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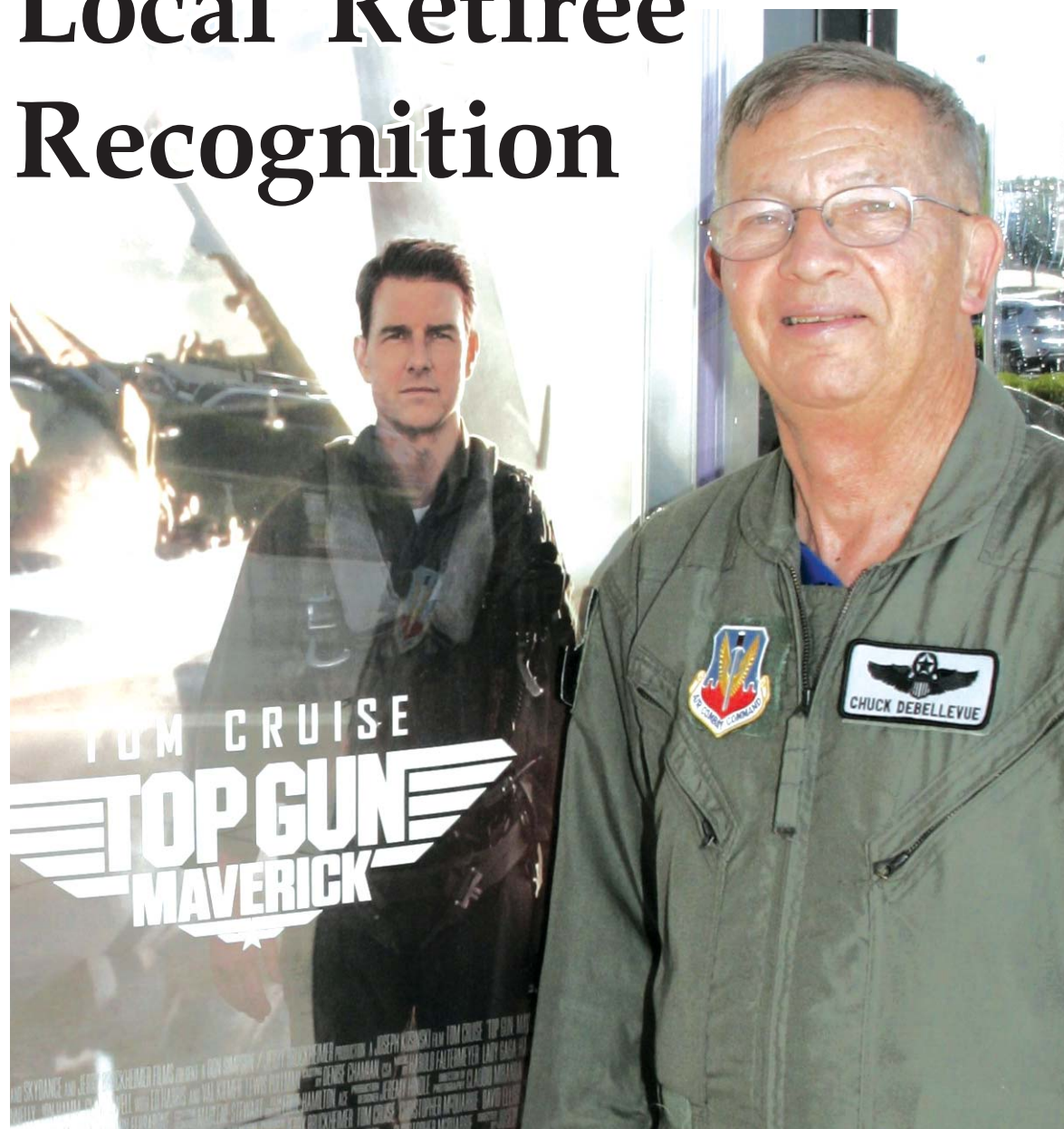
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Movie Hit Provides Local Retiree Recognition



Edmond resident and America's last flying ace on active duty with six MiG kills over North Vietnam, Chuck DeBellevue, poses with the "Top Gun: Maverick" poster at the Regal Warren Moore IMAX Theater.

Story and photo by Darl DeVault, Contributing Editor

On Memorial Day, when one of the highest-grossing patriotic films ever, "Top Gun: Maverick," premiered on the most theater screens in history, an Oklahoman,

retired U.S. Air Force Col. Charles B. "Chuck" DeBellevue, received a standing ovation at a

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Cancer Center Launches Historic Trial.

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Iris Memory Care Hosts Networking



Story and photo by Darl DeVault, Contributing Editor

Community Relations Director Denise Diaz welcomed 51 Senior Business Solution colleagues to their networking luncheon on June 16 at their Edmond Iris Memory Care community. She explained their two-stage memory care philosophy of caring for residents at each stage of their disease in a safe environment at the monthly gathering of senior healthcare marketers and senior-focused company workers.

Sponsor Diaz outlined the importance of meeting a person living with dementia at the level and stage of their disease. "Not everyone has the same type of dementia, so providing quality, compassion-filled care with dignity is our focus," Diaz said. "By meeting residents' needs and providing emotional support and education to their families with monthly support groups and family-centered events, our Iris family becomes an extension of our resident's family."

She turned the meeting over to Bill Muir, CSA and owner of Compass Senior Living Solutions. He explained how important it is for executives addressing area aging agendas to network. Networking is essential to his company, as it provides a free placement service giving personalized tours to some 55 senior communities in the area at every level of need.

Many attendees were learning about their community peers for the first time. For others, it was apparent they had been attending the networking luncheons for many of the six years the group has been getting together.

Muir, another sponsor and the original organizer of the luncheons, also emphasized the services available from the Oklahoma Assisted Living Association. He said OKALA is a non-profit statewide trade organization dedicated to preserving dignity and choice for older Oklahomans and the quality of

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local IMAX theater.

Variety Magazine says after only 31 days on the big screen, “Top Gun: Maverick” became Tom Cruise’s first movie to surpass \$1 billion at the worldwide box office. It is the first 2022 movie and only the second in COVID 19 times to reach that benchmark.

The movie noted prominently that Tom Cruise’s U.S. Navy fighter pilot and instructor character Pete “Maverick” Mitchell made flying ace by shooting down an additional three enemy fighters.

In the audience that day, DeBellevue, now 76, was honored as America’s last American flying ace on active duty with six MiG kills to his credit in the skies over North Vietnam as a weapons systems officer. DeBellevue said he was touched by the standing ovation he received from fellow veterans who watched the movie with him.

The occasion for the Edmond resident accompanied the movie celebration of U.S. Navy aviation as the Regal Warren Moore IMAX Theater welcomed servicemen and women and their children to a premiere private screening.

The Gerrity Chapter of the Air and Space Forces Association (AFA), the Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission (OAC), and the Oklahoma Defense Industry Association (ODIA) partnered to organize the premiere.

The sailors of the Navy’s TACAMO unit based at Tinker Air Force Base were the largest group of honored guests. TACAMO is the Navy E-6 Mercury aircraft which is an airborne command post and communications relay based on the Boeing 707 aircraft, similar to the Air Force’s E-3 Sentry Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS). Additionally, all military veterans and their families were welcomed at this showing.

The event emcee, retired U.S. Navy Capt. John (Irish) Keilty, a former test pilot, was a previous Tinker TACAMO commander and now supervises the Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps Program at Del City High School. He welcomed everyone and introduced the honored guests. DeBellevue said the Navy JROTC midshipmen did an excellent job of presenting the colors at the theater.

In addition to DeBellevue, Keilty also recognized audience members retired Navy Rear Adm. Greg Slavonic, former Acting Under Secretary of the Navy and U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Jeff King, commander of the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Complex at Tinker. He also introduced retired Oklahoma Army National Guard Pilot Chief Warrant Officer 4 Chase Rutledge, now the KOCO-TV SKY 5 Chief Pilot.

The screening highlighted Memorial Day, when Americans hosted parades, visited cemeteries and memorials, and wore a red poppy to honor those fallen in war. DeBellevue said the movie screening helped all in attendance remember those who served and honored the fallen who came to America’s defense and never returned to their families.

