

Living Fair
Offers
Senior
Resources

PAGE 8



Local
Chefs
Unite for
Kids

PAGE 15



Cornett: Moving beyond Oklahoma City to face state's challenges

SENIOR NEWS & LIVING OK

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Burger Boy on Route 66



Marty Hall and wife Carolyn have made Sid's Diner an El Reno institution known across the country during the past 27 years.

by Bobby Anderson, Staff Writer

Pull up a chair and feel like you're at home.

That's the philosophy Marty Hall has brought with him to work every day for nearly five decades in the restaurant business.

And it's how you'll feel when you take a seat at Sid's Diner in El Reno and Hall spins around and asks "How ya doin'?"

"I love the people I meet," said Hall, who has turned the tiny onion burger joint into a

destination.

Hundreds of people daily flow into Sid's, which is just 880-square-feet of real estate (including the walk-in cooler).

"I didn't have any money left," Hall said of why it's not bigger. "When I opened the door I had \$300 to my name."

Hall built the diner in 1990 after owning the old-style walkup

See SIDS Page 2



Mick Cornett is the longest-serving mayor of OKC.

by Traci Chapman

For Mick Cornett, standing still is not an option. Moving forward has always been his style – for 14 years he's done just that, in the process taking with him Oklahoma's largest municipality and changing both its landscape and its people.

Now, as he winds down his career as Oklahoma City's 35th – and longest-serving – mayor, Cornett has set his sights on again moving forward, this time looking to address what some might see as insurmountable obstacles in putting the state back on the right track as he heads toward a Republican primary that could be the first step for the state's next governor.

But, challenges are what Cornett is all about, those who have worked with him said. They are challenges embraced by a man whose campaign slogan is aptly entitled, "fix the mess."

"Over and over as Terri (his wife) and I traveled the state, that's what we heard from people – to 'fix this mess,'" Cornett said. "We listened, we saw the people are emotional; there's frustration, there's disappointment, there's downright anger, and their expectations are not being met."

Among those perhaps the most vocal about their dissatisfaction are Oklahoma seniors. Not only are seniors vital to the state's success, they are almost always major constituency in any election. That's a fact borne out by studies conducted by United States Election Project, which reveal consistently higher voting rates for voters ages 60 years and older across the country.

See CORNETT Page 3

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SIDS

Continued from Page 1

Dairy Hut just around the corner along Route 66 which his mother and father helped him purchase when he was 21.

Hall started working in the restaurant business at age 13, peeling onions and washing dishes at 50 cents an hour.

He also got to eat anything he wanted.

"I had to work. I was just trying to help my folks out," Hall said.

The restaurant's namesake - Hall's father Sid - was a highway foreman who supervised I-40.

"Dad never saw this place. He died before I could get it done," he said. "A year from retiring he passed away from a heart attack."

A NATIONAL SUCCESS

The walls of Sid's Diner are covered with magazine and newspaper articles from food critics who have made the trek to El Reno - population 18,000 - to see what all the fuss is about.

"I've got magazines I haven't even put up yet," Hall giggled.

Adam Richman brought the The Food Channel's Man Vs. Food show to El Reno a few years back.

What he found at the corner of Wade and South Choctaw blew him away before meat even touched flattop.

"We make our own spatulas. We don't buy them," Hall told Richman. "We use brick trowels."

Hall used one to flatten a freshly-formed third-pound of ground beef on the seasoned grill and topped it with a heaping handful of thinly-shaved Spanish white onions.

Hall says there's nothing fancy about any of it. The 200 or so burgers he smashes out every day for lunch trace their roots back to the Great Depression, which, as legend has it, was when Ardmore restaurant owner Ross Davis paired five cents worth of beef with half a onion.

Oklahomans and travelers along Route 66 have been enjoying the meaty marriage ever since.

Hall's diner has been featured in Best Roadside Eats, Delicious

Destinations with Andrew Zimmern, Favorite Places on Route 66 in Oklahoma, Top 5 Burgers in America by the Food Network, Is this a Great State or What with Galen Culver and Discover Oklahoma to name a few.

Visitors have come in from as far away as Africa and Korea.

LEAVING A LEGACY

Hall was born at Tinker Field while his dad was fighting in Korea. His mother used to tell the story of how she went into labor around 10 p.m. one May 7.

His grandparents put his mother into dad's 1948 Chevrolet and sped down Route 66 until the wind and hail forced them to pull over.

"They got caught in a storm and mom said it was a bad one," he said. "She was pretty sure there was a tornado but they made it."

Eight months later his father came home to meet him for the first time.

"I wouldn't change a thing. I love what I do," Hall said.

Working six days a week, Hall swaps off with son Adam on long and short weeks, with one working 32 hours and the other working 42.

Sid's will one day become Adam's, who at 35 is the same age Hall was when he built the diner.

This December, Hall's book detailing it all showed up on Amazon.

A Burger Boy on Route 66 contains decades of stories and photos of those who traversed Route 66 and stopped by for a bite.

The flip was switched a few years back for Hall to write a book. "I'm a Christian and my wife is the one who really encouraged me," he said.

The gravity of it all struck him a few years back.

A friend and her mother stopped by for lunch. She asked how he was getting along.

"I always say I'm doing fine, I've got a really good shepherd," Hall said. "She said 'I know. He likes to watch you cook those hamburgers.' I had never thought about it that way."

Hall paused.

"There's a whole lot more going on here than cooking hamburgers."

CORNETT

Continued from Page 1

For those voters, taxes are key, Cornett said. While personal income taxes are important in any arena – federal, state, county or municipal, he said, a heavy hand can backfire, resulting in revenue drops that come about when wealthy residents choose to find a more attractive place to live.

Quality of life is another concern – and, for seniors and those who care for them, health and wellness are crucial to maintaining the kind of life they want to live. That's where Oklahoma City's \$52 million senior health and wellness project comes in, Cornett said.

"This project is so important because it impacts that basic health and wellness issue," he said. "It's proved to be everything we thought, as we look at the 4,000 members we already have – they had to take a leap of faith, and it paid off."

Part of MAPS 3, a 1-cent sales tax, \$777 million capital improvement program approved by voters charged with making debt-free investments in public facilities, the senior health and wellness project encompasses four centers, to be scattered throughout Oklahoma City. The first 40,272-square-foot building, located at 11501 North Rockwell Avenue, offers everything from workout facilities, gymnasium, aerobics and heated indoor saltwater swimming pool to fitness, cooking, art classes and classrooms, a lounge, health screenings and other amenities.

A second facility, located on South Walker Avenue, is set to open this year; two more – one slated for northeast Oklahoma City and a fourth likely situated in the city's southern sector, but with a location not yet determined – are expected to open in the next three years or so.

The overall project and its four centers are a testament to Cornett's determination and ability to forge partnerships to get things done, city officials said – and, partnerships are key to the project's success, with independent entities given responsibility for operating each facility, while Oklahoma City funded construction and major maintenance costs.

Nonprofit Healthy Living and Fitness runs the Rockwell Center, while NorthCare – an established mental health and substance abuse service provider – will operate the second, 39,000-square-foot Capitol Hill facility. Langston University is set to partner with Oklahoma City on the northeast space, anticipated to open sometime in 2019, officials said.

Cornett said an important aspect

of the centers was accessibility – while those who can afford to pay a membership fee will be asked to do so, those fees would be assessed on a sliding schedule based on income. Centers are open to anyone aged 50 years or older, whether an Oklahoma City resident or not.

"We won't turn them away – we'll find a way to get them there," he said.

