

Chancellor Of Higher Ed Gives A Look At College Challenges

Chancellor of Higher Education Glen Johnson gave us a look at the Higher Education problems and purposes, last week.

Johnson said the goals of Higher Education are to increase access and improve the quality of public higher education for all Oklahomans; to increase the number of college graduates in the state; and to “better prepare students to meet the challenge of a global economy.”

The head of state colleges and universities said to “compete in the Second Century, we must be willing to embrace significant change.”

This includes changes “in the use of new technologies to deliver our academic product more effectively and efficiently.”

The top “initiatives” of the overall program are to increasing awareness of access and opportunity.

One of the four top methods of obtaining the goals is through cooperative alliances with Technology Centers.

“Reach Higher” is an “affordable and flexible way to complete your degree at one of Oklahoma’s respected state universities,” the chancellor said. He reminded that a degree can mean “better job opportunities, a higher salary and a sense of personal accomplishment.”

Annual concurrent enrollment credit hours have increased from 39,758 in the 2005-2006 school year to 50,820 in the See College Challenges, on Page 2

**Welcome District Governor
Ron Peterson**

Club Hears Report on State Road Projects Complete, Underway

State Highway Official Calvin Carney gave us a look at past and current state highway projects, including three projects just completed this year and four now underway.

One is the State Highway 31 project east of Krebs, completed in June at a cost of \$884,872.

And while one project on U.S. 270 and Carl Albert Parkway through McAlester has been completed, at a cost of \$214,927, another on Carl Albert Parkway is just eight percent complete. It is a \$1,043,940 panel and surface project, due for completion by the end of the year.

Completed in August is a cable barrier project on U.S. 69 north, at a cost of \$1,072,232

The state highway work force is down to 187 people, also, Carney reported.

The Hereford Lane project on U.S. 69 is 94 percent complete, and due for completion in mid-October, at a cost of \$7,211,981.

A McAlester Safety Improvement project on U.S. 69 south, is 60 percent complete. It is scheduled for completion in mid-March of next year, at a cost of \$3,552,742.

A State Highway 31 west, bridge replacement is 53 percent complete. It is due for completion in mid-February of next year, at a cost of \$3,394,460.

A proposed project on U.S. 69 at Comanche includes right-of-way, utilities and construction, with right-of-way work scheduled during 2009 and utility work in 2009. Construction is due by 2015. Right-of-way work is

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Coach Cumbie Tells About Girls Softball, Regionals Wednesday

Coach Jackie Cumbie talked to us Sept. 16, giving last year’s McAlester High School Girls Softball record and telling about the Regional Tournament that begins Wednesday, Oct. 8, in McAlester.

Coach Cumbie introduced Coach Kelly Eales, who helps him with the team, and players Shay Griffin, Allison Eales, Taylor Dewberry and McKenzie McClendon. Griffin and Dewberry are pitchers.

McAlester plays Tulsa Edison at noon Wednesday, in the 5A Regional, and Ada plays Tahlequah at 1:30, Wednesday.

The losers of those games play each other at 3 p.m. and the winners play each other at 4:30.

On Thursday, the losers of the Wednesday games play at 1:30. The winners play at 3 p.m. and the winner of that game goes to State Competition.

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2007-2008 year., he noted.

A new web site called OKCOLLEGESTART.ORG is the “official source for planning your college and university education in Oklahoma,” he said.

You can take “Campus Tours;” use the Undergraduate Student-Matching Assistant;” and find out about financial aid, Johnson pointed out.

One of the Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grants is a Pell Grant. It is for eighth, ninth and 10th grade students whose family income is not above \$50,000.

Students must maintain a 2.5 grade point average and “stay out of trouble,” Johnson stated.

Scholarship recipient projections assume a three percent increase in “OK Promise high school enrollment through 2010 and two percent thereafter. It assumes a 67 percent completion rate of high school requirements for scholarship eligibility, the chancellor said.

Workforce and economic development will provide \$4.5 million to increase academic programs at institutions offering nursing and allied health care programs. This should produce an additional 300 registered nurses, 130 allied health professionals and 15 additional masters level nursing faculty

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estimated at \$2.378,000. Utility work is estimated at \$1 million, and construction is estimated at \$18.5 million.

A bridge approach on U.S. 270 at Coal Creek is proposed, with right-of-way at \$250,000 and utilities at \$225,000. Both would be completed in 2009, but actual construction would be in 2015, at a cost of \$3.2 million.

Another proposed project would be widening and resurfacing of State Highway 31, from Krebs east 2.95 miles. Right-of-way would be obtained in 2012, at an estimated cost of \$472,000. Utilities would be done in

members annually, he predicted.

Taking a look at the success of the program, the chancellor said that enrollment in state public colleges and universities has grown from 213,972 in the school year 2000-2001 to 235,730 six years later, in 2005 and 2006. He also showed a chart that reported the per capita income and percentage of adult population with a Bachelor’s Degree or higher, in 2006. Oklahoma had about 23 percent and about a \$21,000 income. Other charts showed what percentage of Oklahoma residents and non-residents who graduate from public colleges and universities remain in Oklahoma, after one year, and after five years. Another showed the cost of a college education, compared to other Big 12 institutions. OU was third from the bottom, while OSU was at the bottom.

Other charts showed resident tuition and mandatory fees at state Regional Institutions, with a legislative limit of \$4,718 and at a dozen Community Colleges, with a legislative limit of \$3,582. All but one of the 11 Regional Institutions were over \$4,000 but under \$4,718. All of the Community Colleges were under \$3,000.

The last Legislative Session included a program dedicated funding source and a \$100 million endowed chair bond issue. Also listed was defeat of the Concealed Weapons Bill (in schools.)

2012, at a cost of \$206,500. Construction work would be done in 2015, at an estimated cost of \$1.4 million

Clyde Filskow who lives at Kiowa asked about the possibility of a traffic light at the Kiowa School, to control a backup of traffic there. The situation is particularly bad when school lets out, Filskow said.

He also asked about plans which were studied at one time to bypass some of the towns in that area. But Carney said the cost was probably too high, and would still be so.

Questions were also asked about holes cut in the road.

Attendance, Guests and Handshakers *And the Big Pot*

Last week there were 51 in attendance. Kyle Burgmyer was a guest of Randy Saunier. Joe Hill was a guest of Helen Wheeler.

On Sept. 23 there were 45 in attendance. Katie Pestors was a guest of Iva Due. Steve Banker was a guest of Lynn Edwards, and Donnie Lennington was a guest of Karl Scifres.

On Sept. 16, there were 47 present.

HANDSHAKERS-Last week, Fred Turner bought \$10 worth of tickets and did not even get a chance to draw the wrong card, but Greg McNall gave him the dollar. (which means he’s \$9 behind.) The previous week Cliff House blessed the buck and gave it to Mark Jordan. And on Sept 16, Greg gave the dollar to Mike Lowber. (Mark and Mike are \$1 ahead.)

But no one has won the Great Big Pot. (Hopefully, it’s still great big.)