



Left: Jeff Ofstedahl tells a class about his trip to Russia at the Center for Academic Success recently. Ofstedahl was in Russia as part of the U.S. Department of State's Teachers for Global Classrooms Program and can be seen in the projected photo standing in front of Saint Basil's Cathedral in Moscow.

Below left: Center for Academic Success science teacher Jeff Ofstedahl hands out answers from Russian students who responded to his students' questions.



goes to Russia

Sierra Vista students gain from CAS science teacher's love for learning

SIERRA VISTA — Center for Academic Success high school science teacher Jeff Ofstedahl handed his students index cards they had written questions on, only now the cards had answers written by students from the other side of the globe.

"You asked and they answered," Ofstedahl said. "Trust me, their English is better than most of yours."

Though it was a joke, that last bit referred to one of the many lessons Ofstedahl learned during his two weeks in Russia, as part of the U.S. Department of State's Teachers for Global Classrooms Program.

"They don't see English as a class or a lesson, they see English as an opportunity," he said.

One of 73 teachers selected to go to one of several foreign countries, Ofstedahl made presentations, learned about Russian schools and served as an informal ambassador. He applies the experience to his classroom back home in Sierra Vista.

On some of the cards he handed out, the Russian students listed their email addresses and Ofstedahl encouraged

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Center for Academic Success science teacher Jeff Ofstedahl speaks with students from an 11th-grade English class at a public school in Khabarovsk, Russia.

his students to get in touch, via email or Facebook. When someone said they probably wouldn't, he said, "Why not, why wouldn't you? Aren't you curious what their lives are like? They wonder what your lives are like."

When he showed some of his students photos of their peers in Russia, one of the first comments was "Hey, they look just like us." Of course they do, Ofstedahl said, but that surprise touches on why his exchange was important.

"To stay in touch, create a relationship, that's what this whole project is about. Tearing

apart those walls that separate us," he said.

BON VOYAGE

Ofstedahl obviously went to Russia at an interesting time, a point in history when the Cold War era feels closer than it has in many years.

The two big questions students in Russia asked him were what do Americans think of what's going on in Ukraine and what do American teenagers wear in high school? That first question fell out of the scope of Ofstedahl's

purpose for being in Russia but sharing and learning about the cultural similarities and differences between the two cultures, including what students wear, was safer territory.

Ofstedahl was one of 12 teachers who went to Russia. He spent a week in Moscow and another in Khabarovsk, a city in far eastern Russia, near the border with China.

He observed classes and made presentations, drawing heavily from Arizona science and history.

In turn, he learned a lot about Russia and its students.

They typically don't have a dress code but they dress for success anyway, he said. They stand when a teacher enters the room, go to school six days a week, and take their education very seriously.

Competition to get into universities is fierce, though about 85 percent of Russian students take that route, Ofstedahl said. He admits compulsory military service for those who don't likely has something to do with it.

But that commitment to education and enthusiasm to learn is something Ofstedahl can relate to. As a teacher, he also happens to be the most active student in the room, constantly finding ways to better himself and bring opportunities to his students.

In the summers, he works for

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Chalk talk:

Get the scoop on what's going on in local schools.

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Prayer & praise:

All the news from area churches.

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Ready to Learn:

Guidance and advice for helping your kids by Bette Mroz.

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CHURCH BRIEFS

Church: this week

This Saturday, April 26, from 9 a.m. to noon Dr. Thomas Kindell will speak on Design in Nature – The Bees at Grace Presbyterian Church, 4950 El Camino Segundo, Sierra Vista. He has also successfully debated the scientific case for creation against notable evolutionists on high school and college campuses, radio and television.

Dr. Kindell is a frequent guest on the radio series “Science, Scripture and Salvation” which is produced by the Institute for Creation Research. He is the author of the acclaimed book, “Evolution on Trial.” He will be presenting this fascinating talk about The Bees — to get to the church, go south on Highway 92 toward Hereford, before you get to Ramsey Canyon Road, turn East on El Camino Segundo and travel about 3/4 of a mile to Grace Church on your right (South of the road). Time permitting he will present a second lecture: Darwinism: Massacred by a Monarch. They hope to see you there.