Promoting health and fitness is nothing new to Cornett, who by 2007 had not only celebrated his own weight loss but challenged others to do the same. Putting Oklahoma City on a diet, less than five years later residents across the municipality collectively met the 1-million-pound weight loss goal.

It was an achievement that illustrated one of the most important tenets of his life – to face challenges head-on and to fulfill the promises he's made in the process.

"That's one of the things I am most proud of – we've done what we said we're going to do," Cornett said. "I want to do big things, and I believe it's easier to accomplish when people know you're telling the truth, they know you're going to do what you say you're going to do."

"Big things" are what those who worked with Cornett said they've come to expect. He first took office in March 2004, after serving as a city council member since 2001. The only four-term mayor in the municipality's history, officials said Cornett was essential in a variety of accomplishments, from bringing the NBA to the city to increasing investments in infrastructure and schools – which, in turn, led to a spike in job creation and private sector investment.

MAPS for Kids was completed on Cornett's watch, while MAPS 3 was one of his overriding passions, a myriad of quality of life projects including not only the four-facility senior wellness center package, but also a 70-acre downtown park, streetcar system, whitewater rafting facility, new fairgrounds expo building and convention center and hundreds of miles of sidewalks and bike trails across Oklahoma City.

Beyond MAPS, Cornett focused on what officials called one of the most extensive public school capital improvement projects in the country, a \$700 million effort aimed at renovating or building schools throughout Oklahoma City. That program impacted more than 70 schools and resulted in the 2014 opening of the \$12 million John Rex Charter Elementary School, located downtown.

Project 180, a 2009 \$140 million downtown street and sidewalk

redesign effort overseen by Cornett was a glimpse into yet another major effort, the 2017 Better Streets, Safer City initiative, passed by voters in September. Championed and led by Cornett that 13-item, 10-year, \$967 million package will fund a range of items, including streets, police and fire department improvements, parks and more, officials said.

"For a time, it seemed we kept waiting for somebody to save us, but I knew that would never happen until we invested in ourselves," he said.

That investment has led to 10,000 new businesses and 100,000 new jobs across the Oklahoma City metropolitan area since Cornett became mayor, he said.

Cornett's achievements – and a list of honors from a multitude of sources – transcend Oklahoma City government. In 2015, he teamed up New York Mayor Bill de Blasio to demonstrate mayors' bipartisan support for a fully funded transportation infrastructure bill – an effort that helped spur a five-year, \$300 billion federal transportation programs and infrastructure bill.

A fifth-generation Oklahoman, Cornett was born and raised in Oklahoma City, attending Putnam City Public Schools, where his mother worked for years as a first-

grade teacher. His father was a postal worker. They were parents whose lives had been lived under the specter of the Great Depression and who passed on their work ethic to their children – something Cornett said he never left behind.

Graduating with a journalism degree from University of Oklahoma, Cornett worked for about 20 years as a broadcast news reporter anchor and manager. In 2009, realizing his formal education was a "little outdated," he enrolled in New York University's Executive MBA program, taking 45 trips back and forth to that school for a degree he completed in 2011.

While Cornett is well-known across Oklahoma City, he said he knows serving as governor is much different. That prompted his statewide travels, speaking – and, more importantly, listening to – people from all 77 counties, he said. Now the countdown is on to the June 26 primary; if necessary, runoff primaries will be held Aug. 28, while the general election is set for Nov. 6.

"I've always had Oklahoma City's best interests in mind, of course, but I'm an Oklahoman – and I care about our state and all its people," Cornett said. "Now, it's time to look to the future for all of us."

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APRIL 5

**Thursday, April 5, 2018
 4:00 - 6:00 pm**

**Moving Mom & Dad - "Assembling
 Important Documents"**

Beyond the Basics

- General Power of Attorney (POA)
 - Durable Power of Attorney
 - Special, Specific, Limited Power of Attorney
- Speakers and Refreshments
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APRIL 26 - FREE EVENT

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MAY 3

**Thursday, May 3, 2018
 4:00 - 6:00 pm**

**Moving Mom & Dad -
 "Having the 'What if' talk"**

- Understanding the needs and concerns of older adults
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- Speakers and Refreshments
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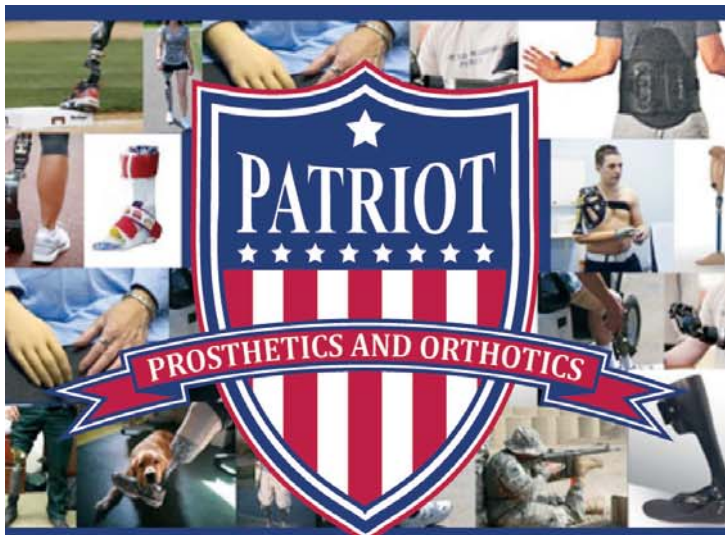
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Senior Savvy

Living fair offers senior resources

Bobby Anderson
Staff Writer

The calls to Lisa Sydnor come in waves.

Seniors facing seemingly insurmountable life changes.

Children looking for resources for their parents.

As Programs Manager for the Salvation Army Central Oklahoma Area Command, Sydnor is charged with plugging those in need with those needed resources.

"People are beginning to understand the dynamics of getting older and it's not always fun," Sydnor said.

Instead of tackling the challenges one at a time, Sydnor came up with the idea years ago to host an entire event dedicated to educating seniors.

The Salvation Army 7th Annual

Senior Living Fair will be Friday, April 27th from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Warr Acres Senior Center, 4301 N. Ann Arbor, Warr Acres.

This year, the Senior Living Fair's focus is to provide a variety of resources from across the community ranging from affordable housing to getting finances in order for seniors and their families.

"This year's event promises to offer a wealth of information," said Sydnor, senior programs manager at The Salvation Army Central Oklahoma. "Many seniors and their families may be facing life-changing decisions and do not know who or where to turn for help. Our goal is for them to leave with their questions answered and to know there is a network of agencies ready to step in and help."

The Senior Living Fair is free to



Lisa Sydnor, Senior Programs Manager for the Salvation Army Central Oklahoma, and Director of Development Traci Jinkens say the upcoming Senior Living Fair on April 27 will help seniors connect with needed resources.

the public – thanks to sponsors like Senior News and Living and United Health Care – and includes exhibits with information about health and wellness, housing, Medicare, insurance, aging-in-place, and end-

of-life decisions.

Exhibitors for this year include Neighborhood Services Organization, Sunbeam Family Services, Around the Clock Home Care, Village at See FAIR Page 9



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FAIR

Continued from Page 8

Oakwood Assisted Living, Concordia Life Care Community, Grace Living Centers, and many more.

The Salvation Army Central Oklahoma operates four senior centers throughout the Oklahoma City metro. The centers are open every weekday to seniors ages 55 and older. Seniors have the opportunity to socialize, enjoy lunch and participate in numerous activities that include Bible study, exercise classes, crafts, dancing and much more.

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination.

More than 183,000 Oklahomans receive assistance from The Salvation Army Central Oklahoma each year through the broadest array of social services that range from providing food for the hungry, relief for disaster victims, assistance for the disabled, outreach to the elderly

and ill, clothing and shelter to the homeless and opportunities for underprivileged children.

