

Sky-high



Amanda Herzberg/Index

Marine Lieutenant Dustin Ralph, Gunnery Sergeant Herron and Captain Brian Olmstead led the flying session, which gave students the opportunity to pilot a plane as part of Career Week.

Students experience plane flight as part of Career Week

BY AMANDA HERZBERG
Staff Reporter

Although Career Week flew by for some, for others it was a chance to fly.

A number of Truman students proved last week that flying is no longer reserved merely for pilots. Although commonly associated with a range of seminars, the Career Expo and opportunities for interviews, Career Week actually brought more excitement to Truman than some might have guessed.

Anxious groups of Truman students gathered outside the Student Union Building throughout the day, beginning at 9 a.m. Thursday. Marine Gunnery Sergeant Robert Herron met each group to act as an escort. After a roster check, the students — accompanied by Truman alumnus, Marine Lieutenant Dustin Ralph — piled into a U.S. Government van and started toward Kirksville Regional airport.

Herron said flights like those offered during Career Week are for recruitment purposes and to raise awareness of what the Marine Corps has to offer for college students. He said that the plane awaiting the students was a King

Air 200, also known as the T-44, a twin engine turbo prop used primarily for pilots in training who have graduated from the single propeller training model. This plane is used as a training tool to lead up to qualification to fly multi-engine aircrafts such as the C-130, a large, military cargo plane. Lieutenant Ralph, who is scheduled to embark upon the early stages of his flight

training this week, added to Herron's explanation.

"The very step in flying for the military is getting a pilot's license. No one gets right into a military plane."

Dustin Ralph
Marine Lieutenant

Clark. Olmstead, currently the Marine Selections Officer for Kirksville, was trained by the

military as a helicopter pilot. Clark, on the other hand, is an active pilot and flies a C-130.

The pilots described an abbreviated version of the training they completed. Olmstead said both he and Clark entered the Marine Corps through a program called PLC (Platoon Leaders Class), which allows students the opportunity to graduate from college as a Second Lieutenant. From there, the Marines embark upon more specialized training before beginning their military careers. Clark stressed the fact that neither he, nor Olmstead, nor Ralph had any prior knowledge of flying before entering flight school. They all entered PLC with zero flight hours, and emerged, or, in Ralph's case, will emerge, as pilots.

The students were led outside where they first glimpsed the King Air 200, a fairly small, white aircraft with a propeller on each wing, marked with the Marine Corps logo. A door on the far side of the cabin revealed steps for entering the plane. As they boarded, everyone received a quick safety lesson from Captain Clark about oxygen masks and seat belts, put on a headset and buckled up for the ride.

Clark's voice rang through the headsets, describing to the group some basic aircraft functions and instrumentation, what to expect and simple aspects of the flight process. He also assured all a chance to take control of the plane for a good 10 minutes.

After taking off at approximately 115 mph, the Marine plane full of students was in the air over Northeast Missouri. The sky was clear blue and beautiful for flying as the plane gained altitude, climbing to approximately 7,000 feet.

During the flight, Captain Clark entertained the group with a near-barrel roll (where the plane was inverted approximately 140 degrees), the experience of 2Gs, which

made the students feel heavy in their seats, and an "idle" maneuver during which everything inside the plane went weightless — all of which had students grasping their seats and laughing with enjoyment. The students cycled in and out of the co-pilot's seat, taking the controls, as promised, under Clark's supervision.

After circling Kirksville, Clark guided the plane back toward the airport in preparation for landing, which he promised would be fun. He flew the plane at approximately 1,000 feet above the runway at full speed before cutting a full 360 degrees, and then landed the craft smoothly. After they exited the plane, each of the students was presented with a flight patch as Olmstead, Ralph and Herron rejoined the group for debriefing.

The reactions were fairly uniform across the group as everyone expressed having enjoyed the ride. Katie Vanderhoof, career coordinator at the Career Center, was one of the flight group members.