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Sunday Service this week will be about “Happiness of the Land, Water and Sky” at The Sky Island Unitarian Universalist Church.

In honor of Earth Day this week, several members of the congregation will share using poetry or narrative, something about the land, water or sky that has given them happiness. Also several members will play Earth-themed music for the service. Tricia Gerrodette will be the Facilitator for this special event.

The youth RE Lesson will review “Our UU Principles” and celebrates their application in all the Beloved Communities participants can name. Home, school, neighborhood, and faith community all provide places for kindergartners and first-graders to affirm their Unitarian Universalist identity and faith by acting in accord with the Principles. The seven Principles give us tools to meet the world in a fair, just and loving way.

The Sky Island Unitarian Universalist Church meets Sundays at 10:30 a.m. at 125 2nd St., just north of the SSVEC Building. For more information on the church and their programs call 378-0197 or visit the church’s website at uuchurchaeaz.org.

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Unity of the Huachucas is a New Thought, inclusive ministry founded on the teachings of Jesus Christ. The Unity movement is known for offering a positive path for spiritual living.

Rev. Sandra Jean will once again be guest speaking this Sunday. She will be speaking to “Finding New Eyes.” As we find New Eyes, we see differently; we interpret differently; we than act differently.

Rev. Sandra has lived in Palominas since 2000. She has been a Licensed Religious Science Professional Practitioner since 1972. She graduated from Holmes Institute ministerial training in Los Angeles in 1981,

and was ordained by the United Church of Religious Science in October 1989. She earned a masters of consciousness studies degree through Holmes Institute in 2008.

Rev. Sandra served religious science churches in various states around the country for 14 years. She is now retired from pulpit ministry, but routinely serves as a guest speaker for Unity of the Huachuca’s.

Also, the Book Study that offers daily practices that can help all people enjoy a more peaceful and harmonious life is ongoing. The group meets from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. every week and uses the book “Pocket Peace,” by Allan Lokos, the founder and guiding teacher of the Community Meditation Center in New York City. Everyone is welcome, whether or not they are part of the Unity congregation. Books for the class can be purchased over the Internet.

Join them Sunday at 10:30 a.m. for positive and practical spiritual wisdom you can incorporate into your everyday life. Prior to services, a guided meditation is offered from 9:30 to 10 a.m. On Wednesday evenings from 7 to 8:15 p.m., a Prayer & Meditation service is open to people in the community of all faiths. For a comprehensive list of all activities and events, check out their all new website at unityofthehuachucas.com. You may contact them at unityontheborder@gmail.com, or call 378-2488. Unity of the Huachucas is located at 7487 E. Larkspur Lane, Hereford, (off Moson between Ramsey and Hereford Roads). Everyone is welcome.

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Interfaith Community Services is sponsoring a conference — Faith Communities and Mental Illness: Mind, Body, Spirit and Community on Friday, April 25, at Catalina United Methodist Church in Tucson. Mental illness is a growing and often confusing issue in our communities and in our houses of worship.

Join us for this powerful day-long conference led by noted national and local experts that will encourage discussion, exchange ideas, and provide support for mental health ministries. Details of the conference including speaker information, breakout session descriptions, and the day’s schedule can be found at: www.icstucson.org. Registration is \$40 each single registrant; \$30 each for groups of two or more registrants. Call Interfaith Community Services at (520) 297-6049, ext. 233 for questions or more information.

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Mustang Mountain Cowboy Church will be having a Spaghetti Dinner, Dance and Auction Fundraiser featuring “The Busted Cowboy Band,” Saturday, April 26, at Huachuca City School Gym, 100 School Road, Huachuca City. Dinner will be from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., and dancing from 7 to 10 p.m.

