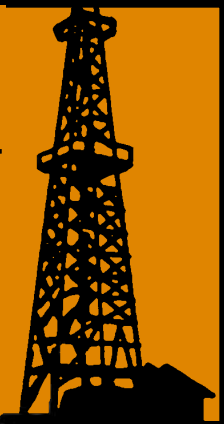


BIG RIG

Merritt High School, November 2014



Secret Talent?

By Lauren Cummings

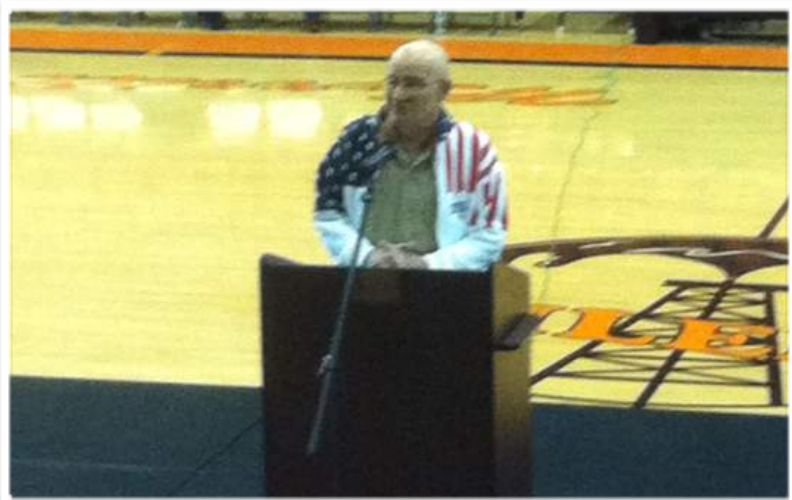
Talent is everywhere- it can be found at school, work, even on the Internet. You see it in your best friend, siblings, and family members. Some talents are more obvious than others, and some are kept hidden. Kenny Price is a great example of this. Three years ago, he began playing the piano.

When asked what inspired him to learn to play, Kenny said his grandpa was the inspiration because he played also.

The first song he ever learned in full was "Ode to Joy," but he currently enjoys playing "Amnesia" by Five Seconds of Summer, and "a lot of Bruno Mars".

At home Kenny plays a keyboard. He doesn't own a full piano, but his grandpa does. Kenny's talent isn't merely kept to himself- he also plays in church on the first Sunday of every month.

When he isn't playing for a crowd he enjoys playing "mostly for myself." Kenny adds that his favorite part of playing piano is for relaxation.



Veteran's Day Program

The Veteran's Day program took place on Nov. 11 at 10 A.M. After an introduction by Kara Eckart, Michal Hust and RJ Bustamante led the posting of the colors. The Merritt Choir sang "The National Anthem" and a medley of patriotic songs. Madison Rutherford welcomed guests and veterans in the audience, and Madison Nagle introduced the speaker, Joe Britton, a veteran of World War II. After an enlightening speech about life after serving in the military, Mr. Britton received a warm applause from the audience. Gabby Carter initiated the poppy memorial, a short ceremony where students placed poppies on wreaths in honor of their friends and family who served. After this, Courtney Reyes conducted a moment of silence before the retiring of the colors. Nate Carr explained national symbols and the successful ceremony was closed.



Patterson Fishing Services was established in Jan. 2004 and is headquartered at 915 Merritt Rd., Elk City, OK. Their office number is 580-225-5252. Len Denson is the Vice President and General Manager of Patterson Services.

Patterson Services, Inc. has grown from humble roots as a family-oriented business to a publicly-traded company that is recognized as a trusted supplier to the oil and gas industry. Founded by C.R. Patterson, Jr., PSI was one of the original providers of rental pipe and rental equipment to the industry.

Patterson's provides a comprehensive line of fishing tools to "catch" tubulars ranging in size from 1/4" to 20". Patterson Fishing Services has procured some of the most technologically advanced equipment in the industry and is continually fabricating new equipment to accommodate customer demand. Additional locations include Lindsay, OK and the new McDonald, PA location. Future plans for expansion include opening locations in areas of major oil and gas discoveries in the U.S. and South America.

A Midsummer Night's Dream

by R.J. Bustamante

On November 5th the juniors and seniors went to Weatherford to see "A Midsummer's Night Dream" by William Shakespeare performed by the SWOSU theatre players.

