

Air Force Celebrates Two Anniversaries

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Volunteer Still Giving Back at 102

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Sibley Insures Educates Seniors

Christina and Steve Sibley empower seniors to make informed Medicare decisions.
Photo by Darl Devault.

story by Bobby Anderson, Staff Writer

For many seniors, there's excitement knowing their hard years of work have finally paid off and it's time to reap the healthcare benefits Medicare affords.

But that excitement can quickly turn into heartache and bad decisions if they can't

navigate the mountain of information in front of them come enrollment time.

"With Medicare as complicated as it is, being able to make an informed decision really requires - I think - having a face-to-

See SIBLEY Page 2

Second Half Expo Offers Panel Discussion



Mark Bravo shares how to create a healthy momentum in our lives and hone it toward an increasingly productive life.

Story by Darl Devault, Contributing Editor

The free 2022 Second Half Expo begins at 8:30 am Saturday, October 22nd, and finishes at 2 p.m. for the second year at National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City.

Billed as Something for Everyone Above Age 50, the expo is tailored to people in the "Second Half" of their lives. This is for those looking to connect with the resources needed to live the way they have always imagined. More than 120 of Oklahoma's senior-related businesses will be present, providing education and demonstrations of their products and services.

The day will be loaded with fun activities, including free educational seminars, drawings for prizes, live music and much more.

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SIBLEY

Continued from Page 1

face conversation with somebody who can go through all of those things with you, explain the differences in a simplified way and in a way you can understand," said Christina Sibley, co-owner of Sibley Insures.

Sibley Insures isn't an insurance company but a company that works for its insurance clients.

There's no high-pressure sales.

The primary goal is to educate and empower clients to make informed decisions.

Serving OKC, Tulsa, and beyond, Sibley Insures offers products from some of the top Medicare plans in the country to smaller local plans.

And those plans all come into focus in the next few weeks.

The last few months of the year the Sibleys' business goes into overdrive with Medicare enrollment beginning October 15 and running through December 7.

Behind her, the whole way is husband, Steve, who brings 17 years of financial services expertise and 36 years of military service to the business.

"Education is extremely important," Christina said. "I came into this business five years ago as a professional educator. Even people who are on Medicare and have been on Medicare for some time often don't

get a thorough education. They get information in the mail."

Most people choose the jobs they want to pursue.

For Christina Sibley, the job chose her.

Christina has been a healthcare provider for more than 20 years. She's taught medical assisting and phlebotomy.

She's worked in doctor's offices, labs, hospitals, and home care, always with a passion for her patients.

But it was a suggestion from her husband that brought it all together.

"I feel like God put me on this Earth for a reason," she said. "I have a specific set of skills, experience, and education that allow me to do things for people, they have put me in a unique position to be able to do things for people that others just don't have the ability to do."

Through Sibley Insures, Christina brings those skills to bear teaching thousands of Oklahomans what healthcare protection truly means.

She says there's so much consumer education lacking when it comes to commercial products that are required when you sign up for Medicare.

Drug plans, supplements, and Medicare Advantage programs are often foreign territory for consumers.

"They're not going to get a thorough education unless they sit down with somebody who can walk them through the basics and all of

their choices and explain the pros and cons of the things they can do," Christina said. "Medicare is not a one size fits all. It's very customized to that individual's needs. People don't know what they don't know."

If you're turning 65 in the next few months, you'll have a lot of company. An average of 10,000 Americans turn 65 every day.

For most, it also means that you're eligible to enroll in Medicare for the first time and most likely have a lot of questions.

As you prepare for Medicare, there's a lot to know.

You do not have to be retired to get Medicare. The retirement age for full Social Security benefits, called "full retirement age" is slowly rising to age 67, but you can still get full Medicare benefits at age 65, even if you're not going to collect Social Security benefits. Some under age 65 qualify, through Social Security disability, after 24 months.

Sibley Insures has expanded over

the years to better serve clients, most recently moving into an agency role that allows for greater outreach.

"We now have the ability to bring in and mentor agents who do what we do," Steve Sibley said. "What we do with Medicare is very much an advocate-based focus."

And that focus is on display in their office, at any one of a number of free seminars, or sometimes in the comfort of your own home.