“This was a great way to remember those who gave their all for our country,” DeBellevue said. “The movie “Top Gun: Maverick” displays the camaraderie, teamwork, and skill it takes to defend this country. The funds needed to stage the movie event were gathered in only two days, showing that the patriotic people of Oklahoma always come through.”

DeBellevue said Allyson Carson with the ODIA assisted Director Grayson Ardies and OAC staffers with the flight plan. Jeff James, president of the Gerrity Chapter of the AFA, and the spirited volunteerism of AFA members Michelle Bouziden, Sandra Shelton, Mark Tarpley, and Walter Kula ensured this was a quality event. Also helping out were Steve Duran and Kara Slavonic, and others.

The ODIA helps leaders in government, industry, and academia collaborate to offer solutions while advancing the national security and defense needs of the state and nation.

Gerrity Chapter volunteers also helped invite the hundreds of patriots, including recruiting identified guests to the free movie. The AFA is a non-profit, independent, professional military and aerospace education association.

“The AFA’s mission is to promote a dominant U.S. Air and Space Force and a strong national defense through education, advocacy and support,” DeBellevue said. “It is an excellent way for community partners and interested individuals to become involved and learn about the Air Force and Tinker Air Force Base and have a say in patriotic issues.”

DeBellevue said the AFA central Oklahoma Gerrity Chapter supports Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education in Oklahoma and the Rosie the Riveter project. The group, along with Oklahoma Career Tech, puts on the CyberPatriot, StellaXplorer and STARBASE OKLAHOMA programs. These are middle and high school level programs to advance experiential STEM education.

The movie attendees were treated to the latest Tom Cruise need for speed after speakers before the film emphasized the might and force of the U.S. Navy. They spoke of how the Aeronautics Commission proudly salutes the sailors of the TACAMO wing on their 30th year in Oklahoma at Tinker Air Force Base and their 60th year of operations. They proudly

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OPINION



Electric Trikes Provide Older Riders Fun, Fitness and Safety

Dear Savvy Senior,

What can you tell me about electric trikes for semi-seniors? I used to cycle a lot in my younger years but have some balance problems and don't trust myself on a two-wheeler anymore. I've read that electric powered trikes are a good option for older riders but could use some help choosing one. **Unsteady Eddie**

Dear Unsteady Eddie,

Electric powered adult tricycles - also known as e-trikes - are a great cycling option for older adults with balance or stamina issues because they're safe and super fun to ride, and easy on an aging body. Here's what you should know, along with some tips to help you shop for one.

Safer Cycling

If you're interested in cycling, but worry about falling or injuring yourself, e-trikes are a great choice because of the three-wheeled

stability they provide. With a trike you can ride as slow as you want without ever losing your balance, which is very reassuring for most older riders.

E-trikes also come with a small electric powered motor to enhance the riding experience, so when you saddle up and apply the throttle the motor will give you a boost when pedaling, or it will do all the work for you. This makes it much easier to whiz up hills and ride into headwinds without gassing yourself or taxing your knee joints.

In addition, most adult e-trikes are also made with a low "step through" design making mounting and dismounting easier; they typically come with big tires that ensure a smooth ride; have ergonomic handlebars that are easy to reach and grip; and offer oversize seats (some even have backrests) for comfort and support.

There are many different types of adult e-trikes to choose from with prices ranging anywhere from around \$2,000 up to \$7,000. To shop for one, contact some bike shops in your area to see what they offer, or you may need to order one online.

When shopping for an e-trike, pay special attention to the motor, which determines how fast it will go, and the battery, which determines how far it will go between charges.

Most e-trikes can reach speeds of anywhere between 15 and 28 miles per hour, and typically go somewhere between 20 and 55 miles on a single charge, depending on how much pedaling you do. Battery charge times will vary too, ranging anywhere from 3 to 8 hours.

How to Choose

To help you figure out the right kind of e-trike for you, ask yourself how and where you plan to ride it. If you're primarily interested in a leisurely ride around the neighborhood for pleasure, fitness or running errands, an upright cruiser e-trike that has a rear cargo basket would be a nice choice.

Some popular options in this category include: Addmotor's M-340 Electric Fat Trike and M-360 Semi-Recumbent Trike (both \$3,000, addmotor.com); Emojo Caddy Pro (\$2,900, emojobike.com); Sixthreezero EVERYjourney 250W Tricycle (\$2,200, sixthreezero.com); EWheels EW-29 (\$2,000, ewheelsdealers.com); and Buzz Cerana T (\$1,700, buzzbicycles.com).

Or, if you're looking to take longer road rides a recumbent e-trike may be a better option. These are aerodynamic, low-to-the-ground stretched-out frame trikes that allow you to recline with your legs positioned in front of you. Catrike (catrike.com) and TerraTrikes (terratrike.com) are two of the biggest U.S. companies that make recumbent tadpole-style trikes (the two wheels are in front) and they both offer electric assist options at prices ranging from \$5,000 to \$7,000.

There are also folding e-trikes, which are practical if you have limited home storage space or would like to take your trike with you when traveling. Some good options here include the Liberty Trike (\$1,600, libertytrike.com) and Eunorau New-Trike (\$2,500, eunorau-ebike.com).

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit SavvySenior.org. Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.

Editors note: Be sure to checkout Mobility City at <https://oklahomacityok.mobilitycity.com> or call (405)725-1755. View Mobility City's ad on page 20.

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ACE

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partner with the AFA Gerrity Chapter and ODIA for Oklahoma military service endeavors.

While TAFB employs nearly 30,000 Oklahomans, a contingent of air mission Navy sailors numbering 1,500 are proud to be known as “Red Dirt Sailors.” There has been a long-standing Navy presence in the area attached to Strategic Communications Wing One (SCW-1) at Tinker. Other active-duty members are attached to the Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC) in Oklahoma City, the local recruiting district and numerous reserve personnel who live and work in the community.

“The US Navy arrived on Tinker AFB in 1990 and has since operated in defense of the United States,” Keilty said. “Inviting the “Red Dirt Sailors” to this viewing was a great way to honor both their service and the service of those who gave their all for this

country.”

Super Hornet presenting sponsor Tinker Federal Credit Union helped make the event possible. DeBellevue said the credit union always supports patriotic themes with style.

“The sailors and airmen who attended this film viewing will remember this Memorial Day for a long time,” DeBellevue said. “Thanks to the volunteers and sponsors for making this a great Memorial Day patriotic event.”

DeBellevue also outlined how much of a boost this movie will be in allowing the military to recruit much-needed pilots in the near future. “I have gone back and watched “Top Gun: Maverick” a second time to really soak in all the excitement it conveys about flying. It reminded me of my missions when I flew into North Vietnam,” DeBellevue said in a recent interview. “There is no doubt in my mind there will be a spike in pilot recruiting across all the services, not just the Navy.”

22 INTEGRIS Health Medical Group Clinics Continue to be Nationally Recognized for Patient-Centered Care

The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) recently announced that 22 INTEGRIS Health Medical Group Clinics earned Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Recognition renewal.

The clinics received the initial recognition for using evidence-based, patient-centered processes that focus on highly coordinated care and long-term, participative relationships.

The facilities receiving the PCMH Certificate of Recognition renewal are listed below:

INTEGRIS Family First Miami, INTEGRIS Family Practice Miami, INTEGRIS Grove Family Practice, INTEGRIS Grove Primary Care, INTEGRIS Internal Medicine Clinic, INTEGRIS Internal Medicine & Pediatric Associates, INTEGRIS Miami Physicians Clinic, INTEGRIS Health Medical Group Baptist, INTEGRIS Health Medical Group Central, INTEGRIS Health Medical Group Coffee Creek, INTEGRIS Health Medical Group Council Crossing, INTEGRIS Health Medical Group Edmond East, INTEGRIS Health Medical Group Edmond Renaissance, INTEGRIS Health Medical Group Lake Pointe, INTEGRIS Health Medical Group Memorial West, INTEGRIS Health Medical Group Moore, INTEGRIS Health Medical Group Mustang, INTEGRIS Health Medical Group Norman, INTEGRIS Health Medical Group South, INTEGRIS Health Medical Group Southwest, INTEGRIS Health Medical Group Surrey Hills, INTEGRIS Health Medical Group Yukon

The NCQA Patient-Centered Medical Home is a model of primary care that combines teamwork and information technology to improve care, improve patients’ experience of care and reduce costs. Medical homes foster ongoing partnerships between patients and their personal clinicians, instead of approaching care as the sum of episodic office visits. Each patient’s care is overseen by clinician-led care teams that coordinate treatment across the health care system. Research shows that medical homes can lead to higher quality and lower costs and can improve patient and provider reported experiences of care.

