The Wewoka Times

"Wewoka's Hometown Newspaper"

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Wednesday, August 2, 2023 50¢ Seminole County, OK

Tax Hike, Bond Issue on City Council Agenda

Staff Report

The Wewoka Public Works Authority and the City Council will convene for special meetings this Thursday, Aug. 3 to discuss setting water, trash and sewer rates and the calling of two separate special elections for this fall.

The meetings were previously scheduled for July 25 but were cancelled.

According to the meeting agendas, both bodies will consider a resolution "establishing and adopting water, sewer, and trash rates; and containing other provisions related thereto."

The city council will consider and possibly take action on a resolution to levy a 1.25% excise tax, which will have to be approved by voters. The tax, if approved, will be in addition to all taxes currently in place.

The council will also consider the calling of a special election on Oct. 10, 2023 in regard to the proposed tax. According to the ordinance, the proceeds of the tax are to be used to fund capital expenditures, including but not limited to water and wastewater system improvements.

The agenda also states that the council will consider the calling of another election, this one for Nov. 14, 2023, "for the purpose of submitting to the registered qualified electors of Wewoka the question of the issuance of general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed the sum of one million one hundred thousand dollars ($1,100,000) to be issued in series to provide funds for the purposes of: (I) acquiring, constructing, expanding, renovating, repairing, and/or equipping public safety buildings, facilities, and equipment, all to be owned exclusively by the City, (II) acquiring, constructing, expanding renovating, repairing, and/or equipping municipal buildings, facilities, and equipment, all to be owned exclusively by the City; and (III) constructing, expanding, repairing, which may also include improving, renovating, acquiring and equipping parks and recreational facilities, all to be owned exclusively by the City; all to be completed with or without the use of other funds, and levying and collecting an annual tax, in addition to all other taxes, upon all the taxable property in said City for the payment of the interest and principal on said bonds: providing for election procedures; authorizing professional services agreements pertaining to the issuance of said bonds; declaring an emergency; and containing other provisions related thereto."

In addition, the council is set to consider and take action with respect to ordinance (See Meeting on Page 8)



Oakridge Home Administrators Barry Stone and Jennifer Carr hold the scissors during a ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the opening of a new classroom/movie theater building. (Staff photo by Bob Melton)

Oakridge Opens New Classroom, Theater Building

By Bob Melton
County Editor

The Wewoka Chamber of Business and Industry presented a ribbon cutting ceremony at the new Theater Building at Oakridge Home on Wednesday, July 26. Arriving visitors gathered at the 501 Lodge, where they were given a short tour of the newest housing unit that includes a large common area and a fully stocked kitchen as well as comfortably sized individual bedrooms.

After walking the short distance to the new theater, they were greeted in the lobby by owner Justin McGrew, who invited everyone to grab a bag of popcorn as he pointed out a multi-screen video game area near the rear of the lobby, where residents could gather to play individually or in teams. He added that they would soon have some "old school" joystick arcade games such as Pak Man and Donkey Kong lining the wall as well.

Before entering the theater McGrew explained that during the day the area is used for a multi-media classroom for "Oakridge University." These classes provide an authentic college university lecture style learning experience for the residents. A small sample of the wide variety of classes available include: Memory Stimulation for the Seniors Class; Adult Functional Money Management; Adult Daily Living Skills; Speech and Language; Art Class; and much more. (See Theater on Page 8)

Navigating The Uncertainty of New Oil, Gas Law

By Paul Monies

Oklahoma Watch

Cities and counties in Oklahoma are getting conflicting information about whether a new law forbidding the state from doing business with banks perceived as hostile to oil and gas applies to their pension funds, bond sales or bank loans.

The uncertainty has frozen a project in Stillwater and led to discussions about taking unilateral action against banks on a list of restricted financial companies at the retirement system for Tulsa County.

State Treasurer Todd Russ released the list of banned companies in early May. The 13 companies include BlackRock Inc., JP Morgan Chase & Co., Wells Fargo & Co., Bank of America and State Street Corp. The list came out of the Oklahoma Energy Discrimination Elimination Act, which lawmakers passed in 2022.

Dozens of states now have laws forbidding business with financial institutions who have pledged to reduce their exposure to oil and gas companies or plans to reduce their carbon footprints. That backlash has been supported by a constellation of conservative groups who have provided model legislation to lawmakers and talking points to state treasurers and other financial officials, including those in Oklahoma.

Stillwater wants to replace aging heating and cooling equipment and replace streetlights with LED lights. But the energy efficiency upgrade project is stalled because of uncertainty over the law.

Stillwater Mayor Will Joyce said Bank of America wants additional assurance a pending loan for the project won't be affected by the bank's appearance on the state treasurer's list. The situation is further exacerbated by rising interest rates and higher materials costs, Joyce said.

"We are completely in limbo," Joyce said. "We've got a contractor who's ready to move on some of these projects. We are forced to hang around and wait until someone can give us a definitive answer one way or the other that the bank will feel comfortable accepting. They don't want to be the first one to stick their neck out."

Alternatively, Joyce said the city could go with a bank that has a higher interest rate than the one offered on the term sheet.

"Our options are to wait to spend more money or try to find a way to fund it out of our city budget," he said. "I certainly understand the concern that some legislators might have in supporting the oil and gas industry in our state, which is an extremely important part of the economy. But for whatever reason, this law just was not given the time it needed to be vetted and to be fully understood by everybody involved."

State Pension Systems Affected

The state's seven pension systems combined manage more than $47 billion in assets. The Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System, or OPERS, has the largest exposure to companies on the treasurer's restricted financial companies list. More than 60% of its assets are managed by companies on the list.

OPERS trustees are expected to decide soon whether to exercise an exemption in the law that would forgo that pension system from divesting almost $6.9 billion in assets managed by BlackRock and JP Morgan Chase. OPERS total asset portfolio is worth $10.2 billion. The system's trustees are expected to discuss the law at their monthly meeting on Thursday.

Legal opinions from other city and county officials describe how the state law only applies to "state government entities" that are (See OK Watch on Page 8)

Advisory Issued as Heat Dome Parks Over State

By Ken Childers
Editor

Triple-digit temperatures are expected to persist all week across central Oklahoma, but forecasters say relief could soon be on the way.

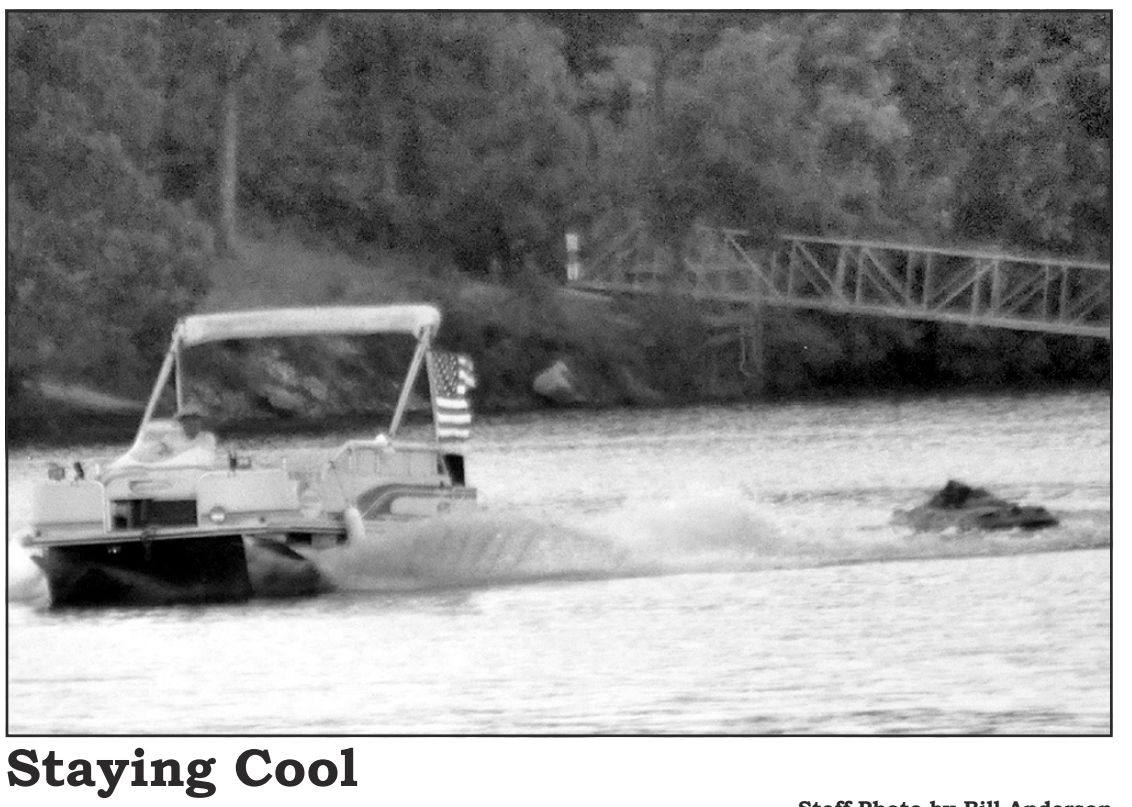
Seminole County was included in a heat advisory issued by the National Weather Service (NWS), effective at noon Monday, July 31 until 8 p.m. Tuesday. According to the advisory, heat index values up to 110 degrees Fahrenheit are expected. The NWS said Monday that heat advisories are likely to be in effect through Friday.