About 82 cents of every dollar raised is used to support those services.

As senior programs manager, Sydnor helps families struggling with crucial decisions when loved ones have an unexpected life change.

She was one of those people years ago when her mother faced a world-altering event.

The Senior Living Fair is an annual event that is free to the public thanks to sponsors and includes exhibits for health and wellness, housing, Medicare information, insurance, aging-in-place, and fun ways to stay active.

The Salvation Army Senior Programs offer participants the opportunity to learn, innovate, promote healthy activities, express and fulfill artistic talents, and socialize. The enhanced self-worth, dignity and hope are intrinsic to the well-being of every person.

Sydnor says experts from a number of relevant industries are brought together to provide a resource – not just for seniors but for everyone as they age.

"I want to see the seniors come

with their families and with their children or grandchildren who will make decisions and help them," Sydnor said.

The Senior Living Fair, presented by Senior News & Living, strives to spread hope by providing resources that empower older Americans to be more positive, active and physically fit.

The event has continued to grow because seniors are finding value in it.

"I want to see young people who have aging parents or grandparents," Sydnor said of who she would like to see at the event. "I can't get my grandchildren to talk about anything and they're in their 30s. That's when they need to be talking about it. "So many times the children don't know what to do, the grandchildren don't know what to do and then they start butting heads."

"I want to get the children, the grandchildren along with the parent or grandparent to come and seek out information."

For more information, go to www.salvationarmyokcac.org. The Salvation Army Central Oklahoma Area Command is a proud partner agency of the United Way of Central Oklahoma.

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COMMUNITY

Blessed to be...103

by Vickie Jenkins, Staff Writer

It was the year 1919. The little red-headed girl, Ruby Luegene Cook sat between her brother and sister in the back seat of the Model A, dodging the giant mud holes along the gravel road. This was a new beginning for the Cook family as they made their way from Bloomer, Arkansas to a town close to Maysville, Oklahoma. A very small place called Story, Oklahoma. As a five-year-old, Luegene still remembers helping her mother and siblings hold down the wire fence that stretched across the road while her uncle continued to drive the Model A, slowly putting forward to their destination.

Luegene's father had set out a few weeks before with their belongings. The team of horses pulled the covered wagon, as it carried their family's possessions. The trip took 9 days with a few stops along the way to rest. The Cook family felt honored to move to a land that had become a new state in 1907.

As a young child, Luegene lived a happy life with her parents and brothers and sister. She was known as the little girl with

long red hair; perhaps this is why she was given the name 'Ruby.' The children walked down the country road to the two-room school house; small in size yet big enough to hold the town's children and two teachers with comfort. On one side of the small school house was the church. On the other side was a small store. "Every time you would walk by the store, there were always two tables by the front door. That is where the men would gather to play dominoes. That's all they ever did," Luegene said with a smile.

The Cook children (Luegene, Juanita, Harold and J.W.) were early risers as they had their chores to do before school; feeding the chickens, gathering eggs, and milking the cows. "Sometimes, the cow's foot would end up in the bucket and the milk would splash, going everywhere. After that, I knew for a fact that we smelled terrible when we walked to school. Of course, I guess everyone did," she said with a laugh.

"We had other chores after

school. We worked at hoeing the young cotton plants, harvesting acres of cotton in the fall. I sure started hating cotton," she added. "Sometimes, we would hoe the neighbor's cotton fields too. Back then, that was just the thing to do."

"My mother, Estelle made all of our clothes. She would flip through a Sears, Roebuck and Co. catalog to find pictures of dresses. She would look at the picture and without a pattern, begin cutting the material. Our clothes were nicer than the ones in the catalog."

In 1932, Luegene graduated high school from Maysville, Oklahoma. The next year, she married the boy next door, William Sam Merritt. They had three daughters, Donna, Kay and Phyllis. "One thing we made sure of was to make sure our daughters went to Sunday school, church and would do well in school. I am proud to say that all three did exactly that. They all went to college and became educators. I am so proud of all of them," she said.

See BLESSED Page 11



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BLESSED

Continued from Page 10

Soon, the married couple had their hands full with three daughters and fields covered with cotton and broomcorn. Both crops took lots of hand labor and they hired about 60 workers that they called Broomcorn Johnnies to harvest the crops.

"During mealtime, the Broomcorn Johnnies would gather around the massive boards that served as tables. With the help of some of my friends, we prepared roasted corn, beans, cornbread and ham, followed with fresh blackberry cobbler. Those Broomcorn Johnnies ate well," Luegene commented.

Luegene and Sam loved spending time with their three daughters. They attended Story Baptist Church. Later on, when the girls moved away, Luegene was a member of Maysville Baptist Church. At one time, she worked at Storm Plastics gluing lures in the fishing lure plant. With her full schedule, she still managed to find time

to play the piano, make beautiful clothes, win state fair ribbons, placing first place as a seamstress. The ribbons didn't stop there; she also won ribbons for her canned peaches, pickles, along with her first place angel food cake and divinity. In the year 1949, Sam and Luegene Merritt were also declared the Corn Champions of the State of Oklahoma for producing the most corn per acre.

It was a year ago that Luegene decided to move into Heritage Assisted Living; nice and comfortable accommodations where she receives the best of care.

Asking Luegene how she managed to live such a long, happy, successful life, she said, "I just do the best I can, doing what's right and looking to the future."

Luegene is looking forward to celebrating her 104th birthday, with family and friends on June 1st, 2018.



Residing at Heritage Assisted Living is Luegene Merritt who will be turning 104 years old on June 1, 2018. A beautiful woman inside and out, Luegene says that the key to her longevity is, "Doing the best I can and doing what is right."

Apr/May AARP Drivers Safety Classes

Date/ Day/ Location/ Time/ Registration # Instructor

- Apr 5/ Thursday/ Okla. City/ 9 am - 3:30 pm/ 951-2277/ Varacchi**
Integris 3rd Age Life Center - 5100 N. Brookline, Suite 100
- Apr 7/ Saturday/ Midwest City/ 9 am - 3:30 pm/ 473-9239/ Williams**
First Christian Church - 11950 E. Reno Ave.
- Apr 10/ Tuesday/ Yukon/ 9 am - 3:30 pm/ 350-7680/ Kruck**
Dale Robertson Center - 1200 Lakeshore Dr.
- Apr 13/ Friday/ Okla. City/ 9 am - 3:30 pm/ 951-2277/ Edwards**
S.W. Medical Center - 4200 S. Douglas, Suite B-10
- Apr 14/ Saturday/ Chandler/ 9 am - 3:30 pm/ 834-2348/ Brase**
First United Methodist Church - 122 West 10th Street
- May 3/ Thursday/ Okla. City/ 9 am - 3:30 pm/ 951-2277/ Varacchi**
Integris 3rd Age Life Center - 5100 N. Brookline, Suite 100
- May 8/ Tuesday/ Norman/ 9 am - 3:30 pm/ 307-3170/ Palinsky**
Norman Regional Hospital - 901 N. Porter Ave.
- May 11/ Friday/ Okla. City/ 9 am - 3:30 pm/ 951-2277/ Edwards**
S.W. Medical Center - 4200 S. Douglas, Suite B-10
- May 15/ Tuesday/ Midwest City/ 9 am - 3:30 pm/ 691-4091/ Palinsky**
Rose State Conventional Learning Center - 6191 Tinker Diagonal

Gordon Cooper Tech. Center - One John C. Burton Blvd.