The play was an all day activity that the English teachers Mrs. Richardson and Mrs. Bollinger also attended. The play itself was very interesting and most of the students enjoyed it very much. Besides Merritt, many other schools decided to attend as well. It was a great way to spend the day and very educational. The Southwestern campus faculty and students did a great job of putting on this fantastic play. We would like to thank them for inviting us.

Legacy Bank employees speak to seniors

By Lauren Cummings

Two employees from Legacy Bank in Oklahoma City spoke to the financial literacy class on Nov. 14.

Senior Compliance Officer Carrie Sides and Assistant Trust Manager and Paralegal Jason Bollinger educated the seniors about identity theft and how to avoid it. They explained what an identity thief would steal, how they would steal it, and what they could do with stolen information.

They also provided the students with ways to protect themselves from identity theft and informed them of "schemes and scams" to look out for. We would like to thank Legacy Bank for allowing them to come talk to us.

NEW STUDENTS

Noah Ligon

by McKenna Archer

This year Merritt High School welcomes many new students. This month's highlighted student is Noah Ligon. He is very open and comfortable, and very nice to everyone around. Noah Ligon was born in Fort Smith, Arkansas. He is in the 9th grade. He moved here from Ada, Oklahoma and attended school at Latta. He is active in sports, such as cross country, basketball, and track. On Noah's free time, he enjoys playing tennis. Noah says, "I miss my friends from Latta the most." He says Latta school is bigger than Merritt, but he likes the people here and has made many friends.



Rebekah Lovelace

by Renan Gonzalez

Merritt is growing rapidly and one way to notice the growth is by observing our teams and activities that grow along with the school.

Every one of our new students have interesting things to share with us and in this article we get to know a little bit more about Rebekah Lovelace.

Rebekah is a freshman who just moved here from Sayre. Her first impression of our school was that everyone was really nice and inviting. As of right now, she still likes the fact that the people in Merritt have received her well and she still loves it as much as she did the first day of school.

One of the best experiences she's had so far was making new friends. In fact, she mentioned a few names: Jada, Brooke, Morgan, and Mikiah.

"The classes are controlled and teachers make it easier to learn," said the freshman when asked what her favorite thing about our school was. Even though she misses her friends in Sayre and being in band, she let us know that she enjoys learning new songs in choir and she's having a really good time.

Some of Rebekah's plans for this school year are to work as hard as possible, and later on she is looking forward to graduate from high school and go to college to become a veterinarian. Some of Rebekah's interests are competitive cheer and beauty pageant contests.





Red Ribbon Week

By: Allison Shepherd

MPTO had Red Ribbon Week October 27, 2014 through October 31, 2014. Each day there was a theme to which students could dress up to bring awareness to the importance of staying away from drugs. Monday was "Wear Red" to show support of Red Ribbon Week. Tuesday was "Don't Get Mixed Up in Drugs": wear mismatched clothes. Wednesday was "I'm Too Smart for Drugs": dress like a nerd. Thursday was "Drugs are Like Totally Gross": '80s day, and Friday was "Team Up Against Drugs": Merritt Spirit Day. They also had a door decorating contest which was judged by creativity and the message. The winner for elementary was Mrs. Phelps and Mrs. Broadbent, and junior high and high school was Mrs. Ray.

Merritt Canned Food Drive

by R.J. Bustamante

Merritt Public School sponsored a food drive for the Food Bank this year. Mrs. Rutherford's Student Council organized the drive, and their goal was to collect 2000 food items for the school. In the end the total food items was placed at 2236. Every class participated in a competition to see who would bring the most food items; the prize being a pizza party. The top classes were Mr. Givens' with a huge total of 650 items, and Mrs. Shepherd's with a total of 141 items. Congratulations to Mr. Givens' 7th graders and Mrs. Shepherd's class for a job well done.



Merritt Public Schools Bond Election Facts

Election Date: January 13, 2015

Place: all regular polling precincts

Polls open: 7:00 A.M. - 7:00 P.M.

