

PANTHER PRIDE

School Principal: Lynn Cragg

<http://osb.k12.ok.us/>

1st Quarter Honor Roll & Students of the Quarter

"A" Honor Roll

Elementary

Katelynn Zampella

High School

Aaron Hopson
Jennifer Ratliff
Richelle Zampella

"B" Honor Roll

Elementary

Jimmy Anderson
Khatungi Bryant
Elbin Carrillo
Avery Carrington
Julia Cisneros
Lorie Cox
Audrey DeBroskey
Priscilla Diaz
Benjamin Middleton
Mannon Moore
Scott Moore
Skyler Moore
Kolten Pennington
Shannon Winter

Middle School

Garrett Kennedy
Tommy Phelps
Kaylee Ragon

High School

Brianna Brennan
William Carney
Morning Star Clark
Patelin Cogswell
Sara Graber
Jacob King
Logan McCoy
Tesla Nakedhead
Ariana Richardson
Regan Spaulding
Tai' Yauri Thomas
Andrew Wagon

Students of the Quarter for the **first Quarter** are as follows:

Elementary - Shannon Winter
Middle School - Tommy Phelps
High School - Richelle Zampella

CONGRATULATIONS!

Oklahoma School for the Blind

2015-2016, Issue 4

Editor: Maggie Mattox

December 16, 2015

Special points of interest:

- ☺ Academic Team
- ☺ Cane Quest
- ☺ Future Shock
- ☺ 4H Show Results
- ☺ FCCLA Star Events
- ☺ Scouts Updates

OSB Spaghetti dinner fundraiser

The OSB Spaghetti dinner fundraiser on December 1st was a huge success.

I'd like to thank the **Masons of Trinity Lodge #502** for hosting our dinner.

The OSB jazz band performed and did a phenomenal job! I had many people

ask if they could play some more.

The dessert auction went very well and a big **"Thank You"** to Miles Beverage for auctioneering for that.

We raised \$1625.00 and the Masons will match that amount!

This money will go to support our wrestling and cheerleading programs.

It was a great evening of good food, music and fun.

Thank you to everyone who came out and supported this effort. We plan to do it again next year.

Lynn Cragg,
principal



Spaghetti fun at the Masons of Trinity Lodge

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Middle School at the NSU College of Optometry

Have you ever used your body like a giant braille cell?

The middle school brought their knowledge of braille to NSU again this year and taught body braille to the 3rd year optometry students. We teach them about braille and they teach us about what college is like.

Lunch is our time to visit with the optometry students and learn

about the differences in our dorms and college dorms, our classes and college classes, and just make new friends.

A GIGANTIC thank you to Patsi Nix Smith for buying our lunch.

After lunch, OSB graduate Charity Pickup gave us a tour

of her dorm and told us about the Sequoyah statue that is found at the entrance to NSU.

Faye Miller,
MS teacher



MS students in front of the Sequoyah statue at NSU Tahlequah campus

Academic Team



Our Oginali conference season ended at Hilldale on November 3rd.

We traveled to seven schools and played 21 games this season.

Both teams played well and represented OSB very well.

Parkview A scored 1870 points and with a record of 10 wins and 11 losses, were barely edged out by Fort Gibson for 3rd place team.

Logan McCoy and Richelle Zampella made the **Oginali All-Conference Team**, scoring in the top fifteen Junior Varsity players.

Logan scored a total of 380 points, with an average of 12.67 points per quarter. Richelle scored 410 points, with an average of 9.76 points per quarter.

Parkview B also played well, scoring 470 points and 2 wins.

OSSAA Regional play was November 14th at Mason High School.

Logan McCoy, Jennifer Ratliff, Richelle Zampella and Kaylee Ragon represented OSB.

We made it to the 5th round of play and were just edged out qualifying for Area by our friendly rivals, Webbers Falls.

Faye Miller,
sponsor



Back Row from Left: Richelle Z., Logan D., Logan M., Jennifer R.
Front Row from Left: Regan S., Briana B., Kaylee R., Ariana R.