"It's crucial for people to talk to an agent or broker," Christina said. "What we do is work for our client, to look across plans and across products to find what's going to be most appropriate for them and their particular needs."

And with hundreds of thousands of Oklahoma Medicare eligible, that time begins now.

"We only have seven weeks to get everyone enrolled."

For more information or to visit with Christina and Steve, visit: <https://www.sibleyinsures.com/>



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OPINION



Dear Savvy Senior,

Free Online Hearing Tests You Can Take at Home

Can you recommend any good online hearing tests? My husband has hearing loss, but I can't get him to go in and get his hearing checked, so I thought a simple online test could help him recognize he has a problem. What can you tell me? -- Loud Talking Linda

Dear Linda,

There's actually a growing number of very good online and app-based hearing tests available that will let your husband check his hearing on his own. These tests are a quick and convenient option for the millions of Americans that have mild to moderate hearing loss but often ignore it, or don't want to go through the hassle or expense of visiting an audiologist for a hearing exam.

Who Should Test?

Hearing loss for most people develops gradually over many years of wear and tear, which is the reason many people don't realize they actually have a hearing problem.



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Anyone who has difficulty hearing or understanding what people say, especially in noisier environments or over the phone. Or, if you need a higher volume of music or TV than other people, should take a few minutes to test their hearing.

Self-Hearing Tests

Online and app-based hearing tests can serve as a great screening tool. They are not meant to be a diagnosis, but rather to give you an idea of how bad your hearing loss is and what can be done about it.

For most do-it-yourself hearing tests, you'll be advised to wear ear headphones or earbuds and sit in a quiet spot.

You also need to know that there are two different type of tests available. One type is known as pure-tone testing, where tones are played in decreasing volumes to determine your specific level of hearing loss. And the other type is known as speech-in-noise or digits-in-noise (DIN) where you'll be asked to identify words, numbers, or phrases amid background noise.

Where to Test

If your husband uses a smartphone or tablet, two of my favorite app-based hearing tests are the hearWHO app created by the World Health Organization, and the Mimi Hearing Test app. Both apps are free to use and are available through the App Store and Google Play.

HearWHO allows users to check their hearing status and monitor it over time using a DIN test, while Mimi uses pure-tone and masked threshold tests to give you a detailed picture of your hearing abilities.

There are also a wide variety of online hearing tests your husband can take on a computer.

Some top online tests - all offered by hearing aid manufacturers - for speech-in-noise or DIN tests can be accessed at ReSound (resound.com/en-us/online-hearing-test) and Mircle Ear (miracle-ear.com/online-hearing-test).

And some good online hearing tests for pure-tone testing are available by Signia (signia.net/en/service/hearing-test); Ergo (eargo.com/hearing-health/hearing-check); and MD Hearing Aid (mdhearingaid.com/hearing-test).

All of these hearing tests are completely free to use and take less than five minutes to complete.

What to do with Results

If the tests indicate your husband has hearing loss, it's best to think of that as a starting point. He should take results to his doctor or an audiologist for further evaluation.

Many insurance providers and Medicare Advantage plans cover routine hearing exams, however original Medicare does not.

If his hearing loss is mild to moderate, he should look into the new over-the-counter (OTC) hearing aids, which are available this fall online and at retailers like Best Buy, Walgreens and CVS.

OTC hearing aids don't require a prescription or medical examination for purchase and they're much more affordable than traditional hearing aids you buy through an audiologist or a licensed hearing instrument specialist.

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.

EXPO

Continued from Page 1

"We firmly believe the senior years can be lived with dignity and purpose with the right guidance and resources," said Bob Loudermilk, event manager. "We strive to support seniors and their adult children, honoring and assisting their aging parents."

This year's free two-hour panel session: THE 50+ YEARS - How to Navigate the Changing Landscape, offers eight community thought leaders sharing their expertise. This timely information on wealth management, senior housing, estate planning, health & fitness above age 50, tax & insurance planning, downsizing, Second-Half entrepreneurship and more is invaluable for seniors.