FIVE SOCIAL SECURITY RESOURCES THAT CAN PROTECT ELDERS FROM SCAMS

By Tonya Cater, Social Security Public Affairs Specialist in Arkansas

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day was June 15. On that day, communities, seniors, caregivers, governments, organizations, and the private sector united to prevent the mistreatment of and violence against older people.

Social Security scams are widespread across the United States. Scammers use sophisticated tactics to deceive you into providing sensitive information or money. They target everyone - especially the elderly - and their tactics continue to evolve.

Here are five easy-to-use resources to prevent Social Security fraud:

- Check out our Fraud Prevention and Reporting page to learn about Social Security fraud - and how we fight scammers at www.ssa.gov/fraud.
- Read our Scam Alert fact sheet to learn what tactics scammers use and how to protect yourself at www.ssa.gov/fraud/assets/materials/EN-05-10597.pdf.
- Create your own personal my Social Security account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount to stay one step ahead of scammers. Please read our blog post at blog.ssa.gov/my-social-security-what-to-know-about-signing-up-or-signing-in for more information about creating or signing in to your personal my Social Security account.
- Learn about other types of fraud on our Office of the Inspector General’s (OIG) Scam Awareness page at oig.ssa.gov/scam-awareness/scam-alert. You’ll also see how to report these scams to our OIG and other government agencies.
- Read our blog post to learn how to guard your Social Security card - and protect your personal information at blog.ssa.gov/guard-your-card-protect-whats-important-to-you/.

Please share this information with your friends and family to help spread awareness about Social Security imposter scams.

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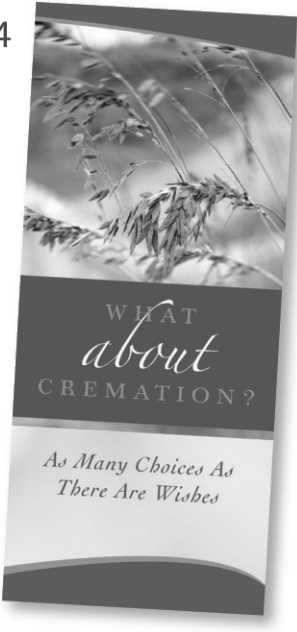
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COMMUNITY

A PLACE CALLED HOME ASH STREET PLACE

Story by James Coburn, Staff Writer

Today, she and her nurse aides and volunteers strive to give the same quality of care and compassion to the residents of Ash Street Place. Friendly conversation with the residents makes her day.

"I like geriatrics," she said of the residents. "They're friendly and very important. I learn lots of things from the residents here."

Dominoes, Bingo, and Checkers are popular games. They take trips to Walmart or other stores for shopping. Church services are held for residents on Monday evenings. On Sunday mornings some of the residents usually venture out for church services with a friend or family member. Some of the ladies get together for Bible study on Sunday evenings.

Williams smiles when recalling the day that Ash Street Place administrator Joe Chappell sang at a resident's birthday party and one of the male residents asked her to dance. A high quality of life includes a family-friendly atmosphere.

The staff is very respectful, punctual and kind, 24 hours a day, Williams said. A certified medication aide works on every shift.

"Everybody's friendly, willing to help each other and be there for each other," she continued. "We have several different levels of care."

Interaction with residents, assisting them when there is a need including medications, and assistance with daily needs is provided. If there is a need



Tammy Williams, LPN, has gone full circle in her nursing career by giving comfort and care as the director of nursing at Ash Street Place Assisted Living, located in Guthrie.

for more assistance with daily activities, a resident may transition seamlessly across the street to Golden Age Nursing Facility for long-term care or skilled nursing. Williams's exposure to nursing began at Golden Age where she was a CNA and CMA before working as an LPN there for 12 years. She graduated from nursing school at Francis Tuttle in 2000.

She sets new residents at ease by asking them about their preferences in life. She helps them blend in by knowing some of their favorite things to do. Williams lets them know that changes can be made to make them more comfortable.

They all share a good outlook on life and are as caring as the staff, she said. Among the residents is a gentleman who worked as a space engineer at NASA, another who served in the Navy during WWII, a woman who worked as a dietician in the prison system, who happens to be a direct descendent of Daniel Boone.

"She was telling us recently about when she had to go through a course of training to learn Karate," Williams said.

Ash Street Place can accommodate up to 37 residents. It represents a strong commitment to the town as the only assisted living facility in town. The family-owned center takes care its own community of Guthrie and other residents from elsewhere.

Ash Street Place is usually the first place a Guthrie resident chooses

when they need more care than is possible at home.

Many of the residents already have a community connection and often recognize other residents as their former neighbors, school chums or fellow churchgoers.

Local owners have grown up in the community. This spirit of care makes Ash Street Place, Willow Creek, Golden Age and Companion Healthcare so special.

"We are here to take care of the health care needs of the community," said CC Crane, marketing director for Companion Healthcare. "Besides Mercy Logan — it is us. I really do think you experience that family centered approach."

As a staple in the community, Ash Street Place must be exceptional in its standard of care. The brand of Ash Street Place is written in family and neighborly community ties of knowing that the best of care is only a step away when choosing one of Oklahoma's finest assisted living centers.

"We're taking care of a lot of people here that were your old schoolteacher, or your former Bible study or Sunday school teacher. Ash Street Place is the first place you would think about if you needed assisted living care," Crane said.

Williams agrees.

"Personally, I think it's the best place. Of course, I think Golden Age is the best place, too," she said.

For more information on Ash Street Place visit:

www.ashstreetplace.com

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The AARP Foundation Senior Community Service and Employment Program (SCSEP) can help you keep pace with the changing nature of work and improve your ability to find employment, even in today's tough job market. AARP Foundation SCSEP places older workers in a variety of community service activities at nonprofit and public facilities like day care and senior centers, schools and hospitals. As a participant, you can sharpen your job skills and earn income — all while giving back to your community.

If you're 55 or over and unemployed, contact AARP Foundation SCSEP's local office at 405.879.3899 for more information.

AARP Foundation
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IRIS

Continued from Page 6

their care in the senior living setting.

Sponsor Joe Forrest with Re/Max First has been helping seniors in Oklahoma for 25 years via ownership, operations and management of senior healthcare organizations. He has worked in-home healthcare services, independent and assisted living, and rehabilitation. He has been a realtor for the past 20 years.

He expressed how important it is to have a robust group of experts to support the agenda. "Serving the senior population and their families is permanently embedded in my DNA," Forrest said in an interview. "This SBS group is committed to quality care and smooth transitions when different levels of care are necessary."

He applauded the gathering of dedicated caregivers on the many needs addressed to create a healthy way to address seniors' needs in Oklahoma.

The luncheon continued with each invitee giving a few minutes of background on their employer and how they saw their role in helping seniors with their needs in the community. A few people outlined special events their venues were planning in the near future, inviting others to attend. Proveer at Quail Creek invited everyone to



From left, Joe Forrest, Denise Diaz, and Bill Muir pose for a photo after the Senior Business Solution networking luncheon.

participate in a block party they were preparing for the following Thursday.

Lisa James represented the third sponsor of the event, CompleteOK, expressing the importance of attending to the needs of military veterans. As a community liaison based at their SW 89th Street facility, she said company facilities around the state were busy doing that. These Veterans Homemaker Program services can help veterans living in their homes and serve veterans of any age, paid for by the Veterans Administration.

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COMMUNITY

Transition Decisions How Seniors Can Trust They've Found a Reputable Contractor

Story by owner Dennis Helm, a True & Proven Senior Advocate

A lot of companies say they specialize in working with seniors. (Hundreds of verifiable References from 35 Years)

But as owner of **Smooth Finish Roofing & Construction** we've proven it since 1987!

I have been a Senior Advocate for as long as I've been in the business. I learned this from caring for those who were and are vulnerable to scammers.

My heart was developed to protect the vulnerable and was cultivated as a child of a single mother who faced many challenges and difficulties raising three boys alone.

Free Inspections: Most Oklahoma homes have hail damage not visible from the ground, unseen until inspection.