The good news is that, as of press time Monday, a pattern change is anticipated, and we should be much cooler next week.

"The large upper ridge that has been keeping us hot and dry in recent days is forecast to weaken and retreat westward, allowing for a downward trend in temperatures and increased storm chances this weekend into early next week!" the NWS posted Monday morning. "You can see the downward trend in the forecast highs at OKC. While uncertainty increases over time, the trend is for temperatures to return closer to average early next week. More rain would keep temperatures lower, while less rain would favor the upper range of the forecast."

To avoid heat-related illness, keep these tips in mind:

Drink plenty of fluids, stay in an air-conditioned room, stay out of the sun, and check up on relatives and neighbors. Young children and pets should never be left unattended in vehicles under any circumstances. Take extra precautions if you work or spend time outside. When possible, reschedule strenuous activities to early morning or evening. Know the signs and symptoms (See Heat on Page 8)



Staying Cool

—Staff Photo by Bill Anderson

A boat pulls a passenger on a raft through the cool waters of Wewoka Lake Monday evening. The lake is an ideal spot for beating the heat as triple-digit temperatures persist this week.

NEWS

Okla. Hospitals Receive Over $4M in Grants

Staff Report

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Oklahoma State Director, Kenneth Corn, last week announced grants totaling more than $4.6 million to assist 12 communities expand access to healthcare as part of President Biden's Investing in America agenda.

"The Biden-Harris Administration has delivered for Rural Oklahoma when it comes to ensuring our small rural towns and tribal communities can have access to safe and reliable healthcare," Corn said. "USDA's Emergency Rural Health Care Grants program has played a key role in strengthening rural Oklahoma's health care infrastructure and building capacity for the future."

USDA has awarded $129 million in Emergency Rural Health Care Grants to improve health care facilities in rural towns across the nation. These grants will help 172 rural health care organizations expand critical services.

These investments will help regional partnerships, public bodies, nonprofits and Tribes solve regional rural health care challenges. These solutions will build a stronger, more sustainable rural health care system for the nation's small towns and communities.

The complete list of awardees can be found at https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/usda-rd-nr-emergency-rural-health-care-grants-awards-07252023.pdf. The following Oklahoma communities and healthcare organizations received grant dollars:

- Choctaw County Ambulance Authority
- City of Elmore
- Kiowa County Hospital Authority
- McAlester Regional Healthcare Authority
- Atoka County EMS
- Grady Memorial Hospital Authority
- Hughes County EMS
- Johnston County EMS
- Kiowa County Hospital Authority
- Mercy Hospital – Ada
- Mercy Hospital – Tishomingo
- Mercy Hospital – Watonga
- City of Sallisaw Hospital Authority

"The Covid-19 pandemic has shown how vital it is to invest in rural healthcare," Corn said. "I am thankful that under the leadership of President Biden we are delivering real results for rural Oklahomans that are making an impact today and in the future for better health outcomes in our communities."

Number of Unvaccinated Children in US Growing

OKLAHOMA CITY - There has been an alarming rise in the number of unvaccinated children in the United States and this has sparked deep concern among health officials nationwide. Recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reveals an estimated 100,000 young children have not received any of the 14 recommended vaccinations, heightening the risk of preventable diseases.

Guardians play a vital role in safeguarding a child's health. Common questions may arise regarding vaccine safety, potential risks and benefits associated with specific vaccines. Ensuring children receive the necessary vaccinations is essential and achievable by consulting with health care providers and following the recommended immunization schedules.

Committed to enhancing the health and well-being of Native youth, Oklahoma City Indian Clinic (OKCIC), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit clinic, is resolute in its mission to combat these concerning statistics. By providing comprehensive health and wellness services to American Indians in central Oklahoma, OKCIC strives to improve the overall health outcomes for the Native population children.

"The growing number of unvaccinated children is a matter of deep concern," says Dr. Janice Hixson, Oklahoma City Indian Clinic's Chief Medical Officer. "It is our collective responsibility to empower the next generation and secure their well-being for a happy, healthy future. I urge all to prioritize their child's immunizations. Life's uncertainties make it essential to provide our youth with the best medical opportunities available."

About Oklahoma City Indian Clinic

Oklahoma City Indian Clinic was established in 1974 to provide excellent health care and wellness services to American Indians in central Oklahoma. The clinic staff cares for more than 21,000 patients from over 220 federally recognized tribes every year. American Indians can receive a range of services, including medical, dental, pediatrics, prenatal, pharmacy, optometry, physical fitness, nutrition, family programs and behavioral health services. For more information, please call (405) 948-4900 or visit www.okcic.com.

OICA Names Pittman Democratic Legislator of Year

News Release

State Representative Ajay Pittman, D-Oklahoma City was recently awarded as House Democrat Legislator of the Year by the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy (OICA) for her work to address students dealing with trauma in Oklahoma's Public schools.



Pittman

"It's an honor to be recognized by OICA for authoring recent legislation that would advance partnerships between law enforcement and schools statewide to help provide a safe and supportive academic environment for children recently exposed to traumatic events known as "adverse childhood experiences" (ACEs)," said Rep. Pittman, Vice-Chair of the Oklahoma Legislative Black Caucus.

Rep. Pittman fostered a successful partnership with Handle with Care Oklahoma, and The Oklahoma Turning Point Council to author HB2513. The legislation establishes a notice to Oklahoma schools of children experiencing ACEs so that school administrators, teachers and counselors may handle them with care, in order to mitigate the negative impact of trauma.

"OICA appreciates and applauds the attention to detail that Rep. Ajay Pittman demonstrated with her hard work on the Handle with Care legislation, and her continued efforts to support all Oklahoma children through policy," said Joe Dorman, CEO of OICA.

HB2513 received overwhelming support and passed both chambers this year. The bill passed the House with 81 yes votes and the Senate with 42 yes votes.

"This type of bi-partisan legislation fosters an environment that will help identify and support students who are experiencing trauma," said Rep. Pittman. "It will allow law enforcement and first responders to notify public schools with a 'handle with care' notice to advise educators that a student has experienced a traumatic event."

Other bills that Rep. Pittman have authored that help children in Oklahoma include HB2649: requires the state to provide oral care for pregnant women (2019). HB2727: permits Adulting 101 to be taught in public schools (2022). HB4396: creates a pediatric palliative care program (2022).

In 2023, Pittman was appointed as the first Democratic Vice-Chair of the Tourism committee for the 59th Legislature. She currently serves on the Agriculture, Appropriations & Budget for Health, and Transportation committees, in addition to serving as Co-Chair to the Native American caucus, and is a member of the Mental Health Caucus, Early Childhood Caucus and the Aerospace and Technology Caucus.

Pittman also serves on National Committees that help Oklahoma receive recognition for strong leadership as the co-chair of the Millennial Action Project, Future Caucus, a statewide millennial bi-partisan caucus.