Parkview A - Individual Points

	Total Points	Points per Quarter
Logan McCoy	380	12.7
Richelle Zampella	410	9.8
Regan Spaulding	30	2.1
Jennifer Ratliff	40	1.4
Logan Deaton	30	1.2

Parkview B - Individual Points

	Total Points	Points per Quarter
Kaylee Ragon	150	3.9
Regan Spaulding	20	1.7
Ariana Richardson	40	1.2
Brianna Brennan	10	0.3

Updates from our Social Services Department



Posted Notes image with note
"Caught being Good"

November & December Students "Caught Being Good"

- ♦ Kentrell Wallace - for finding a student's wallet and turning it in to the teacher.
- ♦ Shaylin Wells - for holding a door open for an adult
- ♦ Patelin Cogswell - for helping another student
- ♦ Destiny Tanyan - for helping other students
- ♦ Jacob King - for giving to a child in need
- ♦ Shannon Winter - for volunteering to help adults
- ♦ Kolten Pennington - for helping a new student

Social Services Department
Jane Thomas
Sylvia Sterling

Please also see our "Business Insider" special
- *7 ways mentally strong people handle stress* - on pages 13-14.

Social Services News & Character Word of the Month

From The Counseling and Social Work Department

The holidays are quickly approaching and there's no better character word for the month of December than **CARING**!

The students have heard stories and participated in discussions on being a CARING person. They have shared ideas on how to show that you care for someone, as well as things they have planned to give others because they care. We've talked about the importance of CARING all through the year, and not just at Christmas time.

The students were encouraged to continue to explore ways to incorporate their caring in everyday situations, whether at

school or home. Everyone enjoys knowing that someone cares and as part of growing our character we will practice using caring words and actions through the rest of this semester and into the New Year.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has been so CARING to me this semester. I began my internship in August and have enjoyed getting to know everyone. It has been a great learning experience for me, and I hope for each of the students that I have been able to work with.

The time has quickly passed and my internship ends as we go into the Christmas break.

I hope to be seeing you all in the spring semester, although I won't be able to be here so much.

I am so thankful to have had this opportunity!

I will end with an apology; we have talked about when you care for someone that you apologize when you have made an error. In my mind I was thinking that putting CARING on the bulletin board in glitter letters would make it stand out. However, I have learned that it glares and is hard to read. So be assured that I have learned and will know not to do that next time! I also have learned to CARE for you all and will never forget this semester at OSB! Remember that I CARE!!

Cindy Allen,
Counseling
Intern
Fall Semester
2015



Cane Quest

Twenty-six students demonstrated their white cane travel skills on December 10th at the **3rd Annual Oklahoma Regional Cane Quest**.



This unique competition gives students who are blind and visually impaired an opportunity to use their white canes, usually used to help them travel efficiently, as a tool to earn points and win prizes.

The event was held at the Oklahoma School for the Blind and in downtown Muskogee on December 10, 2015.

Students from across Oklahoma were invited to compete.



Younger students demonstrated skills by completing a variety of tasks at the OSB campus.

Older students navigated a route in the community by following verbal directions and paying attention to environmental clues to reach a destination.



Cane Quest is one of Braille Institute's national programs. It was created to test the ability of contestants in grades 3-12 to navigate the world around them independently. It seeks to motivate students to master mobility skills, build their confidence in these skills, and is a great opportunity to educate the public about the abilities of blind youth to travel independently.

Congratulations to this year's winners!

Scouts

Top Girl	Lorie Cox
Top Boy	Avery Carrington

Explorers B1

Gold	Nicholas Jackson-Morrison
------	---------------------------

Explorers B2

Gold	Kaylee Ragon
Silver	Tai' Yauri Thomas
Bronze	Kentrell Wallace

Trailblazers B1

Gold	Jonathon Phelps
Silver	Shaylin Wells
Bronze	Destiny VanPelt

Trailblazers B2

Gold	Destiny Tanyan
Silver	Jennifer Ratliff
Bronze	Makayla Fetner



Faye Miller,
O&M instructor

Future Shock - Career Day



"Future Shock" Career Day

began with an outstanding keynote

presentation by Mr. Jim Stovall, founder and president of the Narrative Television Network.

Mr. Stovall, along with other blind and visually impaired speakers, spoke to our students about the importance of taking advantage of opportunities they encounter and how to turn those opportunities

into successful career choices.

They spoke of the education needed to obtain various careers and also about additional careers in their field that might interest the students. They talked about the fun parts of the job as well as some of the not so fun parts. We all know some aspects of our jobs are better than others.

At the end of each break-out, speakers expressed their



appreciation for the opportunity to share their knowledge and career experiences with the terrific students at OSB and that they had learned a lot from the students as well.