The panel session will begin at 9 a.m. with coffee and continental breakfast items provided. Seating is limited. Please RSVP to reserve your seat at <https://secondhalfexpo.com/the-panel/>. Details of topics and bios of the eight panelists are available on this page.

An example of the quality of the panelists offering their insights into living a vibrant and productive Second Half early Saturday morning is someone familiar to many Oklahomans.

Many seniors have seen Mark Bravo, 64, help broadcast the Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon live on local KFOR-Channel 4 television since its inception in 2001. With Bravo's broadcast journalism training from the University of Oklahoma and his experience as a marathoner, he describes the events from the runners' point of view. He offers background both on the elite and "ordinary" runners.

"I'm humbled to be a part of this race, and to offer color commentary on race day gives me a chance to provide insight into road racing," Bravo said in a recent interview. "I describe the mindset of all levels of athletes who participate and the importance of this race to Oklahoma, not only in April but all year long. I'm fortunate to have much engagement with athletes of all abilities throughout the year. The connection to the community has made it one of my great pleasures to help document every OKC Memorial

Marathon."

He actively supports the race throughout the year and on marathon weekend. From hosting the event's two-day Health and Fitness Expo to inviting legends of the sport to the race, Bravo has volunteered thousands of hours over the years.

He takes great pride in ensuring its national reputation as the "Run to Remember," leaving participants with two distinct emotions. The first is to bring together runners and spectators from around the world to honor those who were killed, those who survived, and those who were changed forever in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.

Another source of his pride in this race is Bravo has helped bring many extras to the runners and walkers not available at most marathons. Bravo says this makes each person feel like an "elite" participant because of the on-course support from a massive outpouring of cheering and volunteering by OKC residents.

One of these extras for participants is interaction with Hall of Famers from the sport at the Expo. Many of these famous marathoners were at the forefront of the "running boom" in America in the '70s and '80s. These marathon luminaries speak about their experiences in and out of the sport and share their expertise to help ease runners' minds before the race.

Bravo is a freelance writer, broadcaster and nationally-noted road race announcer who has finished almost 50 marathons in his 40-plus years in the sport. He speaks at countless sports-focused venues on building momentum in one's life. Bravo has coached runners for the last two decades, and his view of mental and physical wellness is detailed in his well-received book: "Momentum: 77 Observations Toward a Life Well Lived."

Bravo's definition of an "athlete" has less to do with physical prowess but more about a few principles. "It's viewing the world and yourself through a 'kinder, gentler' lens, an always existent 'stick-to-it-iveness,' strong view that the glass is 'three-quarters full, not half-empty,' and an

ever-present emphasis on gratitude," Bravo said. "Through these principles and how we share them, each of us raises the calibration of the entire world!"

He stays closely involved with

the local running community in his position as manager of OK RUNNER OKC in downtown Oklahoma City. He and his wife, Leslie, live in Edmond, Oklahoma.

FEMA Funeral Assistance Remains Available for COVID-19 Related

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll on everyone, especially those who suffered loss due to the virus. Nothing can replace loved ones, but FEMA may be able to help ease the financial burden that comes with that loss.

Those who had funeral COVID-19 related funeral expenses can apply for FEMA Funeral Assistance by calling 844-684-6333. Phone lines are open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. CDT, Monday through Friday with Multilingual services available. Applicants requiring relay services, such as a videophone, Innocaption or CapTel, must provide FEMA a specific number assigned to that service. It is important that FEMA is able to contact applicants.

There is currently no deadline to apply for aid.

The criteria to qualify for assistance includes:

- The person died of COVID-19.
- The death occurred in the U.S.
- The applicant paid for funeral, burial or cremation costs after Jan. 20, 2020.
- The applicant is a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, lawful permanent resident or qualified refugee. The deceased does not need to meet these qualifications.

When applicants call for assistance, they need to provide the following information:

- Social security number
- Date of birth
- Current mailing address and phone number
- The deceased date of birth
- Location of deceased death
- Information about any funeral or burial insurance policies
- Information about other funeral assistance received, such as donations or CARES Act grants

Eligibility determinations are based on the submission of all required documents. Additional information and answers to frequently asked questions about the application process can be found on FEMA's Funeral Assistance FAQ page here: <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance/faq>

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COMMUNITY

Senior Day at Fair Blasted Off

Story and photos by Darl DeVault, Contributing Editor

Senior citizens celebrated their free admission day at the fairgrounds in record numbers on Sept. 21 in the Modern Living Building at the Oklahoma State Fair.