The prices for the classes are: \$15 for AARP members and \$20 for Non-AARP. Call John Palinsky, zone coordinator for the Oklahoma City area at 405-691-4091 or send mail to: johnpalinsky@sbcglobal.net

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TRAVEL/ ENTERTAINMENT

Travel through history and be entertained at the 2018 Oklahoma History Center Conference.

Photography and Text by Terry "Travels with Terry" Zinn t4z@aol.com

You don't need to physically travel to a far away destination to be informed and entertained. This year the Oklahoma Historical Society offers its 125th annual History Conference at the Oklahoma City location of the Oklahoma History Center, April 25, 26, and 27. The three day conference features three tours, two luncheons and one reception and one concert, of the musical, "Oklahoma!"

Headlining the presenters will be Ted Chapin, president of the Rodgers and Hammerstein organization in New York, and David Grann, author of "Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI." Dick Pryor, general manager of KGOU will serve as emcee of the annual awards luncheon on Friday, April 27, at noon. The awards luncheon will celebrate accomplishment in Oklahoma history and induct four people into the Oklahoma Historians Hall of Fame.

The other presenters will speak during the course of 18 presentation sessions. The Thursday speakers include Mark Janzen, Edmond, Jonita Mullins, Muskogee, Jan Davis, Oklahoma City, Kitty Pittman, Oklahoma City, Michael Hightower, Oklahoma City, Christopher H. Owen, Tahlequah, Jeanetta Calhoun Mish, Oklahoma City, John Thomas Truden, Norman, and Mark Dolph, Tulsa.

Making presentations on Friday will be Rusty Williams, Dallas, Texas, Sydney Stover, Cheyenne, Davis D. Joyce, Spavinaw, Kathryn Shurden, Henryetta, Craig Corgan, El Reno, Landry Brewer, Sayre, Chester Cowen, Norman, T. S. Akers, Oklahoma City, Bob Blackburn, Oklahoma City, John

Bedford, Oklahoma City, Mark Parker, Oklahoma City, and Jo Rowan, Oklahoma City.

On Thursday, April 26, the Oklahoma Historical Society will partner with Oklahoma City University to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Broadway debut of "Oklahoma!" OCU students will perform songs from the musical and the first iteration "Green Grow the Lilacs" written by Oklahoman Lynn Riggs. The event will feature a special video by Broken Arrow native Kristen Chenoweth, who participated in the 50th anniversary of "Oklahoma!" as an OCU student. This performance is open to the public and tickets can be purchased by calling 405-522-0317. 6:30-8:00 p.m. An additional program is being offered called, Celebrating Oklahoma! at 75, in celebration of the musical's 75th anniversary, this program will trace the story of Oklahoma! and its influence on musical theater. The event will feature performances by students from the Oklahoma City University Wanda L. Bass School of Music.

Also, on Thursday, April 26, the OHS will sponsor a bus tour of '89er landmarks in Oklahoma City led by Chuck Wiggin. Other tours include a tour of the State Capitol restoration by Capitol Project Manager Trait Thompson and a Behind-the-scenes tour of the Oklahoma History Center.

On Wednesday April 25th the registered public is invited to a reception from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Oklahoma Judicial Center, formerly the home of OHS.



Ted Chapin, the president of the Rogers and Hammerstein Organization, New York City will present, "The Legacy of Oklahoma!" at 9 am on April 26th.

At noon, at the Annual Conference Luncheon, Keynote speaker David Grann, author of "Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI," will present the background making of the popular book.

Sessions on Friday will include talks on, "The Red River Bridge War: When the Boundary between Oklahoma and Texas Became an Armed Camp," "The Art of War on the Washita," and "The Origins of Freemasonry in Oklahoma," by T. S. Akers, curator of collections, McAlester Valley of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Oklahoma City, among others. A complete listing of topics and speakers

are available at Okhistory.org.

The mission of the Oklahoma Historical Society is to collect, preserve and share the history and culture of the state of Oklahoma. Founded in 1893 by members of the Territorial Press Association, the OHS maintains 31 museums, historic sites and affiliates across the state. Through its research archives, exhibits, educational programs and publications the OHS chronicles the rich history of Oklahoma. For more information about the OHS, please visit www.okhistory.org.

To attend and hear your selection of nineteen different speakers, and tours and luncheons, you must register by April 20th, either on line at www.Okhistory.org, or by contacting Larry O'Dell at 405-522-6676 or lodell@okhistory.org or Shelly Crynes at 405-522-0317 or scrynes@okhistory.org.

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Experts warn of second flu outbreak



Eliza Chakravarty, M.D.,
in the clinic.

This year's flu season proved to be one of the worst in decades, and new evidence shows it isn't over yet.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a warning this week that a new strain of flu is making a push in the U.S.

Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation immunologist Eliza Chakravarty, M.D., said the predominant strain for this season's outbreak has been influenza A, specifically H3N2. Cases of this strain of flu are now on the decline. But flu cases involving another strain—influenza B—appear to be surging.

"Flu season is generally winding down, but we aren't in the clear, and people need to remain vigilant in protecting themselves and their families, especially young children," said Chakravarty. "Influenza B can be just as serious as influenza A, and it has been known to be severe in young children."

Even though this year's flu shot proved largely ineffective against H3N2, it does appear to be far more effective in preventing influenza B. This means getting a flu shot is still your best possible defense against contracting the virus.

"It is actually possible to get sick with multiple strains of the flu during a single season," said Chakravarty. "The flu is miserable. Don't go through it if you don't have to, especially twice."

From Sept. 1 through March 17, the Oklahoma State Department of Health reports 242 flu-related deaths in the state, as well as more than 4,450 hospitalizations.

"If you can physically get the flu shot, do it, even this late into the flu season," she said. "This virus is deadly. You will not get the flu from the shot; that is a myth that needs to be eliminated. The shot can save your life or the life of someone you love."

Hearing New Year OKC!

Oklahoma City is becoming a Hearing City in 2018. The Civic Center officially "cut the ribbon" to the newly installed Hearing LOOP on February 26. The hearing loop system is hard wired into the auditorium and will transmit sound directly into a hearing aid or Cochlear implant with a "T" coil. The LOOP is actually a wire that is installed on each floor, all of the box seats, the concession stands, and the box office too. Ana Covey, representative of the Assist2Hear, who installed the LOOP said, "This is just so exciting because they (the Civic Center) specifically put this hearing loop in to invite the hearing loss community back to the theater and to experience the arts."

Prior to the formal opening several individuals were invited to events. Some of their comments: Shari Richard said, "I attended The Nutcracker... The new loop system made my listening experience so much more enjoyable. The music was richer and clearer with my t-coil using the loop than it was with my CI processor alone." Fannae' Homer Shields reported that, "...the music was awesome, as my T-coil picked up some high light sounds. I didn't experience any disconnect nor any static coming from the looping wiring. I totally enjoyed the show and all the music!" Nancy Landrum said, "... the music was so much richer and fuller with the telecoils. I could hear the individual instruments, the bow slide across the violin strings, and the bells! Ah, the bells. I could hear them so distinctly."

Hearing Loss Association of America Central Oklahoma Chapter is proud of our member and Assist2Hear's Ana Covey and the excitement she brings to every project with which she is associated. Assist2Hear provides hearing solutions for the hearing impaired in large venues and churches throughout the Oklahoma -- indeed, anyplace where people gather. Ana states, "We are committed to helping people hear better and live better." And that is the purpose of Central Oklahoma Chapter of HLAA too.

