Shi, a junior, will be looking to solidify her top ranking as the highest scoring junior for the entire league at Amesbury. Good luck to Jialin and the rest of the Oyster River math team!!