Tickets are \$15 donation for a single, \$20 for a couple, \$25 donation for a family (17 years and under). Ten percent of the proceeds ben-

efit the Cochise County Children’s Center. For information, call 456-2683.

Church: next week

Over 30 young people in the combined youth choirs at Sierra Vista United Methodist Church will be presenting “The Old Testament Fast Forward,” a musical by Tom Long and Allen Pote, on Sunday, May 4, at the 7:30, 9 and 10:30 a.m. services.

The attempt to “fast-forward” a lesson on the Old Testament provides for amusement as the young people in the musical decide to deliver their own highly condensed version of its entire 39+ books. The musical opens with their declaration to present the 4,000-year history of God’s divine plan and mankind’s story in a mere 10 minutes.

It doesn’t take long, of course, for the kids to realize this is an impossible promise, and they constantly revise their timeline even as they come to explore lessons of faith and discover eternal truths in the lives of Adam and Eve, Noah, Moses and David, to name only a few. Blending dialogue and song, the end result is a balance of entertaining humor and meaningful, moving content.

The Cherub Choir, Kingdom Kids and Spirit Singers began working on learning lines and music right after Christmas.

Carl Coss directs the Cherub Choir, Dave Perry directs the Spirit Singers, and Jean Perry directs the Kingdom Kids. Dorothy Scheafer will accompany all three choirs as they combine on that Sunday. A Love Offering will be taken that morning to help defray costs of the musical. Remaining donations will be split between the choirs and the Children’s Mission Project, which will culminate in December. The public is welcome to attend.

SVUMC is located at the intersection of Buffalo Soldier Trail and St. Andrews Drive. For more information, call the church office at 378-3352 or visit www.sierravistaumc.org.

Church: June 7

Forerunners Outreach Ministry in Sierra Vista is having an exciting event. “Jericho Prayer Rally for Sierra Vista” will be held on Saturday, June 7 at Veteran’s Memorial Park, Fry Boulevard (Ramada on right). They look forward to seeing everyone then. Uniting to turn hearts toward God and his love to others is their mission.

By now, hopefully all have circled this calendar date for this very important event and event coordinators would like to know in what way you would like to participate.

They need help for this exciting event with poster, banners, signs; musicians to play; dancers; praise and worship teams; soloists and choirs; and food and food preparation. If you can help contact the church. Forerunners Outreach Ministry is at

P.O. Box 1946, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635 or call 732-7757 for information or email 4rnnrers@gmail.com.

Church: Ongoing

Covenant Presbyterian Church in Bisbee now holds Sunday services at 1 p.m. with the new Reverend Carlos Montano officiating and all are welcome.

The church building, dedicated in 1903 and located at 19 Howell St., next to the Copper Queen Hotel, is a key landmark in Old Bisbee’s historic district. Attendees will have the opportunity to enjoy hymns played on the 1907 Estey Organ with its compliment of 579 pipes.

Refreshments will be served following the service in the fellowship hall.

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The Social Concerns: “Project Cross” Ministry of Our Lady of the Mountains has established a new collection site for unused toiletries at Landmark Café. Toiletries of all sizes (travel and family) are needed to support local nonprofit organizations supporting both the homeless and families in need.

Toiletries are sorted by ministry members and then donated to various nonprofit agencies that are in direct contact with disadvantaged community members. Local nonprofits benefiting from this ministry include; Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Forgach House, Good Neighbor Alliance, Potter’s hands and Saint Vincent de Paul Food Bank. Additionally, distribution includes some smaller groups volunteering in the area who work both informally and directly with the homeless.

Recently, these groups and nonprofits have seen a great rise in the need for donated toiletries. Toiletry donations are bagged for individual/family use and then distributed almost as quickly as they are packaged. Social Concerns has been hard pressed to fill their needs.

In the past, when there was an over abundance of local donations, members of the “Project Cross” ministry would bring the much needed donations to Ronald McDonald House in Tucson.