Linda Graber,
OSB PTO



OSB 4H Rabbit & Poultry Show - Results

On November 17th, 2015 OSB held another successful "4H Rabbit & Poultry Show", with our 4H members placing as follows:

Destiny Tanyan

- Satin Meat Doe

1st Place,
Grand Breed Champion, and
All Show Reserved Breed
Champion

Garrett Kennedy

- Holland Lop Buck 3rd Place

Skyler Moore

- Holland Lop Doe 2nd Place

Rylie Spaulding

- Havana Buck 4th Place, and 1st Place Jr. Showman Ship

Arianna Richardson

- Mini Satin Buck 1st Place, and Grand Breed Champion



Ariana
Richardson

Tai Yauri Thomas

- Dutch Buck 3rd Place

Skyler Moore

- Dutch Doe 4th Place, and 2nd Place Jr. Showman Ship

Katelyn Moore

- Dutch Buck 2nd Place, and 2nd Place Jr. Showman Ship



Kaylee Ragon

Kaylee Ragon

- Loin Head Buck 1st Place, and Reserved Breed Champion

Cameron Hughes

- Loin Head Doe 1st Place, Breed Champion, All Show Grand Breed Champion, Reserved Show Breed Champion, and 1st Place Sr. Showman Ship

Holly Felkins

- Netherland Dwarf Doe 3rd Place, and 2nd Place Sr. Showman ship

Avery Carrington

- Mini Rex Doe 2nd Place

Tai Yauri Thomas

- Polish Doe 2nd Place

Jacob King

- Mini Rex Buck 2nd Place

Audrey DeBrosky

- Dutch 3rd Place

Rylie Spaulding

- Holland Lop Buck 3rd Place

Abbie Page

- Polish Buck 1st Place, Grand Champion Over All, and Grand Champion Breed

Abbie Page

- Polish Doe 1st Place, and Reserved Grand Champion



Will Carney

Poultry

Abbie Page

- Wyandotte Rooster 2nd Place, and Reserved Breed Champion

- Seabright Rooster 1st Place, and Reserved Champion

- Barred Rock Rooster 2nd Place, and Reserved Champion

- Barred Rock Hen 1st Place

Jacob King

- Cochins Hen 2nd Place

- Cochins Rooster 2nd Place

Mark the Dates:

Jan. 12th

4-H meeting at 5:30 pm

Jan. 19th

next Rabbit & Poultry Show at
OSB

Marcella Bynum,
4H sponsor



Fall Festival

This year's Fall Festival had an outstanding turn out.



Jennifer Ratliff (L) and Halle Stout (R)

Games were lined up and down the halls where students worked the booths to help raise money for their

different clubs and organizations.

The recreation center was set up for ticket sales, but a new addition was added to the Fall Festival this year, a prize exchange booth ran by Mrs. Adams and her husband as well as Mrs. Wassom. Students were able to bring prizes they received for playing games and exchange several for a larger prize.



Aaron Hopson (L)

At the end of the night students turned in their remaining tickets to redeem for additional prizes.

The Girl Scouts and FCCLA had the cafeteria set up with food galore. Frito chili pies, caramel apples, Girl Scout cookie shakes, and funnel cakes were being served up fresh with the help of Mrs. Barker, Mrs. Eckerson, Mrs. LaRue, Ms. Leatherman, and Mrs. Collins.

We also changed up the hayride this year. Civitan Park was gracious enough to allow us to utilize their premises and with the help of maintenance, Mr. Butler, his family, and Ms. Goins, the hayride trail was set up to scare. While students waited to board the hayride, Mrs. Mock donated inflatable toys that the students could enjoy.

Overall, **nearly \$800** was raised. We are very thankful for all the students and staff that participated this year and helped make this another fantastic year.

We look forward to having another wonderful Fall Festival next year.

Kim Politte



Special Olympics "Music & Dance"

The High School Special Olympians traveled to Ben Franklin Science Academy in Muskogee to perform their version of the Whip and Nae Nae.

December 10th was the Cherokee County Area Music and Dance Day.

Performers included: Jacob King, Morning Star Clark, Andrew Wagon, Justin Whitmire, and Seth Wedel.

A local dance teacher, Mrs. Isabel Cockle, worked with these kids for the second 9 weeks getting them ready to dance their heart out.

Big thanks to the classroom teacher Mr. Carden for traveling with the crew, to Ms. Jamie Allenbaugh for helping the class learn their routine and traveling with them, and finally to Mr. Culie the awesome PE teacher and bus driver!

Tera Webb,
P.E. Teacher



OSB students performing
at Ben Franklin Science
Academy

FCCLA Star Events

Three OSB FCCLA members recently participated in competitive STAR events in Ft. Gibson. Students Taking Action with Recognition (STAR) are events in which members are recognized for achievements either as individuals or a chapter.