You can join Central Oklahoma Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America and Ana Covey and become a part of the "Oklahoma City Hearing Loop Initiative." After all, it is an ADA requirement, that facilities offering public access where sound is integral to the space, must offer hearing assistance to those who need it and the hearing loop is by far, the user-preferred system. Ana Covey, Sales Rep. and Marketing Director can be contacted at (405) 640-5152 for a free presentation and site visit to churches, community centers, civic buildings, performance arts centers and more. Or contact Central Oklahoma Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America. (405) 717-9820 or visit our website, OKCHearingLoss.org

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Local chefs unite for kids

by Bobby Anderson, Staff Writer

For nearly three decades, Chef Don Thiery has poured his time and energy into the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma's Chefs' Feast.

It's truly a labor of love and one that has continued to make a lasting impact by feeding Oklahoma children.

"The event helps the Food Bank and the Food Bank is an entity like no other," Thiery said. "A lot of kids wouldn't get food without the backpack program.

"I see it as a way I can give back for some of my successes and be in a situation where I can help make a lot of progress and money for the Food Bank

so they can use it for worthwhile causes."

By day, Thiery is the managing chef for American Fidelity Assurance Company's Guckenheimer Cafe. Daily he comes up with innovative ways to feed more than 1,500 associates at AFA's North Oklahoma City campus.

But for one night each year his reach extends into the community.

Thiery explained the beauty of the event is that it brings together various metro chefs united for one great cause.

"I know every year I'm helping a large amount of kids get food," Thiery said. "They take food home - and I'm sure it's eaten by others, too - but they have a chance to flourish and get the nutrition they need to do good in school and do good in sports and be successful people later on."

The 2018 Chefs' Feast will be held Tuesday, April 10, from 6:30-9:00 p.m. at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage



Chef Don Thiery has been working with the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma's Chefs' Feast for nearly 30 years.

See CHEF Page 17

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ACCREDITED BUSINESS

CHEF

Continued from Page 15

Museum.

Enjoy some of the finest cuisines Oklahoma's premier chefs have to offer. The derby-themed event features delicious food, one-of-a-kind auction items, a wine and whiskey pull, fun music and more.

This event raises awareness about childhood hunger in Oklahoma and provides an opportunity for you to support the Regional Food Bank's Food for Kids Programs. One in four children in Oklahoma has inconsistent access to healthy food, which is why supporting this event is so important.

"One in four children in Oklahoma has inconsistent access to healthy food," said Katie Fitzgerald, chief executive officer of the Regional Food Bank. "Every \$1,000 raised at Chefs' Feast will feed 10 children through a Food for Kids Program for an entire year. Last school year, the Regional Food Bank provided more than three million meals to chronically

hungry children through Food for Kids."

Individual tickets are \$150 and patron tables with seating for 10 are \$1,700. Early entry tickets are an additional \$25 per person and grants access 30 minutes before the doors officially open at 6:30 p.m. To purchase tickets and for more information visit chefsfeast.org or contact Kallie Mikles at 405-600-3193 or kmikles@regionalfoodbank.org.

Chef Rob Johnson from US Foods and Chef Thierry from Guckenheimer Cafe are co-chairs for this year's event. Participating chefs and restaurants include: Chef Jonas Flavala with the Meat Market Refectory, Chef Adam Halacka with Kitchen 324, Chef Adam Ramsey with The Drake and Chef Larry McNeil with McNeil Catering.

"The Regional Food Bank works to ensure Oklahoma children do not go hungry," said Chef Thierry. "Chefs' Feast benefits the Food for Kids Programs, which served nearly 44,000 children last year. This event is one of the premier food events in the state. I am proud to be a part of this event that helps so many children."

The derby-themed event features a raffle, wine pull and silent auction. The silent auction includes trips to New York, Tuscany, Costa Rica, Ireland, Hawaii, Florida, Greece; an Alaskan cruise; and a James Bond European experience, including stops in Switzerland, France and Italy. Raffle items include a \$2,000 BC Clark gift card; and a wine tasting and dinner party for 12, courtesy of Michael and Jim Pullen.

"I tell them every year as long as you let me come back I'll do it," Thierry laughed. "I get to have fun. A lot of times chefs don't have a lot of extra time. This is one of the times you can go out and see what other people do,

how they prepare things and take that back."

The Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma is the state's largest hunger-relief organization and a member of Feeding America's network of Food Banks. The 501(c)(3) nonprofit provides enough food to feed more than 136,000 hungry Oklahomans each week through a network of more than 1,300 schools and charitable feeding programs in 53 central and western Oklahoma counties. Since its inception in 1980, the Regional Food Bank has distributed more than 613 million pounds of food to feed Oklahomans living with hunger.

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SBT Men are 6 times more likely to be struck by lightning than women!

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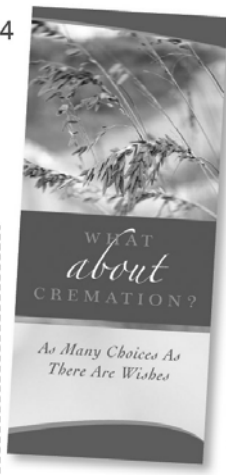
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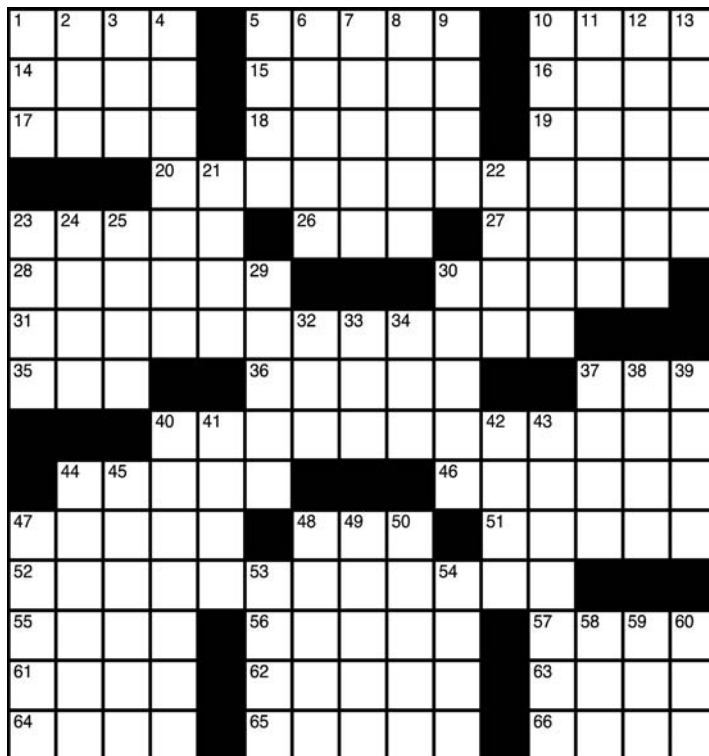
Across

- 1 Trek to Mecca
5 Astringent in taste
10 Something made on a shooting star
14 Brainstorm
15 Circus animal handler
16 Pot starter
17 1999 satire about a reality show
18 Erie or Cree
19 KOA visitor
20 Theoretical temperature at which molecular activity ceases
23 ___-and-effect
26 Wimbledon do-over
27 Quieted, with "down"
28 Wes in the Basketball Hall of Fame
30 ___ Domingo
31 Astronomical phenomenon
35 Bambi's aunt
36 "Mr." with Jim Backus' voice
37 In line for
40 0, 1, 2, 3, etc.
44 Pasty-faced
46 Ability spotted by a scout
47 Slow-moving mollusk
48 "___ was saying ..."
51 Actress Rene
52 Rarity for a pitcher,

Down

- 1 Shake a leg, quaintly
2 Put two and two together
3 Air Force One, for one
4 Indonesian site of a WWII naval battle
5 Some "Night Court" characters: Abbr.
6 "Silent Night," e.g.
7 Novelist Zola
8 Counter, as an argument
9 Author Harte
10 Dangerous place for an embedded journalist
11 Dream up
12 Man cave system
13 "The Great" Judean king
21 Ding-dong maker
22 Sched. postings
23 Like kitten videos
24 Any minute, to Shakespeare
25 Court sports org.