Enrollment numbers: 2011- 546
 2012 - 631 (+85)
 2013 - 665 (+34)
 2014 - 730 (+65)
 2015 - 793 (+63)

Total increase of 247 students

Purpose of the Bond Issue

To build a new Middle School that will house our 6th and 7th grade students at this time. We will have the option of putting 5th or 8th grade in this building according to our enrollment. Estimated cost: \$5,200,000

To build a Multi Sports Complex that will have batting cages, weight room, boys' and girls' locker rooms. Estimated cost: \$832,000

To add air conditioning to our current gymnasium. We have outgrown the Kermit Gurley Gym for programs, so we will have music programs, assemblies, graduations, and other non-athletic and community events in the newer gym. Estimated cost: \$482,303

To add fire hydrants to campus. This will be required by the fire marshal. Estimated cost: \$205,000

Architectural cost, furniture, technology and other fees. Estimated cost: \$847,628

Construction total: \$7,566,931

Long term plans

We have addressed the following needs:

- * Expand football bleachers.
- * Parking lot repair in front of elementary and behind gymnasium.
- * Upgrade the exterior of the existing grade school and middle school buildings.
- * Install a surface on the track.

These will be done with building fund money that we receive from the State Department of Education each year. Currently, we plan to complete one project per year as long as funds are available.

The bond will be a series bond for \$10,020,000 that will be on the tax roll for 14 years with a 11.99% increase in property taxes in Merritt School District.

If your taxes were...		Your taxes would be...	
<u>Previous Taxes</u>	<u>Tax Amount</u>	<u>Annual Increase</u>	<u>Monthly Increase</u>
\$25.00	\$28.00	\$3.00/yr	\$0.25
\$50.00	\$55.99	\$5.99/yr	\$0.50
\$75.00	\$83.99	\$8.99/yr	\$0.75
\$100.00	\$111.99	\$11.99/yr	\$1.00
\$200.00	\$223.98	\$23.98/yr	\$2.00
\$300.00	\$335.97	\$35.97/yr	\$3.00
\$400.00	\$447.96	\$47.96/yr	\$4.00
\$500.00	\$559.95	\$59.95/yr	\$5.00
\$600.00	\$671.94	\$71.94/yr	\$5.99
\$700.00	\$783.93	\$83.93/yr	\$6.99
\$800.00	\$895.92	\$95.92/yr	\$7.99
\$900.00	\$1007.91	\$107.91/yr	\$8.99
\$1,000.00	\$1119.90	\$119.90/yr	\$9.99

There will be a bond information meeting on Thursday, December 18 at 7:30 in the school cafeteria. Everyone is invited to come see the drawings and hear the facts of the proposed school bond.

Hypnotist

by Allison Shepherd

During Drug Free week at Merritt School, Steve Crawford came to the school to offer a great hypnosis show. During the show several of the students were selected to be hypnotized, Kara Eckart was hypnotized into being the famous Britney Spears, Damon Van Buren was hypnotized to be the famous Steven Tyler. Words from a student are "Best hypnosis show I've ever seen!" Have you ever been hypnotized? Would you like to be hypnotized? Can you even be hypnotized? These are some of the questions that everybody asks at first. The only way to tell is to get hypnotized!



Five County Academic Meet

By Lauren Cummings

On November 12, the high school and junior high academic teams commuted to Hammon for the 5 county tournament. The rounds were double elimination. Although high school was eliminated early, junior high went on to play 2 more games. High school has another meet on Saturday, Nov. 15 at Burns Flat.



Merritt Academic Teams

by Justine Courtney

The Merritt High School Academic Team has eight members: Lauren Cummings, Javehn Roberts, Destry Pollard, Abigayle Willis, Kara Eckart, Nick Simons, Karli Droke, and Tanner Mong. When asked how they feel about going into competition they stated, "Our team feels ready and we try our best." The things they feel like they need to work on more is buzzing in faster, though they are very good at speed rounds. This year they had a lot of fun and experienced good team work.

The Junior High Academic Team has seven members: McKenzie Berg, Dalen Smith, Joshlynn Thomas, Allysa Donaldson, Adam Gibbins, Benjamin Mills, and Brock Floyd. This team has tried their best to win and get the answers correct when they go into competition. When asked if they thought they were prepared, they stated, "We feel we were prepared because it helps to know random trivia stuff." Their greatest strength is that each member has a ability in different areas and they are more likely to get the answers right in that area. Out of all the topics they feel they need to work on is the science topics. To prepare for next year, they will be working on trivial pursuit cards.