Event committee member Vicki Escajeda with OU Health Edmond saw the numbers waiting to enter the building before the 10 a.m. start. "This is the largest crowd we have ever had for the first hour (of the event)," Escajeda said.

OG&E and other sponsors invited all seniors ages 55 or older to enjoy the "Fly Me to the Moon" themed event. The first hour and a half of activities, entertainment, exhibits, door prizes and health screenings designed especially for the golden ager were packed. It did not slow down until about 2 p.m. But then attendance picked right back up for the 2:30 Game Show segment.

Activities well attended that day included a robust lineup of free health screenings: Blood Pressure Screenings • Blood Sugar Screenings • Pain Management Assessment • Vein Testing • Depression and Memory Screenings, and Diabetic Foot Screenings.

Total Wellness offered Flu, Pneumonia, and B12 shots at a cost. The day also featured 24 senior health and recreation exhibitors.

Door prizes were offered all day, and many picked up a ticket for each session to win one of many donated gifts. There were multiple drawings in the morning and early afternoon and then again in the late afternoon.

"Senior News and Living" sales executive Amanda Miller passed out more than 600 copies of the magazine's latest issue to attendees while she

See FAIR Page 7



Tawnya Conrad and Raymond Hill won the Senior News and Living special prizes of a \$150 gift card tree and a much larger self-care package.

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Elvis tribute artist Mike Black appeared in his second year entertaining Senior Day at the Fair crowds.
continued next page



The Okie Stompers dance troupe’s 10 cloggers provided spirited performances in the morning and afternoon in different costumes at Senior Days At The Fair.

FAIR

Continued from Page 6

welcomed the crowd to the event.

Several entertaining dance groups covered the entire stage to entertain the crowd, with 10 of The Okie

Stompers of Norman led by Mary Burleson providing two well-received performances in different costumes. The well-choreographed group danced at 10 a.m. and again at 2 p.m.

The event chairs filled up again

as Elvis tribute artist Mike Black drew a packed house in the late afternoon. Back from his popular performance last year, Black sang Elvis’ songs at 5:30 p.m.

“We concluded with a participation dance class because who doesn’t want

to walk and dance like an astronaut? We returned to earth at 7 p.m. with a mission accomplished stamp of around 3,500 visitors dropping by the event,” said Cindy Dimit, Storey Oaks Memory Care marketing director and Senior Day committee member.

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Partnership aims to help seniors

Story and photo by Bobby Anderson, Staff Writer

Living decisions for seniors can be complicated all by themselves.

Throw in an unexpected illness or injury and the situation can quickly spiral out of control.

After seeing these situations play out over and over and the turmoil they create for families, local senior living leaders have come together to provide awareness through education.

Melissa Mahaffey, MHA, serves as the executive director of Tealridge Retirement Community and is one member of a group focused on bringing information to those needing it the most.

“We want people to know we’re in this industry together and we don’t necessarily have to be owned and operated by the same company to put on great resource events and work together for the betterment of the larger community,” Mahaffey said. “We just want to provide a resource. We partner because we feel like we have the same type of philosophy in terms of we want the community to know and what some of the options are.”

Communities like Tealridge and Legend at Jefferson’s Garden have long focused on giving residents just the right amount of personalized support to enhance independence.

But in an industry that can have an array of service levels people can quickly get lost.

“They hear one word and they automatically go down a rabbit hole. It’s educating on all levels,” said Tealridge Retirement Counselor Kristen Moss.

Finding information on those levels is the focus of a series of upcoming progressive tours and educational presentations.

“I think we want to encourage people not to start looking when there is a crisis but be educated prior because they could help their family, their neighbor or someone within their church,” Mahaffey said. “That’s why we need people to understand we are offering this.”

“During each progressive tour stop people will get to touch and feel what we do here. We want people not to be afraid to ask questions. We

See PARTNERSHIP Page 9



Tealridge Retirement Community and Legend at Jefferson’s Garden are helping educate Oklahoma families on senior living options.