- 29 Sinister spirit
30 Teapot feature
32 Western neighbor of Nev.
33 Size up from med.
34 Charged particle
37 Dead ends?
38 Coffee servers
39 ___ perpetua: Idaho's motto
40 Two-person log-cutting tool
41 29-Down's milieu
42 Schoolteacher of old
43 Toronto baseballer
44 Hooded ski jacket
45 Supermarket freebie
47 Speed-reads
48 Big name in arcades
49 Madrid mister
50 "Uncle!"
53 Actor Omar
54 Got a hole-in-one on
58 Wedding vow
59 Memorial Day month
60 "I think," in texts



Answers on page 29

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OPINION & MORE

THE SAVVY SENIOR

Dear Savvy Senior,

My mom has Alzheimer's disease and has gotten to the point that she can't live at home any longer. I need to find a good memory care residential unit for her but could use some help. Any suggestions? *Exhausted Daughter*

Dear Exhausted,

Choosing a good memory care residential unit for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease is a very important decision that requires careful evaluation and some homework.

Most memory care units, sometimes called special care units, are housed within assisted living or nursing home facilities. At their best, they offer staff extensively trained in caring for people with dementia, individualized care that minimizes the use of dangerous psychotropic drugs, a home-like environment and activities that improve residents quality of life. But at their worst, they can offer little more than a locked door. Here are some steps that can help you find a good facility and avoid a bad one.

Make a list: To identify some good memory care residential units in your area ask your mom's doctor for a referral, and use the Alzheimer's Association online tool at CommunityResourceFinder.org. Make sure the facilities on your list are close to family members and friends who can visit often, because residents with frequent visitors usually get better care.

Research your options: Once you've made a list, contact your local long-term care ombudsman

(see LTCombudsman.org). This is a government official who investigates assisted living and nursing home complaints and can tell you which facilities have had problems in the past.

If you're looking at a memory care unit within a nursing home facility, use Medicare's nursing home compare tool (Medicare.gov/nursinghomecompare), which provides a 5-star rating system.

Call the facilities: Once you've identified a few facilities, call them to find out if they have any vacancies, if they provide the types of services your mother needs, what they charge and if they accept Medicaid.

Tour your top choices: During your tour, notice the cleanliness and smell of the facility. Is it homey and inviting? Does the staff seem responsive and kind to its residents? Also be sure to taste the food, and talk to the current resident's family members, if available.

Also, find out about staff screening and training procedures, their turnover rate, and the staff-to-resident ratio. They should have at least one staff member for every five residents.

Make sure the facility offers

How to Choose a Memory Care Unit

quality activities that can keep your mom engaged, even at night when she may be awake. Ask how they respond to residents who may wander or become aggressive. If the answer is locked doors and antipsychotic drugs, that's a red flag.

Because transitions can be unsettling for dementia sufferers, make sure that your mom will be able to remain at the facility for the foreseeable future. And find out what, if any, health conditions might require your mom to leave the facility or move to a higher and more expansive level of care.

It's also a good idea to make multiple visits to the facility including an unscheduled visit at night or on weekends when the staff is more likely to be stretched thin.

To help you evaluate your visit,

the Alzheimer's Association offers a checklist that you can access at ALZ.org/residentialfacilities.

Paying for care: The national average costs for memory care within an assisted living facility is over \$5,000 per month, and over \$7,500/month for nursing home care, but costs can vary widely depending on your location. Since Medicare does not cover long-term care, most residents pay for care from either personal savings, a long-term care insurance policy, or through Medicaid (if available) once their savings are depleted.

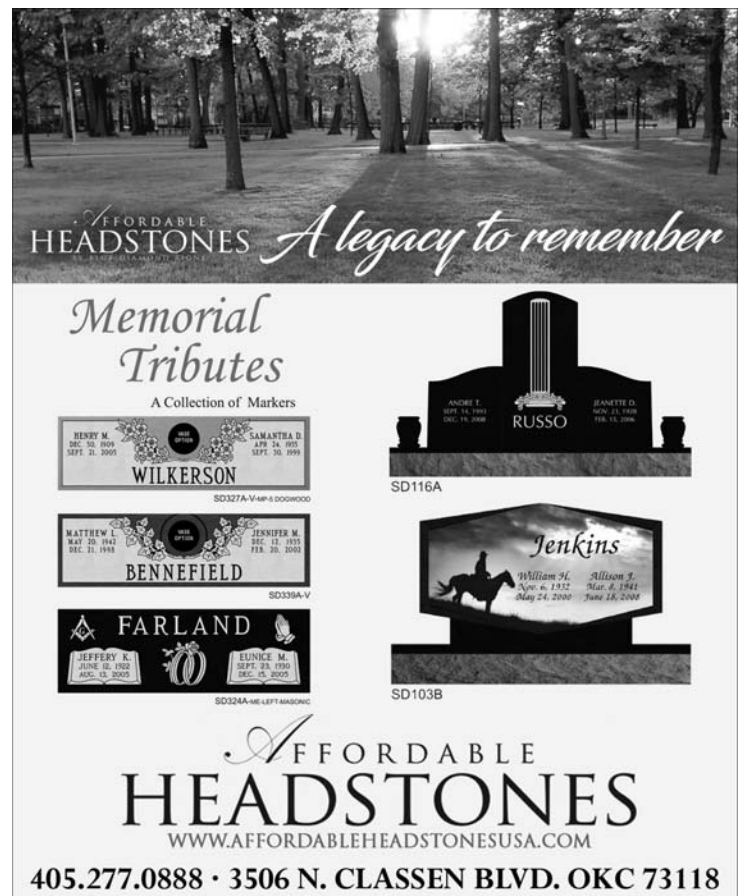
To help you research your financial options, visit the National Clearinghouse for Long-Term Care Information website at LongTermCare.gov.

Volunteer Two Hours a Week Make a Difference in Your Community

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program serves residents in nursing homes, assisted living centers and residential care homes. An Ombudsman helps to improve the quality of care and life for the residents. As a friendly visitor and advocate, the volunteer has many opportunities to be of service and enrich the lives of the residents.

Interested individuals must be willing to attend a two day training in order to become a certified volunteer and spend a minimum of two hours per week in the facility for which they are assigned visiting and advocating for the residents. Additionally, volunteers must be able to attend a monthly meeting for on-going training and supervision.

If you are interested in making a difference in the lives of those residents in Canadian, Cleveland, Logan or Oklahoma County, the next training is scheduled for April 25th and 26th from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm at Areawide Aging Agency located at 4101 Perimeter Center Drive, Suite 310, Oklahoma City, OK. Both sessions must be completed to become a certified volunteer. For more information or to RSVP for the upcoming training, contact an ombudsman supervisor at (405) 942-8500.



