

Pageant builds connections

Scholarship ball allows students to share talent and build relationships

BY DANIELLE BRESHEARS
Staff Reporter

Not only will contestants have the opportunity to share — or rap — their various talents at the eighth annual Jack O' Hearts Scholarship Ball, but they also will have the opportunity to network and build lasting relationships.

The Jack O' Hearts Scholarship Ball is a yearly talent pageant offered by Delta Sigma Theta. Senior Brooke Thedford, Delta Sigma Theta president, said this event is the biggest one of the year for the organization.

Senior Preston Newell, one of this year's potential contestants, or Delta gents, said the ball is a great way to get to know people. He said he didn't know any of the competitors before he got involved but he is now friends with them all. Newell, the oldest of the five contestants involved in the competition this year, appreciates the opportunity to network and meet new people, he said.

Newell became involved with the Jack O' Hearts Scholarship Ball when some of his friends and past Delta gents brought him to a recruitment session, he said.

"I figured, why not, it will be fun," Newell said. "It will definitely be an experience I won't forget and a chance to build new friendships I might not necessarily get to otherwise."

Newell will perform on a stage for the first time during this ball, and is excited to showcase his personal talent, which is rapping. He said he always has wanted to perform, but he's never had the time or resources.

Rap is one of Newell's biggest passions, he said. He said he started rapping Sir Mix A Lot's 'Baby Got Back' at age three, and his sense of rhythm always was evident as a child.

"I used to get in trouble in elementary school for tapping pens on my desk because my teacher would tell me to stop and I literally would not think about it and start doing it again



Adam Antor/Index

Senior Preston Newell, a contestant in the upcoming Jack O' Hearts Scholarship Ball, practiced during a rehearsal Jan. 30 in the Kirk Gym. Newell said the ball has allowed him to share his passion for rap and has introduced him to people he wouldn't know otherwise.

two minutes later," Newell said.

Newell said though classes and clubs at Truman State keep him busy, he constantly is thinking of new raps in his head. He said he would love to continue with rap and take it to a higher level, but he's not sure if that's what his future has in store for him.

"If God has a plan for rap/hip-hop to play a larger role in my life then I will go along with it,"

said Newell said.

The Jack O' Hearts Scholarship Ball is a way for men across campus to display their talents to the community, according to the official event description on the chapter's official website. It also provides a way for the contestants to meet new people and have networking opportunities, Thedford said.

"[This ball] allows young men on the Truman campus to

showcase their talents and intelligence and help develop them as individuals and assist them in maturing through their academic career," Thedford said.

The contestants had to go through a sort of qualification round before being considered, Thedford said. Although there are no technical requirements to be considered, the men interested must attend an informational session, recruitment and inter-

view process, she said. She said the interview process is important because it helps the judges determine if the contestant will be a good representation of Delta Sigma Theta.

Having had weekly practices and preparations since early November, the potential Delta gents have been competing for this scholarship for quite a while now, Thedford said. The Jack O' Hearts Scholarship is offered in different amounts each year and is funded by the competitors' advertisement sales throughout the process, she said.

On average, there are four to nine students involved in the competition, Thedford said. The students who usually compete are freshmen, and Thedford said she thinks this is a great opportunity for them.

"I think it is a good resource for them," Thedford said. "They get to meet upperclassmen they may not have met and learn about resources on campus that they might not have otherwise known about."

Thedford said each potential Delta gent is assigned a mentor, which they call 'special,' from the organization to help cater to their needs during the process. She said the specials are like personal assistants, which builds friendships throughout the whole process. The specials help especially with academic excellence, Thedford said, and recently had a resume workshop for the contestants.

With the competitors building relationships with their mentors and each other, Thedford said the networking opportunity the ball provides is well worth it.

"There are different diversities and backgrounds involved in the pageant, and this provides the opportunity to build connections that they probably wouldn't have made outside of the ball," Thedford said.

This year the other competitors will be displaying a wide variety of talents, from rap to piano and from parody skits to spoken word, Thedford said. She said each year the scholarship ball has different themes, and this year's theme is Manifold of Success. The ball takes place 7 p.m. Feb. 16 in the SUB activities rooms.