Ariana Richardson

participated in New Member Facts. She studied FCCLA history, parliamentary procedure, and the many FCCLA programs that are supported by the national organization. She handled herself like a champ while dealing with some technology issues, and received high praises from area teachers assisting.

Kaylee Ragon

Competed in Recycle and Design. She repurposed jeans and

overalls and made a denim wreath, which she embellished with old buttons, and flowers she made out of denim. Kaylee even used one of the straps from bib overalls to make a hanger for her wreath. She was required to do a presentation about the time, materials, and cost of her project. Kaylee received third place for her efforts.

Richelle Zampella

participated in Children's Literature and wrote a children's e-book centering around the theme of going on a picnic.

Richelle was able to pair her Apex to the iPad to write her story and present her book to the judges. Richelle received third place for her e-book.



All three students spent several hours outside of the classroom preparing for their event. Their time and hard work paid off. Way to go girls!

Allison Garner,
FCCLA sponsor



From Left:
Richelle Zampella, Ariana
Richardson, Kaylee Ragon

Library News

From the Heart Jewelry

The OSB Media Center just received a new shipment of jewelry.

We have Panther Paw, Power of Pink Awareness, and Sports items.

Earrings, Necklaces, Bracelets and Key Rings available.

Stop by, check it out.

- Prices vary (\$7-\$10)

Thank you again for supporting the OSB Media Center Program.

Star Wars READS Night was OUT of this WORLD!

Fun they had over forty students and staff on November 16th.



We ate Darth Tatlers and Hutdogs and washed it all down with Yoda Soda.

There was a galactic battle during the Light Saber Thumb wrestling



tournament and all members of the galaxy had fun playing Wookie-Han-Saber, our version of Gorilla-Man-Gun.

Come and join us in the spring for the next Literacy Night Event, sponsored by the Media Center and Reading Dept.

We will be having lots of good fun that is funny!

Barbara D. Collins,
Media Specialist

Rachel Butler,
Reading Specialist

Boy Scouts & Girl Scouts Updates

Boy Scouts



The popcorn sales went very well.

The Boy Scouts sold a total of **\$1885.00**, resulting in

a **profit of \$678.00** for the troop.

The money will go to help the boys with camping and outing.

Boy Scouts raised \$678.00 for activities

On **February 6, 2016** the Boy Scouts have the opportunity to go to the merit fair. The cost will be \$10.00.

To be able to participate in water activities such as canoeing, sailing, etc. during summer activities, **Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts** will need the merit patch. To earn the merit patch, they will have to show that they can master the swim defense basic strokes.

If your student already knows how to do this, they will

need to be signed off by a life-guard to earn the merit patch

For those who still need to learn the swim defense basic strokes, **swimming lessons will start in February for the cost of \$40.00** per student. A form will be sent home after Christmas.

Boy Scouts' Christmas party will be **December 14th at 4:30 pm.**



The menu will be hamburgers and hot dogs.

Becky LaRue, sponsor

Girl Scouts



Our Girls Scouts traveled to Tulsa November 2nd to experience the life of a girl in Uganda.

We heard about her life's story and experienced her home, school, village and daily life



living in a third world country.



This is part of earning our **Journey award** and badge requirements in World of Girls and Mission: Sisterhood.

We also had a great time at our holiday party December 9th.

Troop 11224 will begin the year with me, Barbara Collins, as the leader, and Becky LaRue and

Carla Cotney as troop committee members.

We are in need of additional troop committee members

as the girls have already picked out several day activities and overnights for the second semester of the year.

You can volunteer to assist with troop meeting(s) &/or with trip(s) and overnight(s) per event or help with all events.

If you are interested, **please contact me via** email: bcollins@osb.k12.ok.us, Phone DAY: 918-781-8200 X-8236, or EVENING: 918-691-1426

Troop 11224 Anticipated Trip Dates

Girl Scout Troop Olympics
– 04/09/2016

Camp Wah-Shah-She Bartlesville, OK

Flyers will go out after approvals received.

Troop 11224

2016 Meeting Dates

January – 1/5, 1/26
February – 2/2, 2/16, 2/23
March – 3/1, 3/22, 3/29
April – 4/5, 4/19, 4/26

Troop Meetings held **Tuesdays 5:00-7:00 pm** at OSB in the Rec. Center or Media Center

Barbara Collins, Media Center & sponsor

Oklahoma School for the
Blind

3300 Gibson Street
Muskogee, OK 74403

Toll Free: (877) 229-7136
Voice/TTY: (918) 781-8200

It takes more than sight to have
vision!