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Arbor House of Mustang	60	Mustang	405-376-2872	www.arborhouse4u.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		
Arbor House of Norman	54	Norman	405-292-9200	www.arborhouse4u.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		
Arbor House of Midwest City	58	Midwest City	405-455-3900	www.arborhouse4u.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		
Arbor House Reminisce Center	48	Norman	405-310-2499	www.arborhouse4u.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		
Ashton on the Green <i>Independent Living</i>		El Reno	405-262-4700		*						*	*		*	*	*
Chateau on the Green <i>Independent Living</i>	44	Moore	405-793-4200	www.chateauonthegreen.com								*		*		
Emerald Square <i>Independent Living/Assisted Living</i>	75	OKC	405-787-4466	www.meridiansenior.com	*	*		*	*		*	*	*	*		
Featherstone Ret. Community <i>Assisted Living</i>	42	Moore	405-799-9919	www.featherstoneretirement.com	*	*		*	*		*	*	*			
Fountain Brook <i>Assisted Living - Memory Support</i>	74	Midwest City	405-769-7677	www.fountainbrookliving.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Gardens at Reding <i>Independent Living</i>	157	OKC	405-636-1537	www.gardensatredingseniorliving.com									*	*	*	*
Heritage Point of OKC <i>Assisted Living Alzheimer & Memory Care</i>	54	OKC	405-252-8200	www.heritagepointokc.com	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
Iris Memory Care		Edmond	405-330-2222	www.irisseniorliving.com	*	*	*	*	*		*		*			
Meadowlakes Retirement Vill. <i>Assisted Living</i>		OKC	405-703-4225	meadowlakesretirementvillage.com	*			*	*		*	*	*	*		
Savannah House of Moore		Moore	405-378-2500									*				
Savannah House of Norman I		Norman	405-329-2450								*	*				*
Savannah House of Norman II		Norman	405-701-8440								*	*		*		*
The Veraden		Edmond	405-359-1230	www.veradenlife.com	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Timberwood Senior Housing <i>Senior Housing</i>	100	OKC	405-619-0079		*	*	*				*	*	*			
Whispering Creek <i>A Gated Retirement</i>	52	Mustang	405-820-4058	www.whisperingcreekretirement.com						*		*		*	*	
Wyndam Place <i>Senior Residences</i>	70	Norman	405-310-2266	www.beacon-mgmt.com								*		*	*	
Grace Pointe <i>Cottage Homes</i>		Moore	405-703-0999	www.gracepointeliving.com					*		*	*	*	*	*	
Grand Tapestry at Quail Springs <i>55+ Active Adult Rentals</i>	140	OKC	405- 605-6900	www.tapestryokc.com								*	*	*	*	*
Willowood at Mustang <i>Assisted Living</i>	99	Mustang	405-376-1200	www.meridiansenior.com	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*		

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Flu fighters

NRH sheds light on outbreak



Norman Regional Health System's ultraviolet technology helped fight the flu at 15 central Oklahoma schools recently.

by Bobby Anderson
Staff Writer

Clyde Brawner has worked for Norman Regional Health System for 33 years now.

But the director of environmental services and distribution transportation has never seen his organization have the kind of impact in such a short period as it did recently.

"Our health system CEO (Richie Splitt) saw the rise of flu cases as something that we as a health system needed to involve ourselves with from a community outreach stance," Brawner said.

While the flu was raving Cleveland County and the rest of Oklahoma, Splitt visited with the superintendents from Moore, Noble and Norman public schools to work out the logistics that would bring the same germ fighting technology

Norman Regional employs in patient areas to the classroom.

All three districts were more than willing to invite the Xenex robots and Norman Regional employees into the schools.

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Xenex drop-shipped the robots at the school sites and Norman Regional healers followed behind.

See FLU Page 30

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Lisa Sydnor

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James Dixon

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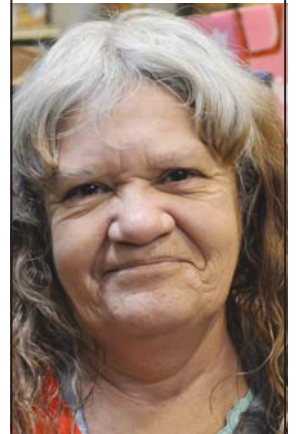
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It doesn't make a lot of difference because I can't tell the difference between winter and spring.



Kenneth Tolle

I love my gardening and the outdoors and helping others because in winter everyone hides.



Linda Garza



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THE DAILY NEWS

By Darlene Franklin

Sex crimes. Guns and nuclear weapons. Uncertain leadership. Hurricanes. Mass shootings in our schools and malls.

Those topics drove the daily news on both local and national levels in 2017.

Other news dominates the prayer time of church services at the nursing home where I live: people diagnosed with cancer, family who doesn't visit, children who've gone astray, friends who've died, service men and women.

Some of the prayer requests are repeated word for word, week after week. At times, I struggle to empathize with the person who's crying for someone to see the world as she does, to care, to make the daily rounds of discouragement stop.

But then I recognize I have a tendency to do the same thing. When I hear myself repeating the same request several times, I realize that struggle is my norm. Some days, I feel wide awake and can work with a clear head for several hours. Those are the exception. Other days, like today, I wake up with a headache and muscle pain. Somehow the normal, not-so-good days, strike me as more notable than the so-called good days.

The media also reports stories of heroism and larger-than-life personalities. We celebrate the stories, but worry about the scary stuff, casting gloom with social media tidbits. At the nursing



Darlene Franklin is both a resident of a nursing home in Moore, and a full-time writer.

See DARLENE Page 29



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Broom Hilda

By Russell Myers



Animal Crackers

By Fred Wagner



Gasoline Alley

By Jim Scancarelli



DARLENE

Continued from Page 27

home, we welcome happy news of birthdays, births, anticipated visits. It's not always easy to find.

After one sleepless night, I gave passing thought to staying in my room. Instead, I decided to go to the service. As soon as I arrived, I spoke to the leader. "I'm here by faith today. Please pray for me." My physical health didn't improve but my attitude did. As I told the teacher, God is good even when I don't feel it.

So, was it bad news-illness? Or was it good news-God's faithfulness? Apparently, my perception decided where on the good-to-bad scale the day fell.

My granddaughter's high school graduation arrived with news of her unwed pregnancy. The unexpected development has become a case for great rejoicing within the family.

Last month, I spent three days in the hospital after a possible heart attack. They gave me a multitude of tests before releasing me. My heart was in the same shape it was in ten years ago. That's a miracle!

The last time I awaited surgery, I wrote cheers to fight the fear of death I struggled with. This time, I faced the possibility of heart stints and blood transfusions in absolute peace.

My son, Jaran, has endured more than many men his age (38). All his wife's elder relatives have passed away over the past ten years. His family deals with a never-ending cycle of difficulties ranging from illness to injury, divorce, and the like. In spite of it all, their faith grows, my son has favor with his employer, and he actively shares his faith.

My cousin Jan experienced an early brush with simultaneous loss—her mother's death and divorce. They prepared her for the ordeal when her son

almost died from a traffic accident.

Look at presidential elections. Every four years multiple camps fight, convinced their candidate is the best for the country. After election night, a good percentage of the population is disappointed with election results—bad news to that party or candidate.

If I allow myself to be afraid of bad news, I'll be in a constant state of distress.

In my life, I've decided that when rain falls, it sometimes creates natural disasters as often as if provides necessary refreshment. The news, like the rain, is neutral by itself. What varies is how I respond.

When I first started to earn additional income from writing, I planned to use it to pay down debt or build a small savings amount. Instead, it would arrive when my car needed repair or my glasses had broken. The pay I had anticipated as good financial news instead could have become a matter of discouragement. It happened often enough that I learned to thank God for providing for unexpected expenses and letting go of my plans.

We don't know the author of Psalm 112, but he says people don't have to be afraid of bad news. That's good to hear, because it comes our way frequently.

The psalmist isn't concerned about the news, good or bad. The point is "their hearts are steadfast, trusting the Lord."

That's how we can be sure we can withstand daily news: To stand secure in the circle of God's loving care.