How Smooth Finish has helped Seniors: (free consultations, decisions for scope, priority lists, free inspections and estimates)

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In homes of seniors who want or need to **age in place**, Smooth Finish can also help with other repairs, restorations and aging in place modifications. Besides roofing, Smooth Finish Roofing & Construction provides:

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- **Interior:** Ceiling repairs, (Leak Repairs) mitigation, texturing, painting, flooring, carpentry and more.

As a Licensed* General Contractor we manage the process of bringing in **Licensed Trades** for Plumbing, HVAC, electrical, etc.

If a senior is moving into a senior living center and needing to **sell their home**, they may likely need a new roof and/or other repairs. This is where our free advisory scope consultation, inspections and estimate(s) help create priority list(s).

Smooth Finish does excellent work at a fair price, so your home can pass all the inspections required for a sale.

Smooth Finish is not only certified & licensed* for roofing of residential homes, but also **senior living facilities**.

As a **true and proven Senior Advocate**, I have a sincere desire to help seniors and I always work to encourage people to use only local, licensed, and insured roofing contractors with hundreds of verifiable references. There are just too many terrible stories of things going wrong when people don't.

Warning: Roofers may not be who they seem!

I've heard many, many times, "most people don't trust roofers". That's understandable. In our industry there are a lot of fly-by-night roofers. They come in town, start a 'company,' get magnets on their car, (405) phone numbers and in 24-hours they look like a legitimate business. But they're not.

Undesirable scammers always rush into town after a storm has



hit to solicit people who need roofing services.

These unscrupulous "companies" will claim to be local, even though they're not. They may go to great lengths to look like hometown guys. We have had to replace many roofs installed incorrectly over 35 Years.

I want people with roofing needs in OKC to rest at ease. I want them to know that when they use Smooth Finish Roofing & Construction, they're getting an honest, proven and reputable company. I'm a lifelong resident and have over 35 years expertise in this business.

License Numbers:

Ask for license numbers and references. Then check them out! reputable roofers live and work in the same city where their business is located.

We don't go out of town, except for **previous and existing customers**. There is always more than enough work for us here in the 620 square miles of Oklahoma City and the metro area.

Your family, friends or clients will thank you for a Smooth Finish recommendation.

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Two Father/Son Duos Think of Father's Day Differently After Transplant Connection

The Koontz family never takes a Father's Day for granted after nearly losing their patriarch last year. Keith Koontz of Wichita, Kansas was having urination issues and just wasn't feeling well when he finally went to the doctor. Come to find out, his kidneys were failing – and he was put on dialysis. "Dialysis is no joke," he admits. "I would go in three times a week for four hours each. It was time consuming and could be painful. Things got a little better when they put me on home dialysis, but it was hard to lug around heavy boxes of fluid anytime we tried to go camping."

An avid camper for many years, Koontz had no idea his hobby would play a role in saving his life. "When it became clear that I needed a transplant, my physicians said I was lucky that I was in such good shape. I attribute that to camping."

But at the age of 81, he wondered if transplantation was even an option for him. "Some transplant centers will not transplant someone over the age of 80," Koontz states. "That was one of the deciding factors for why we chose INTEGRIS Health."

I wasn't done living yet, and they were willing to give me a second chance."

E.N. Scott Samara, M.D., is the surgical director of the Nazih Zuhdi Kidney Transplant program at INTEGRIS Baptist Medical Center in Oklahoma City. "It's our transplant center's philosophy to not look at a patient's chronologic age, age in years, but to look at how the



patient looks physically and mentally. Mr. Koontz is an active, vibrant man with an overall good health status and we felt he was well deserving of transplant for continued quality of life."

The Koontz clan is a tight knit group. Keith's sister and all five of his children

offered to give him one of their kidneys. They all went through the application process, but it was Kenny Koontz of Norman, Okla., the baby of the family, who was a perfect match. "Any one of us would have done it for him," says

See DUOS Page 11

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Route 66 Museum in Clinton to Host Route 66 Hall of Fame Induction and Exhibit

On Saturday, July 9, 2022, the Oklahoma Route 66 Museum and the Oklahoma Route 66 Association will host the Oklahoma Route 66 Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and the opening of a new exhibit, "Route 66 Transitions, 1981-1991: Jerry McClanahan's First Decade of Route 66 Photography." This event is free and open to the public, and refreshments will be provided.

Beginning at 2 p.m., the Oklahoma Route 66 Association will induct two special Oklahomans into the Oklahoma Route 66 Hall of Fame. Inductions are held every two years for individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the promotion or preservation of Route 66. The winners' plaques will be unveiled with the others on display in the Oklahoma Route 66 Museum's Hall of Fame, located in the WOW! exhibit room.

Immediately following the induction, the museum will hold an opening for the "Route 66 Transitions,

1981-1991: Jerry McClanahan's First Decade of Route 66 Photography" exhibit. McClanahan is a noted Route 66 authority, artist and photographer. He first began photographing and mapping the route in 1981 on a trip from Texas back to visit his boyhood home in southern California. McClanahan captured many lost and forgotten scenes during this decade of decline and revival, some of which are presented in this exhibit for the first time.

The Oklahoma Route 66 Museum is located at 2229 W. Gary Blvd. in Clinton. The museum galleries present the history and legends of Route 66 through the decades. For additional information, please contact Pat Smith at 580-323-7866 or email rt66mus@okhistory.org.

The Oklahoma Route 66 Museum is a division of the Oklahoma Historical Society. The mission of the Oklahoma Historical Society is to collect, preserve and share the history and culture of

the state of Oklahoma and its people. Founded in 1893 by members of the Territorial Press Association, the OHS maintains 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.

DUOS

Continued from Page 10

Kenny. "I just happened to be the best candidate."

The transplant took place on Jan. 11, 2021. It was a complete success – but the story doesn't end there.

As fate would have it, the surgeons who performed the transplant on Keith and Kenny Koontz – were a father and son duo as well. E.N. Scott Samara, M.D., is the senior and Shea Samara, M.D., is the son. Both are transplant surgeons at the Nazih Zuhdi Transplant Institute. "What are the odds?" asks Keith Koontz. "When we tell our story to people, they don't believe us at first. But then they think it's amazing when they realize we're being serious."

Kenny Koontz gets choked up when he thinks about it. "The son took my kidney and handed it to his father, who in turn put it into my father. It's more than a coincidence to me, it's a

connection. One we won't forget for the rest of our lives."

"As transplant surgeons, we always feel blessed to be able to help people. One father and son pair helping another father and son pair was truly special," admits Shea Samara. "My dad and I have been blessed to have been able to work together for the past 15 years and we truly cherish every moment together."

The Koontz family hopes to help others by sharing their story. They say life is too precious to be taken for granted. "Never take a Father's Day for granted," advises Kenny. "You never know when or if it will be the last one you get to spend together."

Keith Koontz agrees. He is camping again and just celebrated his 64th wedding anniversary with his wife, Beverly. He says they have lived a blessed life thanks to the Man Upstairs. He calls these next years his 'bonus' years – and says he will live each of them to the fullest.

CROSSWORD CORNER

- Across
- 1 Wrap up

7 Game-watching, maybe

15 "Y Is for Yesterday" sleuth Millhone

16 One skilled at spelling

17 ___ of: address words

18 Rocky time?

19 Slow-witted Bergen puppet

20 8-Down, e.g.

21 Impish

22 Boo follower

23 Key contraction

24 "Likewise"

25 Elect

26 Attributive term

28 One presented for payment

31 Driver's aid

32 Legal show for 40 years, with "The"

36 Youngest-ever "Time" Person of the Year

39 Formal seizure

41 Tyke

44 Early Beatle Sutcliffe

45 "The Last Jedi" villain Kylo

46 Sticky substance

47 Pique

49 Tennis strategy

51 Brits' luxury cars

52 Singer who founded a sewing company
- 54 Seasonal drink

55 "Romeo Must Die" star

56 Riviera resort, briefly

58 President, at times

59 "___ Wins By a Hare": Bugs Bunny cartoon

60 Dog on a bun

61 Throw that anticipates the receiver's timely arrival

62 Puck
- 33 Chest muscle, briefly

34 Phi follower

35 Vietnamese festival

37 Pasta order

38 Modern-day checking suggestion

40 "Nuh-uh!"

41 Citrus garnishes

42 "C'mon, I'm not that good!"