Please check out
our website at:



OSB Employee / Staff Changes:

Change in Position:

Kimberly Politte changed from Recreation
to Medical Assistant (Clinic).



December Birthdays

Students

Payton Crum	Dec	3
Tesla Nakedhead	Dec	3
Xerek Hitchcock	Dec	4
Seth Wedel	Dec	14
Kesslee Travis	Dec	15
Garrett Kennedy	Dec	17
Jimmy Anderson	Dec	22
Khatungi Bryant	Dec	27
Blazen Sitterly	Dec	27
Thomas Raines	Dec	28
Shaylin Wells	Dec	30

Staff

Amy Morgan	Dec	1
Ana Ledezma	Dec	3
Kathy Barrett	Dec	13
Trisha Hart	Dec	15
Cammeron Brice	Dec	19
Allison Garner	Dec	23
Rachel Butler	Dec	24
Brent Webster	Dec	29



UPCOMING Birthdays

Students

Scott Moore	Jan	4
Gavin Day	Jan	5
Jacob Nash	Jan	5
Sara Graber	Jan	12
Miracle Jones	Jan	14
Josephina Cox	Jan	17
Kentrell Wallace	Jan	22
Ariana Richardson	Jan	26
Audrey DeBrosky	Jan	28
Kaylee Ragon	Jan	30

Staff

Melissa Sweeney	Jan	5
Amanda Isom	Jan	15
Amanda Sweeney	Jan	16
Betty Cowan	Jan	17
Jeana Jones	Jan	17
Faye Miller	Jan	17

GOING THE EXTRA MILE - November/December 2015



Following employees were nominated for their devoted support of our students, staff and school:

A huge "THANK YOU" to **Brenda Plunkett** and **Jordan Tinsley**. Both, Brenda and Jordan, were working on their day off (Friday) to meet the State Dept. of Education's deadline by Inputting the school's Free and Reduced Lunch information to complete our certification. Our school will receive approximately \$30,000 from this certification.

Rozann King

Kudo's to **Linda Graber** and **Jeannie Meyer**, for all of their work in coordinating a fantastic "Future Shock" event for us this year.

Christine Boone

Two going the extra miles for me are **Allison Garner** and **Laci Goins** for helping locate a tape measure to get some very important size information for a sorority person.

Kathy Adams

I want to nominate **Kathy Adams** for going the extra mile. She has dedicated so much of her personal time after school to activities and the kids. She stayed

extra late several nights to help with a student who needed extra attention in the dorms. She is the picture perfect example of what an educator should be. Not only does she care about the future of the children but she cares about them more on a personal level as well. She is kind hearted and loving.

Kimberly Politte

I would like to nominate **Faye Miller** for her dedication to our students and various events, such as Braille Challenge, Cane Quest, and many more. She spends various hours before and after school hours, including weekends, on preparing those events and improving the procedure to make them more fun each year. Way to go Faye.

Maggie Mattox

Also a huge shout out and "Thank you" to our awesome **Chris Ferrell**. He always puts together a great Christmas Program and spends extra hours on burning DVDs, so parents and guardians can get a copy, after the actual performance, to share with family and friends over the holidays.

Maggie Mattox

Thank you **Dave Likins**, for being the lead person in maintenance during the month of November on the day's I was out.

Brian Culver

Shout out to **Cammeron Brice** for always being there to support not only his staff, but the day staff, as well. He selflessly gives his time, support, and money from his own pocket to both the kids and staff. He often has to work when we are

understaffed...and 14 hour days aren't for the faint at heart! We couldn't ask for a more devoted supervisor!! Thank you.




DCS Staff

Thank you guys for going the extra mile. It is highly appreciated.





January 2016

 Dorms Open
  NO School
  School In Session

Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30

Schedule of Events

Date Time Event

Sun., Jan. 3rd Dorms Open / Bus Routes run

Mon., Jan. 4th Classes Resume

Thur., Jan. 7th **End of 2. Qtr. / 1. Semester**
Wrestling District Duals in Checotah



Thur., Jan. 14th Sapulpa Bean Dinner

Fri., Jan. 15th ½ Day Professional Day

Mon., Jan. 18th Martin Luther King Day - **SCHOOL IN SESSION !**

Wed.-Sun., 20th-24th Wrestlers & Cheerleaders at SCASB - Talladega, AL



Wed., Jan. 27th Ruth Kelly at OSB for "Team Pictures"



Fri., Jan. 29th Maverick Wrestling Tournament



Sat., Jan. 30th Wrestling Conference Tournament

Upcoming February Events:

Fri., Feb. 12th ½ Day Professional Day

Thur., Feb. 18th Open House



Wed., Feb. 24th Ruth Kelly at OSB for Senior Pictures



Fri., Feb. 26th Braille Challenge



ALL Calendars are "subject to change". - Please visit our website <http://osb.k12.ok.us> for updates.