JUMBLE

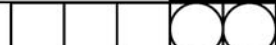
Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SPATN



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TVOID



GARFOE



SUMEIS



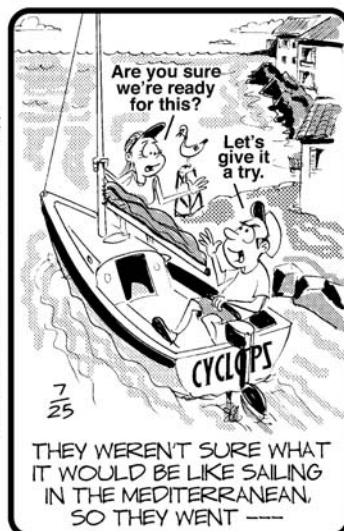
Answer here:



Check out the new, free JUST JUMBLE app

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.



" " " " " "

(Answers Next Month)

March Answers

Jumbles: FLUID WAFER SNITCH VOYAGE
Answer: A popular event at the waterfowl Olympics was the — SWAN DIVE



FLU**Continued from Page 23**

"We have certified users within the health system," Brawner explained. "We developed three teams composed of four to five employees along with school custodial workers. We trained the custodial workers on the use of the devices and the super users from the health system actually oversaw the teams as they went about disinfecting the classrooms."

"What it does is disinfect by changing or distorting the DNA makeup so that organisms, viruses,

germs or spores can not replicate," Brawner said.

The machines look like R2D2 with the ability to emit UV light 10 times brighter than the surface of the sun.

Within the health system, Brawner explained the robots are used in the terminal clean process, disinfecting a 14-foot radius per cycle. Typically rooms are run in two or three five-minute cycles.

Feedback was impressive.

"Everybody was so thankful we partnered with them," Brawner said.

Brawner learned that at one particular Norman school no new flu cases were reported the week of the Xenex cleaning.

"I was impressed when I heard that one," he said. "I will tell you it really was a great opportunity to do that."

For the past two years, Norman Regional Health System has used its four Lightstrike robots daily to enhance safety by disinfecting patient rooms and other hospital areas.

The health system has been impressed for the last two years utilizing the robots, reporting a 35-percent drop in healthcare acquired infections.

Richie Splitt, president and CEO of Norman Regional, said since the hospital had seen great results, it wanted to share the robots' capabilities with the community.

"Norman Regional is committed to improving the health of our community, both inside and outside our hospital doors. If we could provide a robot in every classroom we would, but we're doing the next best thing by sending 11 robots to our partners at local schools to fight the flu," Splitt said. "As a healthcare provider, we've seen how illness can spread quickly and we know that children learn better when they are healthy. Through this partnership with XENEX and local schools we are helping to keep our kids, educators, and parents healthy."

Norman Regional has expanded its Xenex use to elevators, restrooms, and clinics to help curb the virus.

Matt Crowe, Xenex territory manager, said Norman Regional's request for extra robots was an easy one to fulfill.

"Norman Regional is dedicated to creating the safest environment possible and we are extremely proud to help them protect the communities that they serve," Crowe said. "Xenex is the global leader

in UV disinfection and our Germ-Zapping Robots are highly effective against the resistant pathogens that challenge our cities and our hospitals the most: C. difficile, MRSA, Norovirus and Influenza.

"Through our combined efforts this week, we are proactively making a safer environment for all of these students and teachers. Families in these school districts should be thankful to have a health system so dedicated to their well-being."

After the week, the extra robots were returned to XENEX, but Norman Regional's four permanent robots kept working throughout the system.

Norman Regional Health System Infection Prevention Specialist Julie Smith, RN, MS, CIC says hospital sites around the country have shown impressive declines in organisms by using the system including:

* 70% reduction in ICU C. diff infection rates

* 53% reduction in C. diff infection rates

* 57% reduction in MRSA infection rates

* 100% elimination of VRE in isolation rooms



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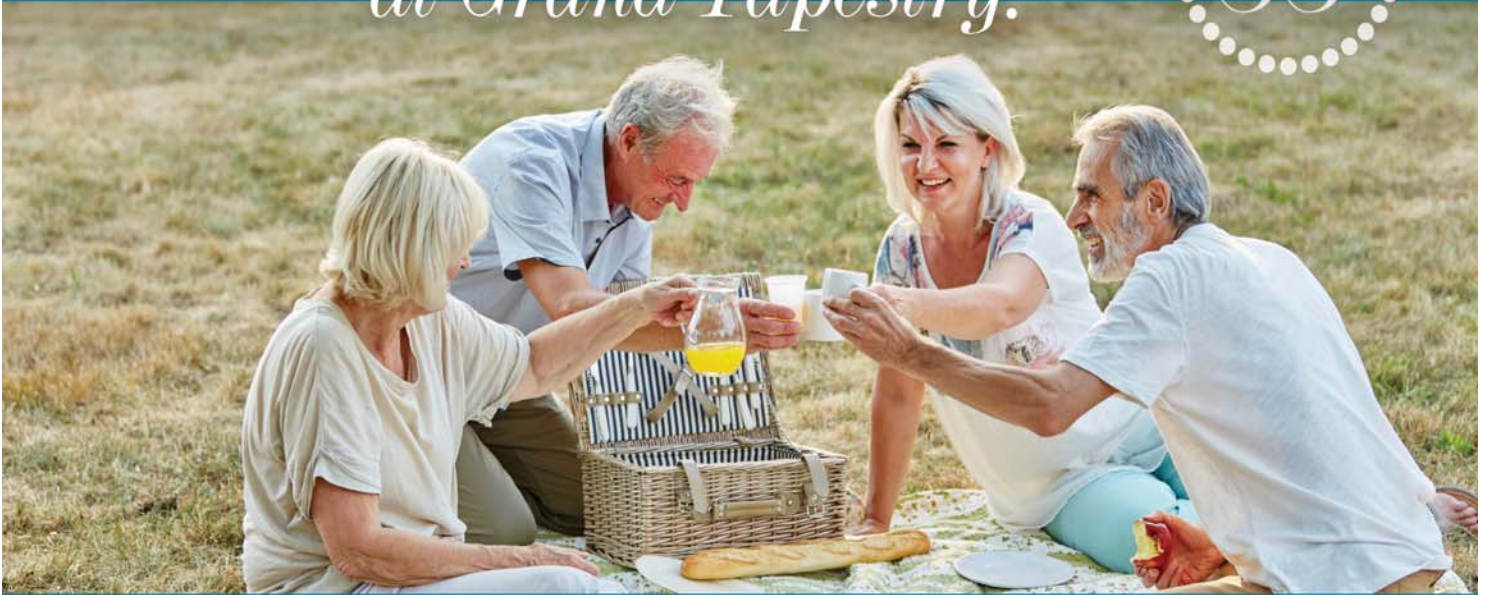
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April 11 - Dine and Dash, 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Drop by for a tour of Grand Tapestry at Quail Springs and take some pizza to go.

April 16 - Famous Brand Clothing Sale, 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Come do some shopping! Everything is under \$25.

April 17 - Firearms Trust Seminar, 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Learn how to protect your firearm collection within your estate.

April 19 - Spring Fling Open House, 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Celebrate spring while enjoying food, beverages and the music of the 70s.

April 25 - Power Breakfast with David Farris, 9:00 a.m. A presentation by the author of *Outlaws*, *Spooky Tales* and *All Around Folklore*.

May 10 - Downsizing Seminar with Nikki Buckelew, 10:00 a.m. Learn five easy steps to downsizing.

May 23 - Power Breakfast with Greg Gunn, 9:00 a.m. Listen to Mr. Gunn's advice on how grandparents can have a great influence on their grandchildren.



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