43 Italian playhouse

48 Pulitzer-winning "The Goldfinch" novelist Donna

50 Inches

51 Yankee whose #2 was retired in 2017

53 Fowl area

55 Cherokee on wheels

57 ___ mater

58 Golfs on wheels, briefly
- Down

1 Business concerned with going downhill

2 Jets' home

3 Great-grandmother, say

4 Nicholas II et al.

5 Round up

6 Word with chart or color

7 Actor Davis

8 2015 best-selling

9 Full house sign

10 Bad marks

11 Touches

12 Co-Nobelists with Rabin and Peres

13 Ruling period

14 The "I" in "E.I. du Pont"

20 Hot air

26 Some saxes

27 Listed in Liverpool?

29 Cup fraction

30 NFL coach Meyer

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TRAVEL / ENTERTAINMENT

Santa Fe : Old and New Traditions

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

Anytime you hear the word Santa Fe, it has to conjure up images. And if you have visited there it must illicit emotions and memories as well. During Summer time it's easy to slip into the mode of recalling pleasant memories, and plan for a fall visit including the Indian Market or the Santa Fe Opera. My first visit to Santa Fe was in the late 1970s, when I was breaking in a new car and exploring the great American West.

Of course, I traveled a long day's drive on I-40 West out of Oklahoma City, then took the highway 284 cut off at Clines Corners and entered Santa Fe on the Old Pecos Trail. That road soon turned into the Old Santa Fe Trail, where I drove along the narrow road with the old San Miguel Mission adobe church on my right and the famed Pink Adobe Restaurant on my left. The Old Santa Fe Trail offered a perfect first impression, as it was lined with atmospheric time worn structures, and not the modern franchise eateries and gas stations that hug the more traditional entry up north from Albuquerque, on Cerrillos Road.

I soon came into the parking lot of the at that time, relatively new, Inn at Loretto, replete in iconic Santa Fe adobe architecture. I was treated the next morning with a light dusting of snow and a hint of pinion in the air, as I pulled away from a town I'd hardly seen but ~ silently, subconsciously ~ vowed to see again. I have returned to Santa Fe many times since then and each time explored new venues with a salute to favorite places, which have become a traditional pilgrimage when visiting.

I can't recall why I chose a one night stay at this particular hotel ~ must have been its appealing architecture and perhaps at that time availability. This time I found myself walking past the Spa and the aroma of relaxation made me regret my time on this visit was too short. My stay at the Inn at Loretto in the 1970s, and in subsequent years has always been a pleasant tradition. This time was no exception.

Old traditional haunts include: the La Cantina Bar at La Sena Casa where waiters turn into opera and musical theatre singers about every ten minutes; the Pink Adobe Restaurant with its fine and sometimes spicy gourmet productions; Jackalope on Cerrillos road with its affordable southwestern flared garden and household offerings ~ along with the best and freshest string of red chili ristras in season; and the old haunts along the Plaza with its Indian jewelry market and a variety of upscale fashion shops.

New traditional offerings include the Balconies at the Plaza restaurant, which until a few years ago was the traditional Ore House Restaurant with the best and meatiest tasting salsa anywhere ~ and an always must see at the top of Canyon Road the specialty galleries.

Upon this recent trip I discovered the Santa Fe pickup, a free bus that circles the old town area, and is certainly a boon and must for those wanting to wander down Canyon Road as it will drop you off at the top. While my most recent autumn visit was blessed with perfect weather, I have climbed the road in scorching heat and can testify that the art is much more appealing starting at the top and meandering down.

Other must visits is the New Mexico Museum of Art and the New Mexico History Museum/Palace of the Governors - both on the Plaza; and up on Museum Hill the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture and the Museum of International Folk Art . Of course a road trip out to Tesuque with its sculpture garden and the near by glass blowing gallery can be broken up with a respite at Bishops Lodge for libations and food with a dose of historic luxury. A Santa Fe visit is not complete without a stop at the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum and a tasting at is elegant restaurant if it reopens.

I'm not sure if it's the upscale art and fashion shopping, the authentic



New Mexican cuisine, the fresh atmosphere and the nearly unspoiled vistas, or the essence of its history that permeates the soul, which beckons a perpetual return. Probably it's all, and yet some indescribable something else that all visitors try to describe when remembering, Santa Fe.

For more information contact: The Inn at Loretto -at www.innatloretto.com. And, click the Calendar here for up to date events www.santafe.org.

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OMRF hosts teachers for research



Nearly 40 Oklahoma middle school math teachers became students again this week, receiving a glimpse into the medical research that results from the passion they instill in students.

OMRF on Tuesday hosted teachers from the Sarkeys Foundation Summer Math Institute at the Oklahoma School for Science and Mathematics. The weeklong program includes teachers from Inola to Mangum and Madill to Sayre.

Scientists at the nonprofit foundation showed them, among other things, research samples from arthritic knee joints of mice and explained how the regenerative qualities of flatworms might someday apply to humans.

OMRF President Andrew S. Weyrich, Ph.D., welcomed the teachers, calling them "the unsung heroes" behind the minds that shape OMRF's research.

Throughout the year, OMRF hosts students from elementary school through college for various education and outreach programs, Weyrich noted. "We do that in part because we know Oklahoma students are paramount to the future of research."

OMRF Vice President of Government Affairs Lisa Day, an OSSM board member, helped organize the event.

"It's gratifying to connect these teachers with a real-world application of the skills they develop in students," Day said. "Much medical research requires a mastery of math. Their skill and passion for teaching make what scientists do at OMRF possible."

During their afternoon at OMRF, the teachers split into small groups to visit lab stations staffed by scientists.

Using a microscope and oversized monitor, David Forsthoefel, Ph.D., demonstrated how quickly the flatworms he studies can completely regenerate their organs. He hopes the clues he learns from the tiny worms might lead to new help in treating conditions ranging from bowel disorders to paralysis.

"We study the flatworms because we hope to learn their secrets," Forsthoefel told the teachers.

Beggs Middle School teacher Carol Creason called her trip to OMRF "tremendously helpful. It shows how important mathematics is to all sorts of jobs outside of the traditional math field of study."

Creason was so impressed with Forsthoefel's presentation that she plans to include flatworms in future lessons.

"I normally use bean plants so they can chart growth, but now I'm going to have them chart regenerative growth in flatworms," she said. "They'd have a blast."



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Cancer Center Launches Historic Trial for Cancer Drug Developed in Oklahoma

OU Health Stephenson Cancer Center has announced a historic first for the campus and the state: A new cancer drug, called OK-1, which was conceived and created by an OU College of Medicine researcher and developed entirely in Oklahoma, without the support of a pharmaceutical company, is being tested in humans for the first time in a Phase 1 clinical trial.

The drug was created by researcher Doris Benbrook, Ph.D., whose work on the compound began more than 25 years ago. New drugs developed within an academic institution, without the aid of a pharmaceutical company, are exceedingly rare. The Food and Drug Administration approved the drug to be given to humans in the clinical trial, which is underway at Stephenson Cancer Center. The drug is initially being given to women with advanced-stage ovarian, endometrial

and cervical cancer.

"It is very exciting to reach the point where we can test OK-1 in a clinical trial," said Benbrook, who is a professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology in the OU College of Medicine. "This drug is not available anywhere else in the world right now. We believe it has tremendous potential for treating cancer without causing toxic side effects."

OK-1 is derived from the natural compound vitamin A. The human body uses vitamin A to make retinoic acid, a nutrient that supports healthy functioning. Some forms of retinoic acid, as well as synthetic versions called retinoids, have been used to treat cancers such as leukemia. However, both are highly toxic, Benbrook said, and patients often become resistant to their effectiveness. Her aim was to create a better version of the drug



Dena Newlun, OU Health Stephenson Cancer Center patient and her therapy dog, Tripod Petey.

that is able to kill cancer cells but is less toxic to normal cells.

That effort has taken over two decades of experimentation. Benbrook worked with a collaborator to modify

the drug's chemical structure and test the biological activity of new versions. The new drug they ultimately

Continued next page



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TRIAL

Continued from Page 14

developed has been modified to such an extent that it works in a completely different way than vitamin A. Collaborators in the OU College of Pharmacy performed research that was necessary to test OK-1 in clinical trials. The work has been supported by millions of dollars in grants from the National Cancer Institute.