Why Summer is Best Time to Book Holiday Travel

AAA

OKLAHOMA CITY — The weather outside is frightful ... with heat! Cold temperatures may seem far off in the distance, but in the travel world, now is the time to think about those cooler days and year-end holidays. AAA travel advisors say even though most people book holiday travel in September and October, summer is the best time to make holiday plans. They explain why it pays to plan ahead and share which destinations are the most popular.

Most travelers want to skip layovers and get right to their destination. That means nonstop flights, especially those going cross-country and internationally, will fill up fast.

"Sometimes travelers wait to book airline tickets to get a better deal, but prices fluctuate, and the longer they wait, the fewer options they'll have for nonstop flights and premium seats," said Jodi Abata, AAA travel advisor, who frequently books international trips for AAA members.

Book Now Before Most Families Do

With summer vacations and camps in full swing, most families aren't thinking about the holidays. That's why you should be! "Beat the rush and start planning for the holidays now! Many families with kids wait to book until early fall, when schools resume and they're back into their routine," said Cady DeBlois, AAA travel advisor, who books many theme park vacations for AAA members. "But ideally, they should start getting their holiday trips on the books now to get the best selection."

More People are Gifting Experiences Instead of Presents

AAA travel advisors say they're seeing more people gift travel experiences to loved ones instead of presents. That means those people are already thinking about the holidays. "I just booked travel for one family who's surprising their children on Christmas morning with a trip to Disney World, leaving later that same day! That family was sure to book early to get exactly what they wanted," DeBlois shared.

YOLO (You Only Live Once) is Replacing Bucket Lists

After three years of a pandemic, many travelers are tackling their bucket lists now! "I've had travelers tell me, I don't know what my health will be in 5 or 10 years, let's go abroad this year," Abata said. "There seems to be a sense of adventure from more people now. They don't want to delay travel any longer."

Europe, Cruises, and Theme Parks Sell Out in Advance

European travel is booming this year, and the holidays will be no exception. AAA travel advisors say touring Christmas markets in Europe is extremely popular and itineraries sell out in advance. River cruises are also in high demand during the holidays, along with Caribbean cruises. Theme parks are a holiday favorite among families with kids when students are on winter break. DeBlois added, "I've already booked theme park vacations for Christmas 2024! That's how eager many families are to get their holiday plans on the books."

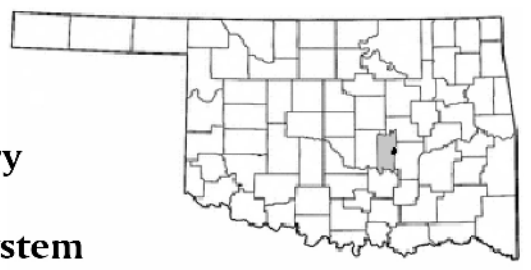
For holiday travel ideas and vacation bookings, reach out to a AAA travel advisor or browse Trip Canvas for inspiration and top trending destinations. Check out AAA Diamond hotels and restaurants for the best places to stay and dine during your trip.

About AAA:

AAA provides automotive, travel, and insurance services to more than 63 million members nationwide and more than 400,000 members in Oklahoma. AAA advocates for the safety and mobility of its members and has been committed to outstanding road service for more than 100 years. AAA is a non-stock, membership corporation working on behalf of motorists, who can map a route, find local gas prices and electric vehicle charging stations, discover discounts, book a hotel, and track their roadside assistance service with the AAA Mobile app (AAA.com/mobile) for iPhone, iPad and Android. For more information on joining or renewing a Membership, visit www.AAA.com.

EXPLORE WEWOKA

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- Wewoka Lake
- Gil Morgan Golf Course
- Wewoka Country Club
- Mutt Miller Park
- Beautiful Public Library
- Tennis Courts
- Great Public School System
- Excellent Sport Programs
- Seminole Nation Tribal Complex
- Seminole Nation Museum & Historical Society
- Lakeside Fireworks Celebration: July 3rd
- LakeFest: July 3rd & 4th
- Sorghum Day (October)
- Seminole Nation Day Parade
- Seminole County Fairgrounds



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This Month in History: Story of The USS Nautilus

By John Grimaldi and David Bruce Smith

According to History.com. "The USS Nautilus was constructed under the direction of U.S. Navy Captain Hyman G. Rickover, a brilliant Russian-born engineer who joined the U.S. atomic program in 1946. In 1947, he was put in charge of the navy's nuclear-propulsion program and began work on an atomic submarine. Regarded as a fanatic by his detractors, Rickover succeeded in developing and delivering the world's first nuclear submarine years ahead of schedule.

"In 1952, the Nautilus' keel was laid by President Harry S. Truman, and on January 21, 1954, first lady Mamie Eisenhower broke a bottle of champagne across its bow as it was launched into the Thames River at Groton, Connecticut. Commissioned on September 30, 1954, it first ran under nuclear power on the morning of January 17, 1955,"

The inaugural voyage—to the North Pole—however, did not take place until August 3, 1958.

For more information, the Grateful American Book Prize recommends Nautilus to Columbia: 70 years of the US Navy's Nuclear Submarines by James C. Goodall

NEWS

Area Teen Accepts Coveted Gates Scholarship

ALLEN, Okla. – News travels fast in this small, rural, close-knit community teetering on the edge of northeastern Pontotoc and western Hughes counties.

In May, 37 teenagers formally marched to "Pomp and Circumstance" at Allen High School's graduation ceremonies.

One of them will travel 1,347 miles in August to begin classes at one of the most prestigious universities in America – Yale in New Haven, Connecticut.



Walker

Chickasaw citizen Keenan Walker, 18, returned to Allen April 26 from a final excursion to Yale and Harvard, another Ivy League school located in Massachusetts, before making his final decision.

In fact, he was bombarded with five offers to attend Ivy League schools before deciding on Yale. They included powerhouses of educational opportunity at Dartmouth in New Hampshire, Columbia in New York City, Brown in Rhode Island, Harvard and Yale.

He was born in Ada and attended Allen Public Schools since prekindergarten. He is the son of Davelynn Walker and the late Ronald Walker, both of whom built successful careers with the Chickasaw Nation.

"I have always had a healthy respect for small towns, even as I am about to leave one," Keenan noted. "I was never athletically inclined, so my time was spent cheering on the Mustangs while concentrating on education and having fun in other ways."

In 2022, Keenan was a national award- winner competing in San Diego, California, as a member of the Family Career Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) organization. His presentation and arguments were judged the finest in the nation when he spoke of career investment research as it applies to practicing law.

This year, the Allen High School academic team finished third in statewide competition fielding math, science, current events and – what Keenan judges as "trivia" – questions from state competition judges. He serves as president of FCCLA and is one of seven who was awarded valedictorian honors this year at Allen's graduation.

"There are things that will always be a part of you. Allen has been that for me. I have always had a desire to achieve, to do something bigger than myself. Every teacher at Allen Public Schools recognized that in me and fostered it, encouraged it, and helped me realize my dreams," Keenan said. "I've never had a teacher who didn't believe I was capable of achieving something huge."

For several years, Keenan has been involved in the Chickasaw Nation's Toksali SMART program, a summer work opportunity for Chickasaw youth ages 14-21. Creating a SMART workforce, the Toksali (to work) SMART (Successful Mindsets with Attitude and Readiness for Tomorrow) program encourages students to develop productive work patterns and behaviors in real- world environments. Innovative partnerships with a variety of community resources provide youth with meaningful job experiences, strengthening the community workforce.

In 2021, Toksali SMART assigned Keenan to Allen's public library. With his love of books, it was a perfect fit, he said. Keenan spent his time organizing and cataloging books for more than a year before transferring to the Ada Early Childhood Center where he provided care and leadership to children aged 4-5 — a very challenging yet rewarding experience. He is still involved with the program this year completing activities of cultural importance for the Chickasaw Nation virtually.

"My father graduated from Allen and worked for many years with the Chickasaw Nation making a difference in the lives of Chickasaw citizens and the general population. My mom and my brother, Mika, (who attends East Central University in Ada studying business) are so supportive of my efforts too, although when mom and I traveled to Columbia University, she was not impressed with New York City," Keenan recalls with a hearty laugh.