"I was skeptical about actually flying the plane," Vanderhoof said.

However, she admitted it was definitely a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Among the students present, sophomore Alex Dalecki and junior Tanner McMillin are both considering careers with the Marine Corps. Dalecki is currently enrolled in the PLC program and McMillin intends to join very soon, although neither plans to pursue pilot training.

"I'd prefer to stay on the ground," Dalecki said, after Thursday's flight.

Although he enjoyed the flight experience, he thinks the air may not be the place for him.

Despite this, Captain Olmstead, Captain Clark and Lieutenant Ralph demonstrated just how achievable a career as a military pilot can be, especially for students still in college.

Local businesses prepare for Halloween

BY BURGUNDY RAMSEY
Staff Reporter

Ghosts, goblins and ghouls galore. It's that time of year again, and several of the local businesses preparing for the Halloween rush.

Kari Wehr, owner of For The Fun Of It Costume Rental, said that this is their busiest time of year, and that they generally rent out between 500 and 800 costumes during the Halloween season. The shop is normally open by appointment only but will begin its Halloween hours Oct. 15.

The costume shop, which was founded in 1986 and has been run by the current owners since 1995, has thousands of costumes to choose from, ranging from newborn sizes to 4X for adults. They also offer a wide variety of accessories, wigs and makeup.

Their most popular items aren't more traditional costumes like witches, ghosts or pumpkins. Instead, men are more likely to get costumes of characters from their favorite horror

movies, such as Freddy Kruger or Jason Vorhees, while women are likely to rent costumes that show a little skin, Wehr said.

The costume rental shop isn't the only place for Halloween enthusiasts to get costumes in Kirksville. A lot of people go to the Outreach Mission for secondhand costumes or to find

"Fall is a popular season, I think, for buying because — number one — the weather is cooler and people are in a good mood, and a lot of times the weather's nice and people are out."

Jessie Cragg
Tranquil Seasons employee

the finishing touches to complete their look, said Rhonda Casey, manager of the Outreach Mission. "I know probably a week before Halloween, we'll get a ton of people in here last minute," Casey said. "Shoppers that want to get like makeup or any kind of stuff like that. Usually the week before, we'll be swamped."

All of the merchandise in the store is donated. Most of their Halloween items arrive during the summer or right after the holiday. The items wait in storage until they are put on the shelves during the first part of October in preparation for Halloween.

"We put it out probably two weeks ago," Casey said. "And we've sold probably half of what

we put out already."

Many retail stores that don't sell costumes are benefiting from Halloween, too. Tranquil Seasons Gift Shop sells Fall-related décor as well as some Halloween-related items. Tranquil Seasons employee Jessie Cragg said that people love the Halloween items the store sells.

"Fall is a popular season, I think, for buying because — number one — the weather is cooler and people are in a good mood, and a lot of times the weather's nice and people are out," Cragg said. "And the fall colors are pretty with the décor."

Like all retail stores, Tranquil Seasons has to order its merchandise far in advance. Most of its merchandise had to be ordered late in the spring or early in the summer to deal with the amount of fall purchases, Cragg said.

Despite the upcoming Halloween rush, Tranquil Seasons and Outreach Mission are already looking ahead to the Christmas season.

Tranquil Seasons had to order its winter and Christmas merchandise during the summer in preparation. They are already starting to put some of the merchandise out in their store as the Halloween items sell and they have more room, Cragg said.

While the Christmas season is just around the corner for many retailers, customers are still focusing on their Halloween preparations. 'Tis the season to be spooky.



Krista Goodman/Index

Tranquil Seasons employee Jessie Cragg puts the finishing touches on the store's fall display. The store is located at 108 W. Harrison St.

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General admission tickets cost \$7 each and will be available at Edna Campbells and the Truman State University Cashiers Window in McClain Hall.

For more information, call 785.4016 or visit the Lyceum website at lyceum.truman.edu.

