



Submitted photo

Alex Miller crawls through the obstacle 'Electric Eel' Oct. 13 at the Tough Mudder race. Participants in the race tried to avoid getting shocked by the wires, which were charged with electricity. Tough Mudder has raised more than \$3 million for charity during the last three years for the Wounded Warrior Project.

Students tough through challenge

Truman State students participate in military-style obstacle course

BY BROOKE DALY
For the Index

During midterm break, several Truman State students participated in an event called Tough Mudder, a combined obstacle course and run.

Tough Mudder is a 10 to 12 mile race through military-style obstacle courses designed by British Special Forces. This event raises money for the Wounded Warrior Project. Since its beginning during 2010, the project has raised more than \$3 million, according to toughmudder.com.

The Wounded Warrior Project raises money for returning soldiers and their families to provide employment, counseling and adaptive sports programs for injured veterans.

Unlike a race where every participant begins at the same time, there are about 10 to 15 "start groups" that begin the course every 20 minutes. Each group recites a pledge in unison before they begin, according to the website.

Junior Stephanie Agre and senior CJ Hoffman crossed the finish line for the challenge Oct. 13 and 14 in Poplar Bluff, Mo., in three and a half hours in honor of their mothers who battled cancer.

"Our shirts said, 'if our moms can survive cancer, we can finish the Tough Mudder,'" Agre said.

After the collaborative chant of the pledge, every 'mudder' helped one another during each challenge, Hoffman said. She said everyone who saw the shirts she and Agre wore for

their moms cheered for them.

"I felt proud that I could actually do it," Hoffman said.

Agre said she trained for six months by running and participating in Truman's ROTC physical training workouts. She said push-ups and sit-ups between miles helped with training. She said she also took cold showers for two weeks prior to the challenge to train for the 'Arctic Enema,' a tank full of ice at 34 degrees.

"Guys are all around you doing it, and there's not a lot of females that do it at all," Agre said. "So you just feel really proud that you're a female, and you're accomplishing all of the things that the guys are doing too."

Agre said the race was about putting on the orange headband at the end to let everyone know she completed the challenge, she said.

Hoffman said the course sounded like a good idea. She said 30 seconds in, you're covered in mud, but the only thing to focus on was not tripping and to get through each obstacle, one at a time.

She said the 'Electric Eel' is an obstacle where participants army crawl under wires and try to avoid getting shocked.

"I got shocked," Hoffman said. "It's impossible to not get shocked because the wires are so low. I got shocked a couple of times on my legs, I got one on the neck, I think I got my arm one or two times ... Once you get shocked, you just try to book it out of there as fast as you can."

Hoffman said she would like to do it again with a larger group of friends.

Kirksville resident Tony Gibson trained for the challenge with running, cardio, kickboxing



Submitted photo

Kirksville resident Tony Gibson, left, runs through smoke Oct. 13 at Tough Mudder. Gibson trained for the 10 to 12 mile run and obstacle course with running, cardio, kickboxing and weight-lifting.

and weight lifting. He said his biggest fear during the race was an obstacle called "The Edge," where participants run up a half pipe covered in mud.

Another challenge, "The Boa Constrictor," which involves crawling through a series of pipes then sliding downhill in freezing mud, made Gibson nervous because of the tight spaces, he said.

Senior wrestler Colton Schmitz completed the challenge with friends during the

summer in Attica, Ind.

"Anytime you achieve a goal that seems out of reach, and you get through it, and you feel like it wasn't too bad, and you want to do it again," Schmitz said. "It was a rewarding experience."

Schmitz said that for him it's not just a race, and instead it's more for the camaraderie and the teamwork.

Schmitz said he was interested in the challenge because he likes to push his limits and want-

ed to accomplish something new. He said he trained by running six miles per day and lifting.

A solid team with equal endurance and strength is key to succeeding with the challenge, Schmitz said. Pull-ups and back exercises are recommended workouts when training, he said.

"You don't have to be the strongest, fastest person out there," Schmitz said. "Anybody can do it as long as you put your mind to it."

Library founder leaves behind legacy

Former Truman mathematics professor worked to establish Adair County Library

BY DAN MIKA
Staff Reporter

Mary Jane Kohlenberg, a former mathematics professor at Truman State, continues to have an impact in the Kirksville area through her contributions in the form of a foundation scholarship and the establishment of the Adair County Library.

Kohlenberg, who passed away Oct. 29, at the age of 91, was an instrumental figure in the founding of the Adair County Library.

Kohlenberg was a tenured math professor at Truman, teaching calculus for more than 20 years. Before that, she served a tour of duty in the Navy during World War II, professor Donna Bailey said.

Bailey, a fellow Truman math professor who retired during 2009, was a pupil in one of Kohlenberg's classes. She remembers Kohlenberg's grit in the classroom and in the department, noting that she was one of the first female professors at Truman.

"She wasn't a drill sergeant, but she was a strong woman in a department filled with males that were there for many years," Bailey said. "She was a pillar at Truman with such a strong personality and such a strong presence."

Lanny Morley, who was the mathematics department head during Kohlenberg's time teaching, said she also re-

members Kohlenberg fondly.

Morley said Kohlenberg always was concerned about her students, and always was willing to help them with assignments.

Kohlenberg continues to help Truman students through her foundation scholarship. Kohlenberg established the Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lisle Walker scholarship to provide talented junior or senior math majors with financial aid, according to the Truman Foundation Scholarship website. But Kohlenberg's influence isn't concentrated solely at Truman. Without her, Kirksville might never have built a public library.

Adair County was founded during 1841, but it didn't have a taxpayer-supported public library until 1984, according to the June 1986 issue of "Show Me Libraries" magazine. The only library open to the public belonged to the Sojourner's Club, a women's cultural society in Kirksville, according to the June 1986 issue of "Show Me Libraries." While Sojourner's Club offered their books and periodicals to the public, it was supported solely through private donations.

"Sojourners was doing what it could with the limited resources it had," retired Pickler librarian Odessa Ofstad said. "But it was certainly not the library Adair counties deserved."

This is when Kohlenberg began campaigning for the library, Ofstad said. Kohlenberg was serving as president of Kirksville's branch of the American Association of University Women when she made the formation of a public library one of the AAUW's projects during 1983.

The campaign eventually switched into



Submitted Photo

Mary Jane Kohlenberg, center, along with Marietta Jayne, left, and Marjorie Roberts, right, hold up the dollar paid for the 30,000 books the Sojourner's Club collected.

a library district that could receive state funding, volunteer for the library campaign Sharon Pritchard said. "But we switched as we started working into the project into an entity that could be developed into a library district that could receive state funding."

After failing to convince county officials to create a library district directly, the AAUW collected petitions to put it on the Aug. 1984 primary ballot. Four hundred and fifty signatures were required to put the measure to a vote, according to "Show Me Libraries" magazine. They turned in 935 names, passed the measure and Sept. 12, 1984, the Adair County Library Board was formed with Kohlenberg as president Glenda Hunt, Adair County

Public Library director said.

Kohlenberg served as president of the Library Board from 1984 to 1993 and oversaw the library's construction in its current location on Baltimore Avenue and its symbolically paid one dollar for the 30,000 books collected by the Sojourner's Club.

Today, the library owns about 70,000 items available for checkout and serves 10,000 people, which shows Kohlenberg's long-lasting effects on the community, Hunt said. Hunt said she admires the effort Kohlenberg and her allies gave to build the library.

"I firmly believe that without Mary Jane's efforts, there would not be an Adair County Public Library," Hunt said.