Keenan plans his undergraduate education at Yale to be political science–based with an eye toward earning a law degree upon completing his bachelor's degree. History, sociology and English also interest Keenan.

In fact, he said his "plethora" of interests have been playing a game of tug-of-war with his emotions as he sets out on his unique Ivy League career.

"If I do attend law school, my primary goal will be to work in government at a federal level. My other interest would be living and working in New York City practicing corporate law with an emphasis on contracts," he said. "It is funny, when we visited Columbia, my mother hated it because of all of the people who are there, and I loved it because of all the people who are there," Keenan said chuckling.

Determination and dreaming big, along with a bit of Lux et Veritas — Light and Truth, which is the motto of Keenan's new Connecticut home — are all elements of Keenan's personality.

The death of his father in 2021 from COVID-19 rocked him back on his heels but he used that time for introspection and renewed determination. An avid reader of all genres, Keenan found himself in the throes of Sarah J. Maas' "House of Earth and Blood" when his father passed. A New York Times best-seller, the ending of the book provides solace for Keenan with the loss of his father.

"A few days after my father died, there was a part of the book that really resonated with me. It concerned healing after a traumatic experience and the characters were speaking to friends they had lost," Keenan said. "I remember thinking everything the characters were saying to each other was the same things I wish I could have said to my dad.

"It has a profound impact on me emotionally. I've reread it three or four times. It is a source of power for me because I remember where I was emotionally when I read it for the first time, which was not a particularly good place. Since rereading it, I have more positive emotions concerning it because of my emotional state now — it's empowering to see how far I've come," he explained.

Keenan admits books he reads may be any topic, from serious to dramatic to "corny cliché romance novels." His favorite musician is Taylor Swift with her "Reputation" album judged her finest. His favorite school tradition is homecoming.

"I think it is just adorable. Memories of us building floats are some of the best, and I hope I remember them for a lifetime," he said. And, despite an overwhelming desire to learn, "hanging out with my friends and making memories" is another A-list activity for Keenan.

Between Yale University financial aid and scholarships, a Gates Foundation Scholarship and the Chickasaw Nation, Keenan will attend Yale debt- free. After a yearlong process of applications and essays, Keenan earned the prestigious Gates Foundation Scholarship. The Gates Scholarship (TGS) is a highly selective, last- dollar scholarship for outstanding, minority, high school seniors from low-income households.

Each year, the scholarship is awarded to exceptional student leaders, with the intent of helping them realize their maximum potential. Being accepted by these elite schools is no easy task.

Keenan wrote essays, filled out applications, personal statements and tons of other paperwork to earn the right to attend Yale.

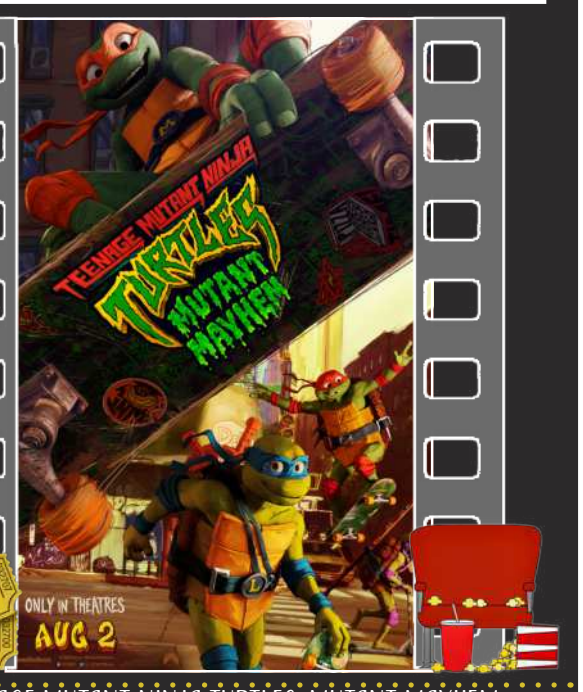
"Honestly, while I was applying there was a little voice that would say 'what are you doing? They won't accept you,' but I am a very confident and slightly delusional person, so I forged ahead and refused to give up on myself. I would rather try and fail than fail to try," he posited.

"There are pre-set formulas about how to be accepted, but I decided to just be myself. I wanted to forge a path different than taken by most students and I don't regret anything. I read advice on how to write the essays, all of which essentially told me to mold myself into an entirely different person, but that didn't really sound like something I was interested in.

"Rather than writing about classes, studying and research, I wrote about wanting to join dance clubs and be a famous actor, and I didn't really mind if it wasn't what they wanted because it was my truth. In high school, could I have gotten a higher ACT score if I spent a bit more time studying? Most likely, but that wasn't the person I wanted to be nor the life I wanted to live. I did work hard, but I've had unspeakable amounts of fun, too, but what I believe really got me where I am is my belief in myself and determination," he said.

"I think one of the most important things someone can do for themselves is have fun and truly live in this amazing world of opportunity we are fortunate to be in, and we will find ourselves where we belong."

Strothers Cinema



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Get Help With Medicare Prescription Drug Costs

With rising inflation and interest rates, the federal Extra Help Program may be helpful if you are a Medicare beneficiary with limited income and resources. The Extra Help program assists qualified Medicare beneficiaries with out-of-pocket expenses associated with Medicare Part D prescription drug expenses. You also won't have to pay a Part D late enrollment penalty while you get Extra Help.

More than 10,000 Medicare beneficiaries in Oklahoma may be eligible for this program but have yet to apply. The Medicare Assistance Program (MAP) is a division of the Oklahoma Insurance Department that can help Medicare beneficiaries understand and apply for this assistance. MAP provides free, unbiased information to help Oklahomans understand Medicare, Medicare supplements, Medicare Advantage, and other health plan options.

"Having to choose between buying groceries or paying for prescription drugs is a decision no one should have to make," MAP Director Ray Walker said.

The income and resource limits in 2023:

Your situation
Income limit Resource limit

Individual $1,660/month $9,090

Married couple
$2,239/month $13,630

Resources include the value of the things you own. Some examples are real estate other than your primary residence, bank accounts, including checking, savings, and certificates of deposit, stocks, bonds, mutual funds and IRAs. Your primary residence, personal possessions and your vehicle do not count as a resource.

Individuals who qualify for this program will receive assistance with their Medicare Part D prescription drug plans. This means that individuals eligible for Full Extra Help will have their Part D monthly premium paid up to $32.90 per month and will pay a reduced copay of $4.15 for generic drugs and $10.35 for name-brand drugs.

To see if you qualify for the Extra Help program, please call the Oklahoma Medicare Assistance Program at 1-800-763-2828 or visit https://www.oid.ok.gov/ship-low-income-subsidy/

SPORTS

OSU's Daton Fix Claims Gold Medal in Poland

WARSAW, Poland – Daton Fix brought home the gold medal at 61 kg with a 6-3 victory over Austin DeSanto at the Waclaw Ziolkowski Memorial Sunday.

A 2021 World silver medalist, Fix began his day with a lopsided 10-0 victory in the first round over Georgia's Ramaz Turmanidze. He then handled Georgi Vangelov of Bulgaria, 5-1, to advance to the final round.

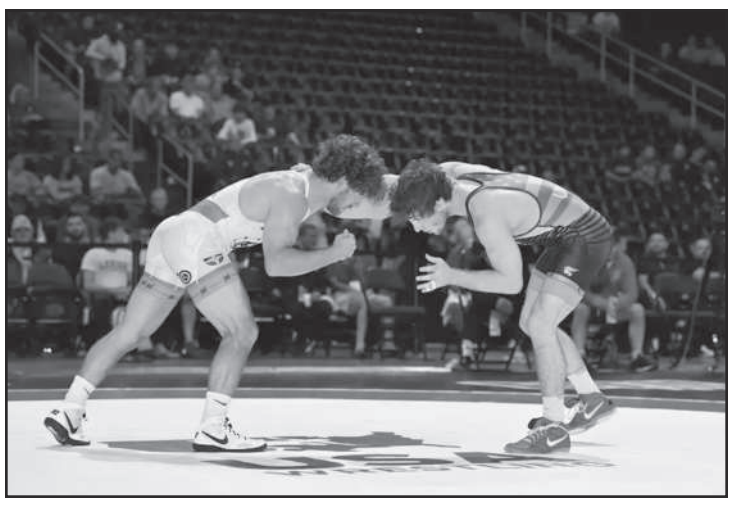
Facing a fellow countryman and common opponent in Austin DeSanto, Fix jumped out to a 4-1 advantage at the break. DeSanto added a takedown late in the second, but Fix was able to hold the lead and earn gold by a score of 6-3.