OK-1 works by taking away one of the “tricks” that cancer cells use to survive. When cancer cells develop, the body naturally tries to stop their invasion and growth. In response, cancer cells increase their production of “chaperone proteins,” which act like “bodyguards” to keep the cancer cells from dying. The drug OK-1 is able to attach to the chaperone proteins, disabling them in the process. The body’s immune system, or another drug like chemotherapy, is then better able to kill cancer cells because they are no longer protected by “bodyguards.” The drug does not harm healthy cells because they do not need the chaperone protection.

Phase 1 clinical trials are conducted to determine the highest dose of a new drug that can be given safely without causing severe side effects. While OK-1 has been tested extensively in the laboratory and in animal research models, the true effect can’t be known until it is given to humans. However, preclinical studies of the drug have proved that it is effective without causing severe side effects or birth defects, Benbrook said. The drug is being given to humans in capsule form. Kathleen Moore, M.D., Associate Director of Clinical Research and Director of the Oklahoma TSET Phase 1 Program at Stephenson Cancer Center, is leading the clinical trial. “The Phase 1 investigators are so excited to finally have this novel drug available to our patients,” Moore said. “It is a completely new class of drug, which, in addition to having efficacy in and of itself, may help other current cancer therapies work better without adding toxicity. This is kind of the holy grail. We have many combinations that work better than the single drug, but the combinations are far too toxic for general population use. OK-1 gives us the opportunity to bring combinations into trials that may work better without compromising safety. The potential is so exciting.”

At the conclusion of the Phase 1 trial, Moore and her team will have learned the optimal dose of OK-1. In subsequent trials, they plan to test the drug in combination with other cancer drugs already on the market. Benbrook has made patent applications on several drug combinations; OK-1 appears to be most effective when given with other existing drugs.

“We found in our experimental models that when we add OK-1 to other cancer therapies like paclitaxel, which is the standard chemotherapy for endometrial cancer, we get a synergistic effect that is much better than either drug alone,” Benbrook said.

Benbrook’s preclinical research also has shown that OK-1 may be effective for preventing cancer. She plans to test OK-1 in an ovarian cancer prevention trial in the Cancer Prevention Clinical Trials Network, a program of the National Cancer Institute. The drug will be given to women who are going to have their fallopian tubes surgically removed. Because most ovarian cancers originate in the fallopian tubes, researchers will examine the effect of the drug on fallopian tube tissues. Ultimately, the drug could be given to women who are genetically predisposed to cancer, such as those with a BRCA gene mutation.

The Oklahoma TSET Phase 1 Program at Stephenson Cancer Center is the only such program in the state and is considered among the top 10 programs in the nation. As a National Cancer Institute-designated cancer center, Stephenson can offer patients first access to early-stage drugs like Benbrook’s OK-1.

“This is a very exciting time to be conducting the first Phase 1 trial for a drug developed on our campus,” said Robert Mannel, M.D., director of Stephenson Cancer Center. “It is only possible because of Dr. Benbrook’s passion and determination and the ability of Stephenson Cancer Center to offer Phase 1 clinical trials. We have a very special team of doctors, nurses, researchers and staff who work together to safely give these new drugs to humans.”

In addition to funding from the National Cancer Institute, Benbrook’s research has been supported by grants from Oklahoma City-based Presbyterian Health Foundation, as well as the OU College of Medicine Alumni Association.



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TINSELTOWN TALKS:

Singing legend Johnny Mathis still touring at 86

By Nick Thomas

Chances are, every time velvet-voiced Johnny Mathis takes center stage during his current US tour, the atmosphere could turn Misty.

Sure, some devoted Mathis fans might swoon teary-eyed with waves of emotional nostalgia witnessing the 86-year-old singing icon in person, but many will just dutifully sway to the familiar soothing melodies as the veteran performer delivers his signature ballads such as "Wonderful! Wonderful!," "Chances Are," and, of course, his 1959 hit - "Misty."

Interrupted briefly by the pandemic last year, Mathis continues his 2022 Voice of Romance Tour with stops around the country (see www.johnnymathis.com). Although the viral menace is still lurking, it has not deterred the soulful singer from performing this year.

"Well, it's what I do," said Mathis from his home in Los Angeles during a tour break. "Except for earlier in the pandemic, I've been touring since I

recorded my first album in 1956."

Currently in his 66th year as a recording artist, the Mathis career statistics are impressive, including 79 original albums, 43 singles on the Billboard Pop Chart, 5 Grammy nominations as well as a 2003 Lifetime Achievement Grammy and songs used in over 60 films and television shows.

Then there's his historic 1958 Greatest Hits album, released just two years after his debut album, which became the first Greatest Hits album issued by any pop artist.

"Mitch Miller was responsible for that," said Mathis, referring to the conductor and record producer best remembered for the 60s musical show "Sing Along with Mitch" on NBC. Mathis signed with Columbia Records in 1956 and to cash in on the growing Mathis phenomenon, Miller wanted to release a new album in the late 50s but the singer was in Europe. Mathis had scored big with recent hits, so Miller bundled several together on one



Johnny Mathis - credit R. J. Alexander, provided by publicist.



A young Johnny Mathis recording in NYC in the 60s - credit Columbia Archives, provided by publicist.

record and "Johnny's Greatest Hits" would spend almost 10 continuous years on the Billboard Top Albums Chart.

Ironically, Mathis's signature song, "Misty," didn't appear on the 1958 compilation since it would be featured the following year on his "Heavenly" album. Written by Errol Garner (music) and Johnny Burke (lyrics), Mathis first heard the tune at the Black Hawk nightclub in San Francisco where he grew up.

"I used to go there as a teenager to watch the singers and the owner would let me sit in the back where no one could see me," recalled Mathis who would eventually be discovered singing at the club. "Garner would perform several times a year and play this wonderful tune (Misty) on the piano with no lyrics. His piano introduction was about a minute and a half with all sorts of chord changes and, oh man, I loved hearing it."

Later, Mathis learned Burke had added lyrics to the melody. "Columbia usually chose all the songs for me to record but as soon as I got a chance to select something, I recorded Misty."

While Mathis acknowledges the influence of many professional and personal buddies throughout his career, one always stands apart.

"I began singing because my dad sang," says Mathis. "He was my best pal and my true blessing is that he lived long enough to see my success as a singer."

Nick Thomas teaches at Auburn University at Montgomery, in Alabama, and has written features, columns, and interviews for numerous magazines and newspapers. See www.getnickt.org.

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Destination Oklahoma points to communities, cultural traditions at the crossroads of the country

New exhibition will feature more than a dozen works from five Oklahoma-based artists

Destination Oklahoma, opening at Oklahoma Contemporary on July 14, offers artist perspectives on the patterns of migration that have long shaped life in our state. Through more than a dozen works (ceramics, mixed media, paintings, photographs, prints and video) Oklahoma-based artists illuminate the distinct cultural backgrounds that have long existed at the country's crossroads.

"Destination Oklahoma features artworks by five artists that touch upon the layered contexts and experiences of this place, and the ways in which we define — or misunderstand — what it means to be an Oklahoman," said Oklahoma Contemporary Associate Curator Pablo Barrera. "As Oklahoma City welcomes refugees from Afghanistan, approaches the one-year anniversary of the First Americans Museum, revitalizes the Clara Luper Civil Rights Center, and sees a record increase of newcomers from other states, this exhibition is a timely opportunity to reflect on how

the region's long-standing patterns of human migration continue to shape our artistic landscape."

Photographs by September Dawn Bottoms suggest the complicated nature of intergenerational resilience, while drawings by Ghazal Ghazi co-mingle the Persian miniature format with contemporary portraiture. Paintings by Skip Hill reimagine symbolic imagery related to the Dust Bowl era, and paintings by America Meredith playfully mix pop culture references with historical illustrations of Indigenous subjects. Prints by Pan Lynh Pham blend graphic language with Vietnamese folk art traditions to evoke the sense of connection — or disconnection — felt by some immigrants to the state.

Destination Oklahoma is a collaboration between Oklahoma Contemporary and guest co-curator Liz Blood, a Tulsa-based writer who is contributing to the exhibition a poetry zine featuring responses to artworks by Oklahoma-based writers.



Dan Lynh Pham, Thank You, Bà Noi (Grandmother), 2021. Limited edition screen print of digital illustration on fine art paper. 16 x 20 in. Image courtesy of the artist.