Hope's Kitchen recognizes donor

Edina, Mo., resident Viola Parrish is honored as charity's largest single donor

BY ANNA SELLE
Staff Reporter

For a Truman State student, \$30 might be enough to purchase a paperback textbook, gas for a weekend getaway to Columbia or a case of Red Bull from the C-Store. But for Viola Parrish, an Edina resident and donor to Hope's Kitchen in Kirksville, \$30 buys a week's worth of meals for community members in need.

For more than a decade, Parrish has sent a check for \$30 every month to Hope's Kitchen, an organization providing meals for those in need in Kirksville since 1999, said Tim Tucker, Hope's Kitchen board member. Parrish has been helping Hope's Kitchen along with Truman faculty and students.

"The contribution amounts to about 15 meals a month," Tucker said. "That's quite a contribution, every month, for over a decade."

While the monetary contribution itself has been important to the patrons of Hope's Kitchen, Tucker said Parrish's dedication also has had a lasting effect on the people who have made the continual existence of Hope's Kitchen possible.

Parrish's husband started the donation and she continued it in his honor after his passing, Tucker said.

"It's very touching," Tucker said. "What struck me is her sense of responsibility to service to the community. She's humble and someone I would hope to emulate. She's contributed to Hope's Kitchen as much as any board member."

Tucker and fellow board member Cathy Wood have been searching for a way to thank Parrish for her contributions for years. They were given that opportunity Jan. 18, when they presented her with a plaque commemorating her service.

"We've wanted to talk to her for a couple of years," Tucker said. "The plaque we gave her is two and a half years old ... She was someone I'd thought about quite a bit, even though I'd never met her. We'd just send her thank you notes, but we didn't know her as a person."

The board of Hope's Kitchen was able to pay tribute to Parrish's contribution, Wood said. Parrish's daughters were able to bring her to Kirksville to visit the organization and meet the board members.

Contributors like Parrish have helped keep the work of Rachel Higgins and Megan Lesczynski, who founded Hope's Kitchen as high school students, alive in Kirksville.

"They felt the need to feed the hungry in Kirksville," Wood said. "It's completely run by volunteers and donations. [Higgins and Lesczynski] graduated and at that time it was introduced to the A.T. Still University Alpha Phi Omega chapter, who are now its sponsors. The board is comprised of second year students and community members."

Students and faculty from Truman also have been able to give their time to help sustain Higgins and Lesczynski's vision.

Teak Nelson, a nursing professor, is one of many people within the Truman community who has donated time to the organization, and has been sending students to volunteer at Hope's Kitchens for eight years.

Nelson said she likes to bring a community-based perspective to her class and encourages students to think about nutrition from the perspective of a "vulnerable population." She said working at Hope's Kitchen gives students this opportunity and allows them to see their work in action.

"We can make a bigger impact by helping change nutrition in the community," Nelson said. "The other side of it is the academic side. It helps students to learn if they can actually apply that knowledge in a real world setting."

However, Nelson's involvement with Hope's Kitchen supersedes the academics of nutrition.

Part of her goal is to provide her students with the opportunity to understand another perception of hunger that they might not experience otherwise, she said.

"The face of hunger changes depending on the demographic," Nelson said. "Rural hunger looks different from urban hunger. The needs are met in different ways because our geography is different. Hunger is also affected by the economic climate ... This gives the students the opportunity to see that and challenge the image of the hungry."

WWW.TRUMANRENTALS.COM

Providing affordable student housing for more than 25 years.

Boardwalk • Waterworks • Park Place • States Avenue • St. James Place • New York Avenue

Four Horizons Realty
703 N. Marion St.
Kirksville, MO 63501

660-665-RENT

www.4horizonsrealty.com

Welcome Back Students!

BUCK BROS.
SUNNY SLOPE AUTO, LLC

660 - 665 - 8464

Tune Ups • Brakes • Exhaust • A/C

710 W. Potter Avenue
at the Corner of Osteopathy & Potter Ave

Let the guys at
BUCK BROS.
SUNNYSLOPE AUTO
make sure you're in class on time!
Call now to set up an appointment.

NAPA Service Center