



Neighbor News

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Victim's mother finds closure following murder conviction



JPS suffers cuts after state aid allocation

By Danielle Stoltz
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Jenks Public Schools administrators said initial state cuts will not affect the district drastically after receiving the report that the JPS will start off the 2012-13 school year with about

JENKS

\$210,000 less than they began the previous school year.

The Oklahoma Department of Education released its initial funding allocations to

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Jenks teacher goes on aquatic adventure

By Steven James
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Some Jenks teachers will return to the classroom this month after an uneventful summer. Alicia Gillean is not one of them.

Gillean, media specialist at West Intermediate, spent 12 days in the north Atlantic Ocean aboard the research vessel Hugh R. Sharp working alongside scientists as they conducted a survey of marine life.

The scientists conducted their survey in two ways, via the Habitat Mapping Camera System, or Hab-Cam; and by dredging, or towing a net behind the boat for 15 minutes and seeing what kinds of animals are caught, Gillean said.

She got to “fly” the Hab-Cam over the ocean floor as it took photos at the rate of six per second.

“It was interesting to see how everything is related to each other,” she said of

piloting the device.

“You can really see the camouflage of the animals, you can see what groups together. We saw a lot of skates (stingray relative), scallops, different types of fish, sea stars (and) sea urchins. We tended to find more variety in the dredge, but it was neat to see the balance of the two.”

The dredging was slightly less glamorous, as Gillean had to don a rubber suit and sort everything by hand.

“You are literally out there sorting (and) digging through piles – here’s sea stars, here’s fish, here’s scallops. ... It’s dirty, busy work,” Gillean said.

Marine life has been an interest of Gillean’s ever since high school, when she took three years of a marine biology elective. After graduating with a degree in education from Oklahoma Baptist University, she worked three years at the Oklahoma Aquarium as an education specialist.

Gillean was one of 25

participants selected for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s 22nd annual Teacher at Sea program, which drew some 250 applicants.

“It’s a big honor to be chosen,” she said. “Very exciting.”

She said she’s excited about taking what she learned on her summer adventure into the classroom to benefit West Intermediate students.

“It was so neat to see ... the scientific process in action,” she said.

“We teach our kids all about scientists always asking questions, always changing their hypothesis, always changing their idea. It was so neat to see that, particularly with the HabCam project.”

Gillean said her journey through the North Atlantic opened her eyes to how much there is still to learn under the surface of the ocean.

“I was surprised by, given the amount of time I’ve spent teaching at the



STEVEN JAMES/SOUTH COUNTY LEADER

Alicia Gillean, media specialist at Jenks West Intermediate, was one of 25 participants this summer in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Teacher at Sea program.

aquarium and studying aquatic life, how many things we pulled up in the dredge that I had no idea

what they were.

“There’s still so much diversity out there that I don’t know anything

about. That’s exciting to me that there’s still so much to explore and to learn.”