"My family migrated to share that history of migration that Oklahoma just over 100 years ago," has made Oklahoma a beautiful Blood said. "Those of us who are not original inhabitants of this land

Continued next page



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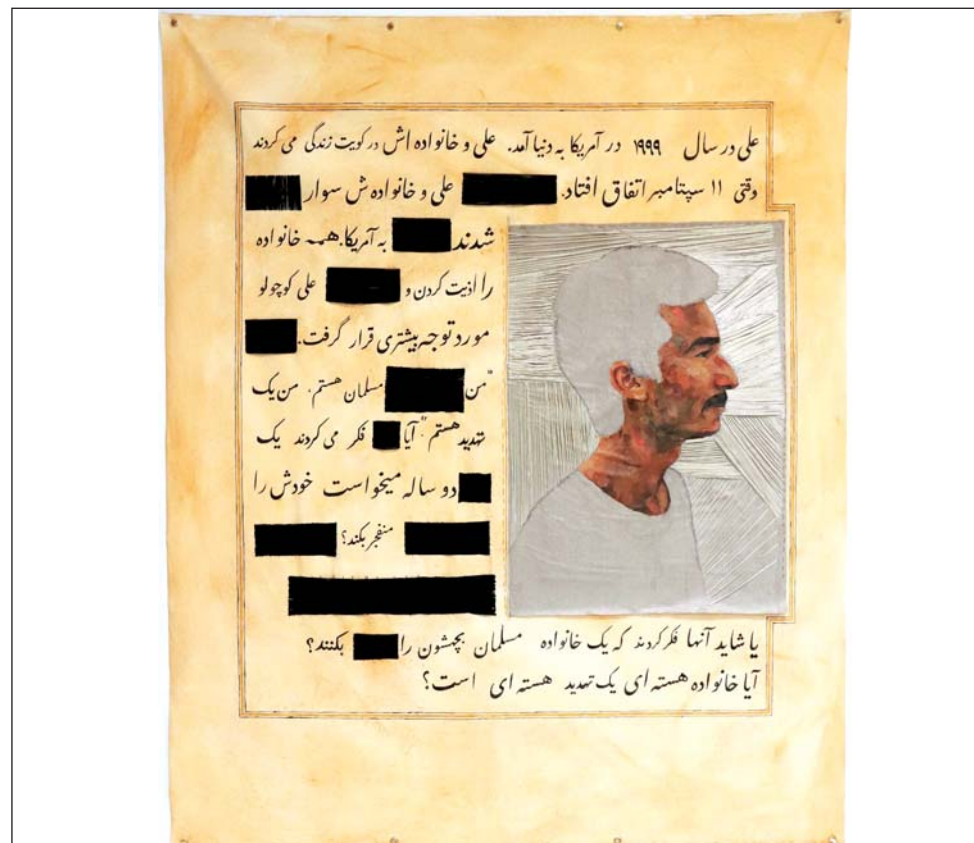

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ART

Continued from Page 18

and complex place. Destination Oklahoma celebrates and explores that complexity.”

The exhibition will be on view in the Mary LeFlore Clements Oklahoma Gallery through Oct. 17. Admission to Oklahoma Contemporary’s exhibitions and most programs is free.



Ghazal Ghazi, Monumental Redactions: Ali's Return to America from the Middle East Four Months after 9/11, 2022. Oil paint, watercolor, embroidery floss, and pencil on linen. 84 x 67 in. Image courtesy of the artist.

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Hudson College of Public Health Coordinates Initiative to Improve Future Response to Emergencies Like COVID-19

To ensure that Oklahoma is prepared for future public health emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic, the Center for Public Health Practice at the Hudson College of Public Health at the OU Health Sciences Center convened stakeholders from across the state to study strengths and weaknesses in various sectors of society. Today, that group — known as the Achieving a Healthy Oklahoma initiative — is announcing recommendations aimed at improving preparedness and making Oklahomans less vulnerable to emerging diseases.

“While our state mounted a strong response to COVID-19, we wanted to bring people together in order to learn from our mistakes and build upon our resources,” said Dale Bratzler, DO, MPH, interim dean of the Hudson College of Public Health and the University of Oklahoma’s Chief COVID Officer. “Members of this initiative came from diverse sectors of our society, and they dedicated themselves to establishing actions we can take to improve and expand our public health infrastructure.”

The Achieving a Healthy Oklahoma initiative began nearly a year ago as a nonpartisan effort funded by private and philanthropic organizations. The group, with more than 100 members representing the sectors of public health/healthcare, business, education, and community organizations, held statewide listening sessions and workgroup meetings, conducted interviews and performed surveys.

From those efforts, the initiative’s four overarching recommendations are:

1. State and local health departments should optimize emergency response performance by:
 - Identifying key public and private partnership capabilities to improve performance across Oklahoma; and
 - Coordinating innovative responses and efforts across jurisdictional boundaries
2. Health leaders and policymakers should pursue sustainable funding for state and local health departments to strengthen public-private partnerships. Oklahoma State Department of Health workforce data indicates

there are 316 unfilled public health positions — 193 of which are considered critical — across Oklahoma. The greatest shortage is among registered nurses.

3. The Center for Public Health Practice (at the Hudson College of Public Health) should serve as a hub for:

- Communications around public health preparedness
- Policy collaboration
- Workforce development data and evaluation
- Cross-sector collaboration to guide data modernization and grant opportunities
- Periodic review of the Achieving a Healthy Oklahoma recommendations and impacts

4. Data modernization must be a key driver for the next phase of preparedness and health improvement. Policymakers must pursue funding for sustainable, interconnected health data solutions, including cross-sector, statewide and national systems. The Center for Public Health Practice is uniquely positioned to serve as a central data modernization hub between public-private entities to pursue scalable and interoperable health data projects.

The Achieving a Healthy Oklahoma initiative made further recommendations specific to the sectors of public health/healthcare, business, education, and community engagement. Within each area, action items were designated to the Center for Public Health Practice, Oklahoma policymakers and public-private engagement.

The initiative also gleaned insight from different areas of Oklahoma through six regional listening sessions. Listening was key to understanding each area’s distinct needs, as one stakeholder said: “We really have to step away from planning for people without planning with people. What you do for me, without me, you do to me.”

Common themes emerged in each community. Participants identified strengths including a strong volunteer presence; flexibility among common and secondary schools; business engagement in the emergency response effort; and coordination of emergency response systems at the local and county level. Weaknesses included inadequate



staffing at county health departments, hospitals and schools; politicization of strictly science and health issues; technology barriers; burnout among healthcare workers; and barriers to vaccine rollout.

Recommendations that developed from listening sessions include: developing real-time actionable communication strategies; additional investment in the healthcare workforce and ensuring staff work at the highest level of licensure; making real-time, decentralized and transparent data accessible; and training policymakers and political leaders on disaster response and

health emergency management.

The regional outreach of the Achieving a Healthy Oklahoma initiative also identified several successes unique to each area’s response to COVID-19. In Duncan, for example, urgent care clinics played a critical role in diverting non-emergency care from hospitals. Duncan Regional Hospital retained its employees and cross-trained staff to adapt to changing needs. In Muskogee, the city sent masks to every resident, and businesses were proactive in encouraging masking in

See COVID Page 23



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COVID

Continued from Page 21

stores. In Miami, first responders and leaders from schools and county health departments facilitated an increase in public trust and communication. In addition, the local hospital system, operated by Integris, partnered with Indian Health Services to manage the influx of COVID-19 cases.

In McAlester, hospitals diverted care to federally qualified health centers, which played a critical role in relieving local healthcare facilities that were overburdened by COVID-19. In addition, the Choctaw Nation was a key partner in the local vaccination effort. In Lawton, libraries served as central hubs to deliver IT access and community resource catalogs to community members. The vaccination effort was quickly organized, and volunteers and community partners delivered up to 1,500 vaccinations a day.

The Southern Plains Tribal Health Board, which provides a unified voice on tribal public health needs and policy for the 43 federally recognized tribes in Oklahoma, Kansas and Texas, extended tribal resources to all residents in local communities regardless of tribal status. Tribes also took a population-level approach to

addressing COVID-19 health needs rather than an individual approach. Contact tracers with tribes served as comprehensive case managers and public health allies.