Merritt Elementary Academic Team has four members: Corbin Davis, Jordyn Garrett, Brooklyn Musick, and Blakely Barnett. When going into competition, Mrs. Fletcher stated, "My team has worked very hard this year and I can definitely see improvement." Mrs. Fletcher feels that her teams were very prepared in the science and current events areas. Though, she feels like they need to work on a few things like literature, the arts, and music. Their greatest strength is they were very well rounded. To prepare for next year, they will be working on literature and art.

Elementary News

by McKenna Archer, McKayla Doty,
and Sarah Cruzen

Mr. Cloud's class was getting into the Halloween spirit this last month. The class learned about bats and pumpkins, from deciding whether a pumpkin will sink or float to estimating the amount of seeds inside the pumpkin.

Not only that, but earlier this month the kindergardeners went to the Corn Maize in Weatherford, and received their own pumpkins!

Mrs. Porter, the 5th and 6th grade reading teacher, is reading *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* to her class this November. They are also taking formative tests (Alpha Plus). They go to the library every Wednesday, and work on Scrapped. Usually, they have a media coverage- videos, movies, and games- of the type of work they are doing.

The kids in Mrs. Wilson's Kindergarten class made paper plate pumpkins that said what they were thankful for. The kids are very excited for Thanksgiving and have been talking about all the food they can't wait to eat. They have also been talking about all the things that they are thankful for.

Mrs. Poole's Class was working on the letter I and writing numbers 1-50. Also, they were counting by 10s, and blending/building words. Recently, they have been talking about pumpkins, fall things, and moving into Thanksgiving activities.

Mrs. Zachary's class has made a turkeys with feathers on them saying what they are thankful for.

Mrs. Schachle's class made teepees and are learning about the Plains Indians.



Good for You!

by Derek Capps

Good for You is an article to recognize students and faculty that have gone out of their way to do something to help others. The students are nominated by other students and teachers. If you would like to nominate a student for something he/she has done, email the name and a brief explanation of what the student did to merrittbigrig@aol.com.

This month's "Good for You" goes to:

- Katlynn Whittemire: Helping a fan from another town needing assistance opening the door to the gym.
- Landon Stowers: Helping teachers out by holding the door to the cafeteria for them.
- Avery Simon: Staying after class and helping other students with their homework.
- Jocelyn Thomas: Helping teachers by picking up trash after class.
- Nolan Simons: Holding the door for everyone on the bus to come into the building.
- Devin Stephens: Being a gentleman and holding the door for a lady.
- Tristan Dornon: Helping Randy with his chemistry.
- Juanita Courtney: Putting extra cheese on Renan's rigatoni.



SWOSU Career Day

By Lauren Cummings

On Nov. 3, the seniors visited Sayre's college campus for SWOSU Career Day. They arrived at 8:30 A.M. and later went to degree sessions, where the students chose two majors that interest them and attended short seminars led by the professors.

Some programs passed out scholarship applications, such as the Incoming Freshman/Transfer Scholarship and the Music Performance Scholarship.

After the degree sessions the seniors returned to the gym for dodgeball and bumper ball, and after a free lunch provided by the college, returned to school.

New Teacher: Mrs. Rippetoe

by Levi Finley

Mrs Brenna Rippetoe is a new teacher here at Merritt High School. Mrs. Rippetoe graduated from high school at Hollis, and after that she went into college at SWOSU where she graduated with a degree in math education. She loves to spend time with her family and to be outdoors. Both of her parents were teachers and her brother and sister are school administrators. Her favorite subject to teach is math. When asked for advice she would give to her students Mrs. Rippetoe states "Always try hard, and do your best." We look forward to seeing what Mrs. Rippetoe has to offer for our great facility. We want to welcome her to our school and wish her a great 2014-2015 school year.

If you have any questions or comments or would like to contribute information or photos for the Big Rig, please email the information to:

merrittbigrig@aol.com

Merritt High School Basketball

by Zachary Beals

The Merritt High School had a great football season. Now that football is past, Merritt is preparing for basketball season. If our team is as good as they were in football then we should have a very exceptional basketball season.

"Our basketball team is coming along great," said Cayde Fletcher. "We are going to work great together, just like we did during football." Our team has a lot of confidence this season, but they just need to get out of the football mind set and be prepared for this new basketball season. We are looking forward to watching them play!



FCCLA Corn Maze

By Lauren Cummings

On Thursday, Oct. 30 the members of FCCLA went to Weatherford for the Haunted Corn Maze. They left at 6 P.M. and arrived at dusk. They had the option to play laser tag, go through the maze or both. They had a great time!