Fix has now defeated DeSanto twice this summer, previously downing DeSanto with a 9-0 shutout at the true third match last month to earn a spot on the United States National Team. Fix also defeated DeSanto three times in collegiate competition, including in the semifinals of the 2021 NCAA Championships.

At 79 kg, Dustin Plott concluded his strong day with a dominant 10-0 technical fall over neutral athlete Iman Mahdavi in the bronze medal match.

Plott compiled a 4-1 record on Sunday, highlighted by a wild 22-11 victory against fellow American Donnel Washington Jr. in the second round.

On Saturday, incoming freshman Brayden Thomp-son competed in the 86 kg bracket and dropped narrow matches to Georgia's Daviti Koguashvili and Tamaz Nikoleishvili.



OSU Daton Fix

Fix and Plott were two of eight American wrestlers to pick up medals on the day, helping the United States win the Men's Freestlye division with 121 team points.

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Wewoka Tiger Cross Country Getting Ready for Season

Wewoka Cross Country

Staff Photo by Bill Anderson

The Wewoka Cross Country Team are getting ready for the 2023 season. Pictured left to right are: Asst. Coach Jenny Davidson, SJ Maxwell, Rachel Davidson, Emerson Gates, Priscila Alaniz and Coach John Davidson.

(not pictured is Navaeh Smith)





Tiger Pride

Staff Photo by Bill Anderson

The cross-country team warms up out at the Dr. Gil Morgan Wewoka golf course Monday evening.

The first cross-country meet is Aug. 31st at Gore. The schedule is not completed and will be posted online at a later date.





Staff Photo by Bill Anderson

Two of the Wewoka Tiger's cross-country team go through some drills Monday evening. Pictured left is SJ Maxwell and right is Rachel Davidson as they complete their drills.

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Sooners, Razorbacks Set for Battle at BOK

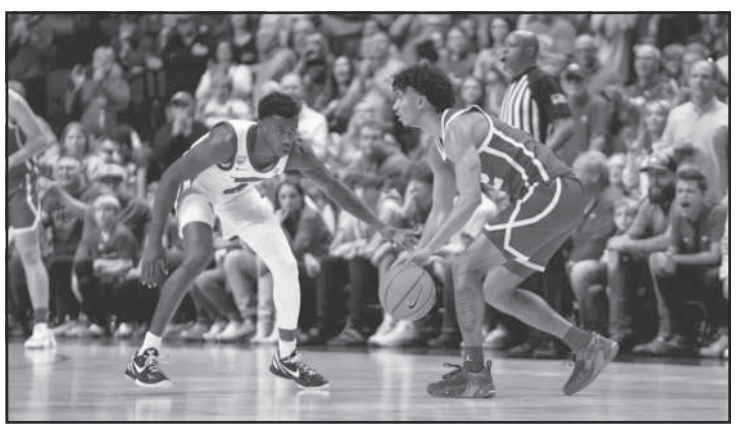
NORMAN – The University of Oklahoma men's basketball team will face Arkansas for the third consecutive season in the Crimson & Cardinal Classic at the BOK Center in Tulsa, Okla., on Saturday, Dec. 9, 2023.

The neutral site clash will be the final contest in the three-game series.

OU won the 2021 meeting against the Razorbacks, claiming the 88-66 victory. Arkansas evened the series with an 88-78 win in 2022.

Located midway between the Oklahoma (125 miles) and Arkansas (116 miles) campuses, BOK Center offers a central location that caters to alumni and fan bases from both universities. Tickets for the match-up will be divided at mid-court to create a unique 50-50 atmosphere for fans from the bordering states.

Tickets start at $12.50 and can be purchased at SoonerSports.com/Tickets.



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SPORTS

Katie Ledecky Breaks Michael Phelp's Record

USA - Katie Ledecky had a historic swim on Saturday.

The three-time Olympian, 26, surpassed Michael Phelps for most career individual world swimming titles after clinching her 16th gold medal at the 2023 World Aquatics Championships in Fukuoka, Japan. She won the 800-meter freestyle — her signature event — with a time of 8:08.87, defeating second place finisher Li Bingjie of China by 4.44 seconds.



Katie Ledesky

Ledecky's victory also made her the first swimmer to win six consecutive world championships in the same event.

After the race, Ledecky reflected on the magnanimity of beating Phelps' record.

"It's special. I really didn't even know I was going to achieve that until people started telling me. It's cool," she said, according to CNN. "I'm happy with that swim. I wanted it to be a little better, but I'll take it. I'm really pleased with how the week went."

On Tuesday, Ledecky won a gold medal in the 1,500 free, tying Phelps' record. She also took home silvers in the 400-meter free and the 4x200-meter free relay in Japan.

The Stanford University graduate is now well-positioned to chase even more history at next year's summer Olympics in Paris. With seven gold medals, she is two shy of second place in Olympic history (shared by American swimmer Mark Spitz, Soviet gymnast Larisa Latynina, track and field athlete Carl Lewis and Finnish distance runner Paavo Nurmi). Phelps commands first place with 20 Olympic gold medals.

Last year, Ledecky was named best female athlete at the 2022 ESPY Awards. During her acceptance speech, she called on parents to teach their children how to swim, something she called a "really important life skill."

Ledecky also encouraged young people to "find something you really love that you're good at, that can be a positive force in our world."

"Something that can inspire somebody else, something that can help somebody else, anything that can change our world," she said. "There are so many heroes, not just in sports, but all around us... look to those people as role mod-els and go for the gold."

Ahead of the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo, Ledecky opened up to PEOPLE about her previous two Olympic appearances in 2012 and 2016, calling the opportunity to represent the United States at such a significant event an "incredible feeling."

"In London and Rio, I had my family there and it's just a great feeling to see them and share that moment with them while I was on the podium and hear the national anthem," she said at the time.

"It's such an honor to represent your country and to do it at the highest level and to reach the podium. And it's kind of a moment of reflection, I think — kind of like a little meditation."

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Crawford Proved Too Much for Spence Jr

LAS VEGAS -- For years, Terence Crawford told anyone within earshot just how damn good he was. The problem? Crawford couldn't lure the necessary opponents into the ring to prove it.

So, he shouted from the mountaintop that he was the best in the world and called out every fighter under the sun.

As is often the case in boxing, politics stood in the way. For much of his welterweight reign, Crawford was signed with Top Rank while Errol Spence Jr. was with PBC, rival companies rarely doing business with each other. When Crawford (40-0, 31 KOs) became a free agent after his TKO victory over Shawn Porter in November 2021, the "side of the street" argument echoed by many fighters no longer applied.

And when they finally met in the ring on Saturday, Crawford proved to be no rival to Spence (28-1, 22 KOs) at all. He picked him apart round after round with his laser-like southpaw jab and slicing right hooks. The 35-year-old punched between Spence's attacks, carving up the bigger man like Crawford had done so many times before. Crawford dropped Spence in Round 2 and twice more in Round 7 before he stopped him on his feet in the ninth of a one-sided beat-down.

Crawford proved to be not just the best welterweight in the world, but an all-time great and entered himself into a virtual deadlock with Naoya Inoue for pound-for-pound supremacy.

"They tried to blackball me. They kept me out," said Crawford, who fights out of Omaha, Nebraska. "They talked bad about me. They said I wasn't good enough, that I couldn't beat these top welterweights, and I just kept my head to the sky, and I kept praying to God that I would get the opportunity to show the world who Terence Crawford is. And tonight, I believe I showed how great I am."

Indeed, Crawford did, and now he could look toward another fight with Spence, even if the bout wasn't remotely competitive.



Terrence Crawford

The deal contained a bidirectional rematch clause, and Spence will have 30 days to exercise his right to an immediate rematch slated to occur before the year ends. The caveat: The winner selects if the rematch takes place at 147 pounds, as Saturday's fight did, or Spence's preferred 154.