The Achieving a Healthy Oklahoma initiative is one of the first of its kind in the nation, and it establishes the foundation for Oklahoma to serve as a leading agent of change for public health, said Gary Cox, J.D., Associate Dean for Public Health Practice in the Hudson College of Public Health and Community Partnerships Director for the college's Center for Public Health.

"The work accomplished this past year by our committees provides actionable steps for Oklahoma to be better poised across healthcare, business, education, and community sectors to prepare for — and respond to — public health crises in the future," Cox said. "The Center for Public Health Practice is prepared to turn these action steps into sustainable, effective programs that can be implemented throughout Oklahoma and serve as a template for the rest of the nation."

To read the entire report from the Achieving a Healthy Oklahoma initiative, visit <https://publichealth.ouhsc.edu/AHO>.



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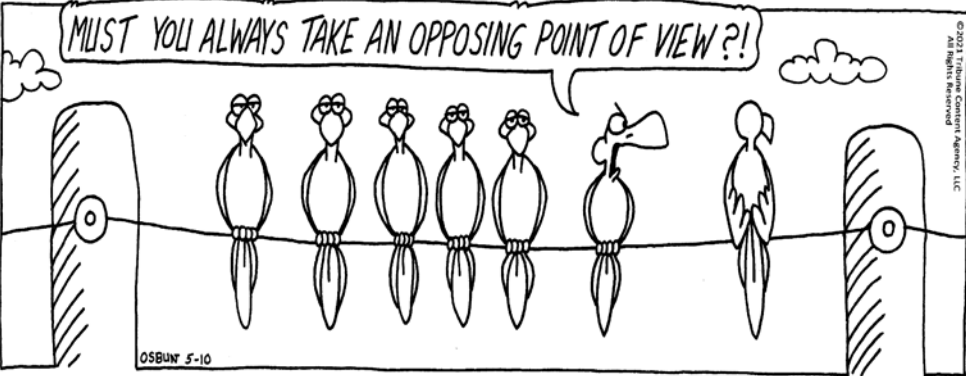
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Mulready Says Get Ready Part II: During the Storm

By Oklahoma Insurance Commissioner Glen Mulready

When it comes to severe weather, proper preparation and knowing what to do in certain situations can save you and your family's lives. That's why I'm encouraging Oklahomans to Get Ready for when—not if—the next disaster happens. Storms in Oklahoma often occur without warning, not leaving you enough time to prepare. Here are three important steps you can take to stay safe during the storm:

1. Take Shelter Immediately

- Go to the basement or storm shelter. Put your family emergency plan into action and check your go-bag in case you must leave in a hurry.

- If you do not have a basement or storm shelter, go to the room at the lowest level in the

home (i.e., hallway or bathroom), away from windows and corners where objects tend to collect. Cover yourself with a heavy object such as a mattress or sleeping bag to protect you from broken glass or flying debris.

- Stay in place until you are sure the storm has passed.

2. Stay Weather Informed

- Stay informed on weather updates. Monitor the storm's progress and listen for warnings from local officials.

- Power outages are highly possible in severe weather. Unplug appliances that are not necessary for obtaining weather updates. Use phones only in an emergency.

- Have multiple sources to stay informed of the evolving conditions—TV and radio,

emergency notifications via mobile devices, NOAA Weather Radio, etc. Make sure to have at least one source that does not require electricity.

3. Plan to Evacuate If Necessary

- Before leaving your home or driving anywhere, listen carefully to local weather experts and government officials who will be coordinating evacuation plans.

- Go to higher ground if flash flooding or flooding is possible.

- DO NOT drive into high water. Six inches of water will wash away a person and two feet of water will wash away a car.

- Don't forget the footwear. It is dangerous to walk outside barefoot because glass and other debris are everywhere during a storm.

To help Oklahomans prepare for this storm season, I'm releasing the three-part column series—Mulready Says Get Ready: Before, During and After the Storm. This comprehensive series will provide general preparedness tips for before, during and after disasters. Visit www.oid.ok.gov/news to check out Part I: Before the Storm. In the next series, I'll share detailed information on the insurance claim



Glen Mulready - Insurance Commissioner.

process and how to recover quickly after disasters. Please stay tuned and visit www.oid.ok.gov/getready for more information on how to Get Ready.

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Greg Schwem: Have we allowed our children to become royal pains?

by Greg Schwem

Maybe it's time to admit that, when it comes to parental discipline, our skills have disappeared faster than a toddler's attention span.

Princess Kate Middleton recently found herself under the disciplinarian microscope when a hilarious, yet uncomfortable video emerged starring her youngest child, 4-year-old Prince Louis and fifth in line of succession to the British throne. (Translation: He will never be King).

The video, shot as mother and son watched the Platinum Jubilee pageant from front-row seats, featured a clearly bored Louis sticking out his tongue at his mum and batting her hand away when she tried to refrain him from "cocking a snook," the British expression for thumbing one's nose.

Because the dustup happened between royals, the video naturally went viral, causing millions to give their unwanted opinions on Kate's parenting skills. The responses ranged from sympathetic (kids will be kids, even if they do live in palaces) to calling Louis a spoiled brat for daring to show disrespect to the future Queen of England. What kind of hooligan will Louis be at 15 if he is already testing boundaries at 4, they wondered?

I chuckled when I saw the video, knowing Kate was in an impossible situation. What was she supposed to do, knowing her every move was being recorded by dozens of cameras? Backhand her son across the face? Summon the royal guillotine? Or, worse, put young Louis in timeout by making him sit with the weird-haired gentleman, none other than British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, in the second row?

If you're a parent, you've had your own Kate moment. When she was 2, my eldest daughter bit my finger hard enough to draw blood. She is now 25 and holds a corporate job. She has never spent time in jail. At least, not that I'm aware.

Cut Kate some slack, I thought. All children should be subject to discipline, but who are we to judge how it is administered?

Of course, that was before I saw the Mercedes.

It was sitting, unattended, in the park I visit each morning with my dog. A real beauty she was; jet black in color, with the silver three-point Mercedes-Benz emblem glistening in the rising sun. A Google search revealed I was staring at the 12-volt, S63 model, featuring one-button start, forward and reverse shifter, wear-resistant wheels, one USB port and an MP3 interface. The car retailed for anywhere between \$190 and \$250, depending on what site you were perusing.

Oh, no, this wasn't an actual Mercedes-Benz. It was a toy replica, designed to be piloted by drivers between 3 and 5 years of age. Still, I wondered, what type of ungrateful kid leaves such a vehicle in a public park overnight, knowing another child could just hop in and drive away?

Worse, what parent allows this to happen?

I tried to imagine the scenario: Did the car's battery die and no toy Mercedes tow trucks were available to assist? This seemed unlikely, since the S63 weighed a mere 33 pounds. Picking it up and putting it in the family car wouldn't be that difficult.

Or were there other forces at play here? Did another child zoom by in a toy Tesla, featuring a Wi-Fi-enabled touch screen? Did that cause the embarrassed Mercedes owner to throw a tantrum, exiting the vehicle and demanding his cheap parents purchase an immediate upgrade? If I had been that parent, I would have calmly explained the 2023 models hadn't



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yet arrived and it would be wise to wait.

When she was 5, my daughter, the aforementioned finger biter, had a Barbie-themed electric car. Purchased for 10 bucks from a yard sale, it was parked in our garage every night. Had she left it anywhere else, rest assured, there would have been consequences.

So, parents, let's stop coddling our kids. Make them put away their toys and teach them the value of money. Let them know the finer things in life come with responsibilities. They will thank you later.

Even if it means spending time in the royal dungeon.

You are now cured of scrolliosis. That didn't hurt a bit, did it?

(Greg Schwem is a corporate stand-up comedian and author of two books: "Text Me If You're Breathing: Observations, Frustrations and Life Lessons From a Low-Tech Dad" and the recently released "The Road To Success Goes Through the Salad Bar: A Pile of BS From a Corporate Comedian," available at Amazon.com. Visit Greg on the web at www.gregschwem.com.)

You've enjoyed reading, and laughing at, Greg Schwem's monthly humor columns in Senior Living News. But did you know Greg is also a nationally touring stand-up comedian? And he loves to make audiences laugh about the joys, and frustrations, of growing older. Watch the clip and, if you'd like Greg to perform at your senior center or senior event, contact him through his website at www.gregschwem.com)



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