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PARTNERSHIP

Continued from Page 8

encourage everyone over the age of 60 to come."

Unfortunately, decisions regarding the next level of care often occur within 24 to 48 hours prior to a loved one needing care. All too often an injury or illness has landed a loved one in the hospital and the determination has been made that further care is needed after discharge.

What shape and form that care comes in is often a mystery to those charged with making a decision on behalf of their loved one."

Moss said the scenario plays out time and again, forcing people into crisis mode.

"Then somebody ends up in the hospital and it's go time," Moss said. "It's Wednesday and the hospital is

going to release on Friday and we have to go somewhere."

And then there's the issue of cost and where funding will come from.

Skilled nursing days are limited under Medicare.

Independent and assisted living costs are excluded altogether.

"Education is so important because they don't know," said Kristi Wilhelm, sales director at Legend at Jefferson's Gardens in Edmond. "I had a family that literally walked into my building and she realized mom is exhausted from taking care of dad and mom's fixing to go downhill if she doesn't do something.

"She didn't know what independent living is. She didn't know what assisted living is. I was with them for two hours going through all the steps.

"She was so relieved I educated her and explained everything to

her."

And learning that information when not facing a deadline can make the difference between the right decision and a decision for right now.

"And a lot of times people in that emergency, the first place they go to they'll end up moving in and it might not actually be the right fit for them," Wilhelm said. "Eventually they start shopping again because they're not happy because mom isn't happy. That's why it's all about education so it's not the last minute."

Mahaffey said the program is unique to the metro but expects it to expand quickly because at the end

of the day it comes down to the right fit for both the resident and the residence. "I always tell people when they come to visit our community know that if I'm not the one you chose, I'm still here as a resource to help you in any way. They appreciate it so much," Wilhelm said.

Tealridge Retirement Community is a full-service retirement community located at 2100 NE 140th Edmond.

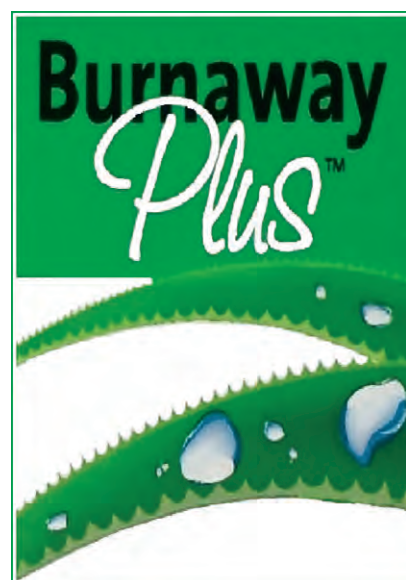
Legend at Jefferson's Garden specializes in assisted living and is located at 15401 N Pennsylvania Ave in Edmond.

For more information about Tealridge Retirement Community visit <http://www.tealridge.com>



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COMMUNITY

VillagesOKC receives grant from Force 50 Foundation for veterans program

Story and photos by Eddie Roach

VillagesOKC received a \$5,000 grant from Force 50 Foundation to be used to implement a veterans initiative called One-On-One Honor.

"This grant will be used in our pilot program seeking to bring awareness of the importance of bringing honor and patriotism into everyday life," said Marilyn Olson, VillagesOKC Executive Director.

The program will honor veterans in assisted living and low-income senior housing. Identified veterans will be honored in a ceremony at their facility and receive a veteran cap, service pin, photo, and certificate. The presentation will be conducted by a fellow veteran.

"VillagesOKC is part of the annual Vietnam War Era Pinning Ceremony each March 29 at the Oklahoma

History Center. But, this One-On-One Honor program awards those who are in assisted living communities and cannot attend the annual pinning ceremony," Olson said.

Gary W. Banz, Force 50 Foundation Executive Director, said the grant application was open to any of the foundation's partner agencies. VillagesOKC was selected because its mission of connecting older adults to opportunities and services in the community is like Force 50 Foundation's objectives.