"Hell yeah, we got to do it again," said Spence, ESPN's No. 2 welterweight and No. 4 pound-for-pound boxer. "I'm going to be a lot better; it's going to be a lot closer."

"He was the better man tonight," he added. "He was using his jab, and my timing was a little bit off. He was catching me in between shots. ... I make no excuses."

Spence, 33, would be hard-pressed to perform worse, and it's not a re-match fans are immediately calling for after Saturday's action. Given what was on display, the result of a second bout between Crawford and Spence could be a mere formality.

Crawford proved to be levels above Spence, and there might not be anyone around Crawford's weight who can test him. "Bud" is a peerless fighter who will probably have to move up in weight to meet a genuine challenge.

He only increased his power as he climbed from 135 to 140 and now 147, scoring eight wins inside the distance in eight fights. And against his best opponent -- by far -- Crawford found another level, raising his game to match his foe.

If Crawford remains at 147 pounds, the most attractive fight is easily a matchup with Jaron "Boots" Ennis, who's impressed against solid yet unspectacular opposition. At 154 pounds, Crawford could fight Tim Tszyu, the undisputed 154-pound champion who will meet Canelo Alvarez for all four 168-pound belts on Sept. 30.

But first up is probably Spence, who owns the right to a rematch if he wants it. They will both rake in career-high paydays when it's all said and done, and they elevated each other -- and the sport -- by delivering the long-awaited fight.

While it took the two of them to get together and make the fight happen, only Crawford can now continue to tell everyone just how great he is and more. And this time, he has the signature win to back it up.

Big 12 Considered the Worst Power Five Conference

The Big 12 has been the example of mediocrity for years.

A big reason is Oklahoma has been the only one holding up its end of the bargain year in and year out.

Very rarely does Oklahoma have an off year, but the conference hasn't had a much consistency apart from the Sooners. The SEC has the Georgia Bulldogs and Alabama Crimson Tide. The Big 10 has the Ohio State Buckeyes and Michigan Wolverines. The ACC has Clemson.

The Big 12 was supposed to have Oklahoma and the Texas Longhorns, but Texas has been nowhere to be found since 2010.

After a bad season for Oklahoma last year and another mediocre year for Texas, the Big 12 was ranked as the worst Power Five conference by Athlon Sports.

Having the Big 12 in last is a little unfair. I don't see why the Pac-12 or the ACC are considered better than the Big 12 right now.

To strengthen your ranking, you need your blue-blood programs to play like it. The only problem is the Big 12 only has one more season to reap the benefits of Oklahoma and Texas.

Come next year, they'll be leaving the worst Power Five conference behind as they make their way to the conference that came in at No. 1, the SEC.

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NEWS

Encouragement From a Stranger

Daris Howard

Life's Outtakes

I presented a seminar this weekend about work I have been doing for many years. It was about an ancient civilization that I had researched extensively. I studied their culture, archeology, and all I could about them. Often people will come up after such seminars to ask questions, but this time, as I was gathering my papers, a lady approached and said, "I am Emmaline Strange's daughter."

For a brief instant, I paused, then the recognition of the name flowed through me. I seldom heard her first name and called her Mrs. Strange, the greatest substitute teacher in the world.

When I was young, I was kind of a wild child and loved being away off on my own. Before I was even old enough to go to school, I would escape from the house and go exploring with my lamb and my dog, who were my best friends. We would find a bird nest or a pretty rock. Of course, there were always wild onions that were easy to find as the smell drifted across the breeze. If I was lucky, I might find a snake's skin, which I had to carefully add to my special collection so my mother wouldn't throw it out. My mother often worried about where I had gone, but I always returned home when I got hungry and the wild onions were all eaten.

My parents felt kindergarten was a waste of time. "We do not send our children to school to play," my father said. So, I didn't start school until I was old enough for first grade, and then I started a few days late. The principal ushered me to the room of a young teacher. As soon as I sat down at my desk, she asked me to recite the alphabet. I had no idea what the alphabet was. I could ride a horse bareback and identify many wild plants and animals, but I had no idea what she was talking about.

As a result, the teacher said, "I don't have time to waste teaching a child that is dumb." I was put at a desk in the corner. I didn't mind too much because I was by myself, but the children joined in the name-calling, and the bullying was intense. More than once I got the paddle for fighting, when in reality, I was doing little more than defending myself.

That's where Mrs. Strange came in. About halfway through the school year, one of the teachers had surgery and would be gone for a few months. Mrs. Strange became her semi-permanent substitute. She saw how the other teacher and the children treated me and quickly learned about my situation. She asked that I be transferred to her class.

She tried hard to teach me, but I often told her I was too stupid. She would have none of that, and would always say, "You can do anything and be anything you really want to be." Eventually, with her help and encouragement, I began to believe it. As I learned to read, it opened whole new worlds to my curious mind. I took books with me as I herded cows, one thing I did a lot in the summer. I soon had read the whole of our family's extensive library.

Over the years, Mrs. Strange's words of encouragement stuck with me. I worked hard and became a top athlete and valedictorian. Mrs. Strange's daughter even mentioned that and said her mother thought of me like a son. She said there was something fun the family was going to do on the night of my graduation, but Mrs. Strange came to my graduation instead to be there for me.

I had a pleasant visit with her daughter, and after she left, I continued to think of my wonderful teacher. I have had my share of failures, but I have had successes too. And each time I finished a degree, published a book, or received any honor, I often thought of Mrs. Strange.

My successes are very much the result of a kind little lady who kept telling a little boy he could be anything if he really tried.

News Tidbits

According to the International Whaling Commission "whale watching tourism is rapidly growing around the world." But it is highly unlikely that the majority of the millions of whale watchers out there have seen what the Robert Addie family saw off the coast of Provincetown, MA recently: three humpback whales simultaneously breaching the Atlantic Ocean. Coincidentally, Robert had his video camera handy when the trio of whales soared out of the water at the same time.

Go figure

It is estimated that hundreds of millions of online buyers make purchases via Amazon. Cindy Smith of Prince William County, VA is one of them, as is Liz Geltman of Washington, D.C. That's not the only thing they have in common. Back in May Ms. Geltman reported that she received some 80 unsolicited packages of goods from the online "super" market over a period of time. More recently, Ms. Smith received more than 100 boxes containing a variety of products ranging from glue guns to binoculars. She, too, did not order the goodies she received. Believe it or not, according to the UPI news service: "Amazon officials said they looked into both incidents, and discovered both Smith and Geltman's packages were the result of vendors having packages shipped to random addresses in order to remove unsold merchandise from Amazon fulfillment centers."

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Pastor, Dan Factor

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Interim
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Wednesday 6:45 pm
Pastor Nathan Brumley

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Cromwell
Claude Butler, Pastor
Sunday School 9:45 am;
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Wednesday 7 pm

FIRST FREE WILL BAPTIST
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Rev. James Benedict
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Wednesday 7 pm

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Wednesday 7 pm

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Cardell Banks, Minister
Sunday School 9:45 am
Morning Worship 11:00 am
Evening Worship 4:00 pm
Wednesday Night 6:00 pm

Church of God

CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST
6th and Eufaula
D. Taylor, Minister
Sunday School 10 am;
Worship Service 11 am and 6 pm;
Thursday 7 pm

Episcopal

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL
8th and Oak, Holdenville
Rev. Kathrin Radach
Church Services: Every 2nd & 3rd
Sunday at 10:00 am

Methodist

HITCHITEE UNITED METHODIST
Strother Community, Seminole
Bob Kinney, Minister
Sunday School 9:45 am;
Worship Service 11 am;
Wednesday 7:30 pm

JONES TEMPLE CME
104 S. Ocheese
Rev. Gorey James, Minister
Sunday School 9:45 am;
Worship Service 11 am;
Wednesday 7 pm

KANEY CHAPEL UNITED METHODIST
3½ Miles E. of Bowlegs
on Hwy 59
Hazel Battice, Pastor
Sunday School 9:45 am;
Worship Service 11:00 am

FIRST UNITED METHODIST
P. Marie Faubion, Pastor
Sunday School 9:45 am;
Worship Service 10:55 am;
Men's breakfast;
7 pm Choir Practice