January 2016



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Dorms Open	4 Boy Scouts 5:30-6:45 Open Rec. 6:45	5 BINGO @ 6:30	6 Xbox Dance Off Contest	7 Wrestlers @ District Duals, Checotah Home Going	8	9
10 Dorms Open	11 Boy Scouts 5:30-6:45 Open Rec. 6:45	12 Movie Night @ 6:30	13 Karaoke	14 Home Going	15	16
17 Dorms Open	18 Boy Scouts 5:30-6:45 Open Rec. 6:45	19 Bunny Show @ 6:00 pm (gym) Open Rec.	20 (SCASB -> Sunday) Tye Dye Night! Bring white T-Shirt or pillow case.	21 (SCASB -> Sunday) Home Going	22 (SCASB -> Sunday)	23 (SCASB -> Sunday)
24 (SCASB returns) Dorms Open	25 Boy Scouts 5:30-6:45 Open Rec. 6:45	26 Beach Party Games/Food/ Fun @ 7:00 pm	27 Make play- dough	28 Home Going	29 Wrestlers @ Maverick Tournament (Tablequah area)	30 Wrestlers @ Conference Tournament GO PANTHERS!
31 Dorms Open						

****CALENDAR SUBJECT TO CHANGE****

Nancy Brice, Recreation, 918-781-8200 Ext. 8278



BUSINESS INSIDER

7 ways mentally strong people handle stress

Inc. AMY MORIN, INC.,
JUL. 11, 2015, 3:00 PM

While stress causes some people to crumble, mentally strong people continue to thrive in the midst of added tension.

In fact, they view adversity as an opportunity for self-growth.

Whether they're dealing with financial setbacks, health problems, or workplace difficulties, mentally strong people don't let stress drag them down.



Walking is a good way to deal with stress.

Here are seven ways mentally strong people handle stress effectively:

1. They accept that stress is part of life.

While some people waste time and energy thinking things like, "I shouldn't have to deal with this," mentally strong people know that setbacks, problems and hardships are inevitable.

When stressful situations arise, they devote their efforts into doing what they can to move forward. Even when they can't change the circumstances, they know they can always take steps to improve their lives.

2. They keep problems in perspective.

Rather than think a flat tire has the power to ruin their whole day, mentally strong people keep inconveniences in proper perspective. When they're tempted to catastrophize a minor event - such as thinking one mistake could ruin their whole career - they respond by reframing the message they give themselves. They refuse to allow a pessimistic inner monologue to take hold.

3. They take care of their physical health.

Mentally strong people recognize the importance of keeping their bodies in smooth operating condition. They recognize they won't be able to combat stress if they're worn out and running on empty. They exercise, get plenty of sleep, and maintain a diet that keeps them healthy.

(Continued on page 14)

4. They choose healthy coping skills.

While some people turn to alcohol, junk food, or other unhealthy vices to help them escape stress, mentally strong people choose to cope with discomfort in a productive manner. They allow themselves to feel uncomfortable emotions, like anxiety, fear, and sadness, head-on. They use healthy activities, like going for a walk or participating in a hobby, to cope with emotional pain.

5. They balance social activity with solitude.

Sometimes, in an attempt to avoid facing problems, people fill their schedules with social activities. Others deal with stress by withdrawing from their friends and family. Mentally strong people, however, strike a good balance. They maintain a healthy social life even when they're stressed, but they also reserve time to be alone with their thoughts.

6. They acknowledge their choices.

Stress can cause people to feel like a victim of bad circumstances. But mentally strong people acknowledge that everything they do, from the time they wake up until the time they go to sleep, is a choice. They're willing to say no to things they don't want to do and they accept responsibility for their behavior.

7. They look for the silver lining

Mentally strong people don't necessarily see the world through rose-colored glasses - their outlook is a realistic outlook - but they do look for the silver lining in tough circumstances. They recognize that good things can stem from stressful circumstances. Rather than allowing hardship to turn them into bitter people or helpless victims, they choose to use stressful circumstances to become stronger and better.