The donations helped defray costs of operating the house that provides clean, safe, and free housing for parents and families forced to stay in Tucson due their hospitalized child’s illness.

The increased need in the greater Sierra Vista area has precluded ministry members from bringing donations to the Ronald McDonald House for more than five months. However, they are able to continue bringing donated soda can tabs to the house for paid recycling. Soda can tabs are also being collected.

The new donation site at Landmark Café is located at 400 W. Fry Blvd. Look for the donation container in the front entrance way. Both toiletries and can tops are greatly appreciated. Call Social Concerns: “Project Cross” member Deacon Rodger Miller or Ginny Sciarino Miller at 459-0368 for information.

GLOBAL CLASSROOMS PROGRAM: *He sets example for his students*

FROM PAGE C1

NASA as a fellow and an education ambassador. Just this year, he started a new engineering program at CAS, which he hopes to build upon in the years to come.

MEET “MR. OH!”

“It’s always been my goal to make this the premier academic institution here in the county,” Ofstedahl said.

A former Cochise County teacher of the year, Ofstedahl has adopted the nickname of “Mr. Oh!” to represent those moments when a light bulb goes on in a students’ mind. As the most enthusiastic student in the room, Mr. Oh! always seems to be working on something new.

This year he started the school’s first engineering class, using Project Lead the Way curriculum. As this first cohort of students progress, he will add a more advanced class each year.

“These are 21st century skills that students can take with them,” Ofstedahl said. They

will give them a leg up in applying to college engineering programs.

Engineering is also key because it challenges students in a way many subjects do not, especially with the increased emphasis on standardized tests.

“We don’t get lot of opportunities to teach students creative problem solving anymore,” he said. “If we’re expecting this generation to be the innovators of tomorrow, then fostering these skills is paramount.”

Just as key is instilling a love of learning, because that’s one skill the students will need in adapting to an evolving workplace and a rapidly changing world.

“I think it helps to set an example, to model that,” Ofstedahl said.

Just by being in the same room as Ofstedahl each day, the students will take home one lesson, which could be the most important of all.

“That you can be an old fart like me and never stop learning,” Ofstedahl said.

For more photos and details about Oftedahl’s trip to Russia, check out his blog at ofstedahl.blogspot.com.

CHALK TALK

FROM PAGE C3

practice for 1st Holy Communion.

- **Saturday, April 26:** 10 a.m. First Holy Communion.
- **Sunday, April 27:** Bake sale after the Sunday Masses sponsored by Student Council.
- **Monday:** 8:10 a.m. School Mass with May Crowning
- **Thursday, May 1:** School Choir is singing at Prestige Nursing Home

Preschool/Pre-K, Mrs. Durgin

This week the class is celebrating Earth Day! Children are learning about the 3-R’s, reuse, reduce and recycle.

The class had a discussion on how we can protect the Earth and what children love about it. They will have a day where children will clean up the school grounds/environment. Children will also be learning about shadows and reflections.

In Mrs. Harig’s Art class at All Saints Catholic School the students are painting ‘what color is Spring?’

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COCHISE COLLEGE

Upcoming events at the college

Sierra Vista:
Cochise College’s Bi-national Chorus, Women’s Ensemble, Orchestra, and Douglas Campus Ensemble will present “Springsong 2014” at 7 p.m. on April 30 at the Central School Project in Bisbee. The concert celebrates sounds from around the globe, from varying times and with an array of life-giving themes.

This concert is free and open to the public, with donations accepted for the Music Department Scholarship Fund. For information, call the music department at (520) 417-4066.

For information, visit www.henningsguitar.com. This concert is free and open to the public, with donations accepted for the Music Department Scholarship Fund. For information, call the music department at (520) 417-4066.

Cochise College will hold its 49th commencement ceremony at 7 p.m. May 16 on its Sierra Vista Campus. Students completing their first and second years of the nursing program will participate in a pinning ceremony at the campus at 7 p.m. May 15. Both ceremonies will

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