Nazarene

Pentecostal

BETHEL PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS
3 miles South of Wewoka 3¼ W.
Rev. R. Nell Davis-York
(405)795-9547
Sunday 2pm

NEW LIFE CHURCH
121 W. 12th 257-3537
Tommy Azlin, Pastor
Sunday Worship 10:30
Wednesday Family Night 7 pm
Angel Food Host Site

PENTECOSTAL CHURCH OF GOD
Rt. 1 Box 30 ~ 257-2135
Rev. John W. Fraley
Sunday School 10 am;
Worship Service 11 am and 6 pm;
Wednesday 7 pm

PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS CHURCH
North of the Post Office-Cromwell,OK
Rev. R. Nell Davis-York
Sunday School 9:45 am;
Worship Service 10:45 am & 5 pm
Thurs. Evening 7pm
(405)795-9547

Presbyterian

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
7th St. and Mekusukey
Rev. Greg Amen
Sunday School 10:00 am;
Worship Service 11:00 am
Christmas Eve Service: 6:30 pm

WEWOKA HILLTOP INDIAN PRESBYTERIAN
1700 1/2 S. Ocheese
Worship 11 am 2nd & 4th Sunday
Wednesday 7:30 pm
Robert Kernell, Elder

Others

Cornerstone Tabernacle
1 Blk So. Post Office, Sasakwa
405-941-3632
Pastor: Bill Chesser
Thurs. 6:30 PM
SS 10:00 AM
Bible Study 1:00 PM

CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD
218 S. Hitchite
V.I. Dubose, Minister
Sunday School 9:45 am;
Worship Service 11 am
Wednesday 7:30 pm

KINGDOM HALL OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES
2104 Seran Dr. ~ 257-3457
Sunday Meeting 10:00 am;
Wednesday Meeting 7:00 pm

GLEANER'S HOLINESS
14th and Bluffview
Larry Chesser, Minister
Sunday School 10 am;
Worship Service 11am and 6:30pm
Wednesday 7:00 pm

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2 blocks North of
D-J Auto Salvage
1 mile East on 270 & back North
John Chesser, Minister
257-3715
Worship Service 10 am and 7 pm;
Tuesday/Thursday 7 pm

CHURCH OF SALVATION
7 ½ mi. N. of Wewoka on Hwy 56
Worship Service 10:30 am
& 7:30 pm

COKV MUCVSE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH
1¾ Miles West of Wewoka
Sunday School 10 am
Worship Service 11 am
Sunday Night Service 6 pm
Wednesday 7 pm

CANADIAN VALLEY COWBOY CHURCH
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Peace

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peace
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50. PERSONALS

Narcotics Anonymous meets at 322 N 4th, Tuesday 6:30 p.m. Wednesday 6:30 p.m. Thursday 6:30 p.m. and Saturday 5 p.m. Business meeting 2nd Tuesday of the month at 5:30 p.m. Contact Dana at 405-382-0948 for information.

Information for Alcoholics Anonymous meetings contact Gary K 405-683-2135 or Sherry L. 405-303-2769

70. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Recovery In Christ, 12 Step Open Recovery Meeting every Sunday night 5:00 pm,2704 Hwy 3N Community of Christ Church Come join us in recovery. For more info call Jim 405-308-2354.

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Temple of Praise, Pastors Jeff & Naoma Nance.. One GOD, One church, One family.Pastor JeffNance@att.netService Times - Sunday School 10am, Sunday Morning services 10:00 a.m Wednesday evening 6:30 p.m Children's Nursery Provided. 382-0503.Find us on U tube: Temple of Praise PCG.(find your destiny PCG) 1100 N. University.

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CAXCA

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CAXCA

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480. COINS-STOCKS-STAMPS
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510. COLLECTIBLES
520. APARTMENTS
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NEWS

Tame Traffic-Related Stress

Aggravation on the nation's roadways has become a frequent topic of conversation over the last decade or so. Incidents that involved traffic-related acts of violence have gained increased attention over that span.

The automotive group AAA estimates that nearly eight out of 10 drivers demonstrate aggressive driving behaviors. While data indicating the number of road rage cases per state is not available, The Trace's study on road rage with a firearm found 522 people were shot in 2021 due to road rage, and that Texas, Florida and California have the most road rage incidents involving guns.

Road rage is the extreme outcome of impatience or frustration behind the wheel. Many times this frustration stems from traffic-related stress. There are more cars on the road than ever before, which can intensify stressful traffic conditions. Drivers can take steps to reduce stress while behind the wheel and recognize behaviors that may contribute to road rage.

· Don't rush. Leave plenty time to get to a destination. You are less likely to be impatient and react to traffic stressors if you are racing the clock.

· Calm down. If there is something that has angered or upset you, take time to calm down before getting behind the wheel.

· Be patient. Recognize that someone driving slowly may be lost or aging with diminished abilities.

· Keep a safe distance. Tailgating can create animosity among drivers. By leaving room, you can avoid aggressive interactions between drivers that can contribute to frustration.

· Don't honk unnecessarily. Honking out of frustration is unproductive and also may exacerbate your levels of stress and anger other drivers.

· Take an alternative route. If you know that certain roadways are plagued by traffic, then figure out a route to avoid the traffic, even if it may be longer.

· Change your schedule. It's not called "rush hour" for nothing. Certain times of the day feature busier roadways than others. If possible, alter your schedule so that you commute during off-peak hours.

· Share the driving. Split driving duties with others, particularly when feeling stressed out. Breaking up particularly long trips among a few drivers can relieve anxiety.

Driving can be stressful, but there are various ways to mitigate feelings that may escalate into anger and road rage.

●Meeting

(Continued from Page 1)

NO. 529: "an ordinance levying and assessing an excise tax equal to the prevailing sales tax rate levied by the City of Wewoka, Oklahoma, on the purchase price upon the storage, use or consumption of tangible personal property purchases outside the state of Oklahoma and brought into the City of Wewoka, Oklahoma: providing for the automatic change in use tax rate upon change in the prevailing sales tax rate."

Ward Three Councilmember elect Bryan Williams will also be sworn in at the start of the city council meeting.

The meetings are slated to get underway at 5:30 p.m. at Wewoka City Hall, 123 S. Mekusukey. All meetings of the city council and its related authorities are open to the public.

●Theater

(Continued from Page 1)

Vocational Work Programs include: Housekeeping; Maintenance; Dietary; Office Aide; etc.

At night the same entrance offers a classic "movie theater experience," complete with thick velvet lineropes on stanchions outside the large, round-windowed door with a brass kickplate. McGrew explained that when the theater is not being used for a classroom during the day or movies at night, it will be used for a number of entertaining activities as well. For example, they have discussed watching Monday night football, horse races on the weekend, and similar viewing options. The area will also be used for birthday parties and exercise classes.

As they entered the theater itself there was an audible gasp as visitors expressed how impressed they were with the theater and its comfortably spaced, plush movie seats and the high-resolution images that were showing on the large movie screen. Visitors were once again encouraged to help themselves to the free concessions and popcorn as they enjoyed socializing in the comfortable surroundings.

Among those celebrating this important addition to the community were District 28 State Senator Grant Green, District 29 State Representative Kyle Hilbert, and Brendan Clark from the office of U.S. Representative Stephanie Bice.

At the conclusion of the ribbon cutting ceremony Mayor Tom Ryan, on behalf of the City of Wewoka, thanked everyone for being there and praised Oakridge for what they are accomplishing for the citizens of Wewoka, adding the City will continue to support them in every way they can.

●OK Watch

(Continued from Page 1)

pension systems. The pension systems run by Tulsa and Oklahoma counties and the systems run by Oklahoma City and Tulsa aren't covered under the Oklahoma Energy Discrimination Elimination Act.

Other counties across the state have their retirement assets managed by OPERS, said Chris Schroder, executive director of the Association of County Commissioners of Oklahoma.

"From everything I've read, it doesn't apply to the counties directly in their financial realms," Schroder said. "It's the (state) retirement systems and anything dealing with the state treasurer."

Tulsa County Treasurer John Fothergill said trustees of the Tulsa County Employees Retirement System discussed the law at a recent meeting. They got advice from their investment advisor and the Tulsa County district attorney's office that it didn't apply to the county's pension system, which has $320 million in assets.

Fothergill said the county's pension system does contract with State Street, which is on the state treasurer's list of restricted financial companies. He said he expected Russ's office to update its list to remove State Street, which didn't respond to the state treasurer's letter earlier this year.

"We talked as a retirement board as to whether we wanted to take a stance as well because both Tulsa as a city and as a county are very reliant on oil and gas revenue," said Fothergill, a Republican who took office in 2020. "We talked about it, even if it's symbolic in nature, to do something as a retirement board.

"When it was all said and done, we didn't know how effective it would be or if it would create change with such a small investment (portfolio) in the big scheme of things. We just decided as long as State Street was alright and we weren't invested with those other 12, that would be enough."

Meanwhile, officials with the city of Oklahoma City watched with interest as the Legislature took up another bill earlier this year that would put further restrictions on doing business with banks or financial firms perceived to be boycotting oil and gas. The Oklahoma City Employee Retirement System has $816 million in assets. It counted State Street and Wells Fargo, which are on the state treasurer's list, among its investment managers in 2022.

Rep. Terry O'Donnnell, R-Catoosa, authored House Bill 2547, which would prohibit state pension systems from relying on voting guidance from financial firms on the treasurer's restricted company list in shareholder proxy elections. The bill passed the House but didn't get a hearing in the Senate.

"We don't think this bill would impact municipal pension systems," Oklahoma City municipal attorney Richard Mahoney said in a March email to colleagues. "There have been past proposals that would impact municipal pension systems, so we need to be alert for amendments to this bill."

However, a separate section of the law includes political subdivisions and forbids contracts of more than $100,000 if the contractor is deemed to be boycotting oil and gas companies.

"We have heard from municipalities that are concerned about increased costs, and we will continue to work with municipalities and their municipal attorneys to ensure compliance with the act," said Mike Fina, executive director of the Oklahoma Municipal League.

"We have met with the state treasurer and will continue to consult with him as we move forward."

State trust funds like the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust or the one run by the Commissioners of the Land Office aren't covered by the oil and gas discrimination law. Despite that, Gov. Kevin Stitt and two other members of the five-person CLO board voted to stop contracting with BlackRock and JPMorgan Chase at the board's June 7 meeting. Together, those two firms manage more than $300 million in assets for the $2.5 billion school land trust.

The Land Office sent letters June 30 to BlackRock and JPMorgan Chase informing them it wasn't renewing the investment manager contracts. The agency has more than a dozen other financial companies managing assets in its portfolio.

●Heat

(Continued from Page 1)

of heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Wear lightweight and loose-fitting clothing when possible. To reduce risk during outdoor work, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration recommends scheduling frequent rest breaks in shaded or air-conditioned environments. Anyone overcome by heat should be moved to a cool and shaded location. Remember, heat stroke is an emergency, so call 911.

Obituary

Jeri House

Jeri Lynnette House age 57, passed away Wednesday, July 26, 2023 in Ada, OK. She was born February 6, 1966 in Ada, OK to the late V.L. Watters and Alice May Rodden.

She is survived by her children, Charity Childs and husband Justin of Holdenville, OK, Hali Calvert and husband Byron of Sasakwa, OK, Paige Lyon and husband Alex of Ada, OK, ten grandchildren, one great grandchild, siblings, Jeff Watters and wife Sophia of Sasakwa, OK, Shelly Bible and husband Gary of Sasakwa, OK, along with numerous nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

Memorial service to be held at 11:00 A.M, Friday, August 4, 2023 at East Main Church of Christ in Holdenville, OK with Pastor Joshua Moyer officiating.

House

Arrangement by Stout-Phillips Funeral Home in Wewoka, OK.

Obituary

Dana Davis



Davis

Dana Lynnette Davis age 43, passed away Thursday, July 27, 2023 in Wewoka, OK. She was born August 18, 1979 in Holdenville, OK to Danny Logan and Susan (Jackson) Parks.

She graduated from Wewoka in 1997. She worked as the Deputy Clerk at Seminole County Assessors Office for many years. She enjoyed sports, spending time with her kids and her church family, and watching movies. She was very involved in her children's lives.

She is preceded in death by her grandparents, Kathryn Jackson, Tolbert Jackson, Don Logan, Rose Walden, and uncle Wesley Jackson.

Dana is survived by her parents, Danny Logan and wife Johna of Wewoka, OK, Susan Parks of Wewoka, OK, children, Macie Mariott and husband Ty of Holdenville, OK, Brady Davis of Wewoka, OK, Natalie Davis of Wewoka, OK, father of her children, Michael Davis of Wewoka, OK, granddaughter on the way, brothers, Tolby Parks of Wewoka, sisters, Sarah Jordan and husband Paul of St. Louis, OK, Megan Anderson and Chris of Wewoka, OK, along with numerous nieces, nephews, other relatives, and friends.

Funeral service will be held at 2:00 P.M., Friday, August 4, 2023 at Hilltop Free Will Baptist Church in Wewoka, OK with Sam Ketcher officiating. Interment to follow at Oakwood Cemetery in Wewoka, OK.

Pallbearers: Zeb Summers, Matt Summers, Cody Keesee, Kyle Pipken, Rick Campbell, Brady Davis.

Honorary Pallbearers: David Jackson, Tolby Parks, Michael Davis, Ty Mariott, Paul Jordan, Bo Summers, Jacob Summers, Derek Logan, Justin Logan, Josh Logan, Matt Logan.

Arrangements by Stout-Phillips Funeral Home in Wewoka, OK.

Obituary

Bonnie Smith



Smith

Bonnie Smith was born October 18, 1923, in Wewoka, Oklahoma, to Alfred McKinley and Leona Alma (Price) Smith. She departed this life on Thursday, July 27, 2023, in Salina, Oklahoma, at the age of 99 years, 9 months, and 9 days.

Bonnie grew up in the Holdenville, Oklahoma area graduating high school there. She lived most of her life in Lewisville and Flower Mound, Texas, as well as Oklahoma City. Bonnie moved to Tulsa in 2019 and then to Salina in 2021. During WWII, Bonnie began work in the Ford Motor Company Factory becoming a "Rosie the Riveter". After the end of the war, she became one of the first secretaries for Ford Motor Company and was an original member of the Ford Secretary Club. She retired in 1986.

On June 15, 1963, in Miami, Oklahoma, Bonnie and Kenneth "Ken" Harley Smith were united in marriage. Ken preceded Bonnie in death on December 7, 2009. The couple had been married for over 46 years. She loved being a part of Northern Baptist Church and was a member of the Red Hat Society.

Bonnie's love for dancing led her to be a High Stepper at the Y. She liked to play gin rummy and chickenfoot dominoes. She truly loved to socialize and travel, having been all around the world. Above all, she treasured time spent with her family. Bonnie was a beautiful person that was very faithful. Her personality was magnetic as people were naturally drawn to and loved her. She will be missed dearly.

Bonnie is survived by grandchildren Lisa Kirk, Heather and husband Chad Collins; daughter-in-law: Donna Coday and husband Gary; 2 daughters, Marilyn S. Fitzpatrick of Midwest City, Oklahoma and Nancy L. Williams of Midwest City, Oklahoma; one son, Steven K. Smith of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; 9 grandchildren: Dr. Jim Smith and wife Tiffany, Dan Smith and wife Carlene, Lisa Emrich and husband Rob Osberg, Tracie Seimon and husband Anton, Paul Emrich and wife Ginger, Christopher Smith and wife Jennifer, Tony Williams, Shaun Piegdon, and Marcus Smith; numerous great grandchildren and great-great grandchildren; other relatives and many friends.

She was proceeded in death by: 2 sons, James Stanley Kirk and Phillip Bruce Kirk.

Funeral services will be held Tuesday, August 1 at 1:00 P.M., at the First Baptist Church in Wewoka, Oklahoma. Pastor Nathan Brumley will officiate. Interment will follow at Oakwood Cemetery in Wewoka, Oklahoma. Services have been entrusted to the Locust Grove Funeral Home. You may share thoughts, memories, and condolences at www.locustgrovefuneralhome.com.