"We value a 'One Mission, One Force' network as the best way to connect organizations serving veterans," Banz said. "What we are all about is providing a platform for information sharing, connecting veterans to the various support



Gary W. Banz, Force 50 Foundation Executive Director, presents Gaylene Stiles, VillagesOKC Community Momentive Director, with a check for VillagesOKC's One-On-One Honor project.

opportunities." He explained that while there are many organizations offering veterans services, vets don't always know where to look.

VillagesOKC embraces a similar mission of connecting older adults to

See GRANT Page 11



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GRANT

Continued from Page 10

programs for learning, planning, and serving – providing a plan for aging that connects a community.

Gaylene Stiles, who submitted the grant for VillagesOKC, said the project also will engage Southern Nazarene University students from the SNU Veteran Center, providing an opportunity for students of all

ages to observe and participate.

VillagesOKC is a nonprofit that connects adults ages 55+ in the greater Oklahoma City metro area to valuable resources that empower them to remain independent and age gracefully. VillagesOKC consists of virtual neighborhoods of volunteers who share vital connections, education, and programming with members to improve their quality of life.



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

The area is full of many live theater options, and if you don't reserve your seat in advance you might lose out. If you schedule it, it will happen. If you don't, it won't.

Of course you can get in trouble as I did this summer when I bought a nonrefundable ticket to NYC's Broadway production of Music Man, which I know would win lots of Tony's and be in high demand in the fall. I scheduled my NYC trip complete with air and hotel reservations for mid October. With a recent physical accident I had to cancel the trip and try and pass along my \$400 orchestra aisle ticket to a NYC resident. I don't regret the buying of it or the canceling of the trip. Reality Bites.

Getting a season subscription to theater nearer your home, you can be relatively sure you can make it. Season subscriptions are the way to go - reserved seats and definite theater times for your calendar

I consider the professional reputation of theater before putting down a lump sum for future enjoyment. One such professional troop is the Prairie Sky Opera Company, who always produce excellent casts who shine with the meaningful and difficult medium of Opera. Recently I took in their Scalia / Ginsburg opera of supreme court justices in the OKC Contemporary Arts. They did not disappoint in this intellectual and ironic story of 2 supreme court justices. Outstanding was the performances of Brian Cheney, Lauren Cook, Jonathan Moots and direction by Rob Glaubitz. It concluded their regular season. Coming up is their Opera Gala at the Skirvin Hotel in OKC on Oct 14th in honor of well known Oklahoma City University voice profession and entertainer, the late Florence Birdwell. Space may be sold out but you might check it out at www.prairieskyopera.org.

I recently happened upon some home town talent at St Luke's Methodist Church's Broadway Revue. The local talent was good for the most part and the Broadway theater selections were exceptional. Their Poteet Theater Season (stlukesokc.org/poteet) is about to begin with: Spelling Bee. Season tickets are available.

The Professional company touring shows of OKC Broadway (www.okcbroadway.com/about) always delivers top notch talent with the material they offer in big theater productions in the OKC Music Hall downtown. Their recent tour of Pretty Woman, was week in material and the casting needed some charismatic personalities. But that's the chance and joy you take with live theater. While the season tickets might be sold out, you can usually get a single ticket somewhere in the massive auditorium. Coming up is: Hadestown, Tootsie, Cats, Book of Mormon and Hamilton.

Lyric Theater of Oklahoma never disappoints which can be proven by experiencing the upcoming shows of: Rocky Horror Picture Show, this month, and this season; The Play That Goes Wrong, Concerto, Sound of Music, Prom, Ain't Misbehavin' and the add on shows of Big River and A Christmas Carol. This month you can enjoy performances, food and drink at the October 13, Broadway Bash fund raiser at the Oklahoma City Golf and Country Club.

If you are a theater regular be sure and check out the offerings at OKC REP (okcrep.org), the university productions of theater and musicals at Oklahoma City University, University of Central Oklahoma, University of Oklahoma, Stillwater's Town and Gown, Canterbury, and Guthrie's Pollard, among others. Many are looking forward to the reopening this fall in brand new location, of the longtime theater company of Carpenter Square. (www.carpentersquare.com) Oklahoma is not lacking for live entertainment.

It is said, especially with seniors, that it makes life more enjoyable if you have something which to look forward. I am looking forward to the April 15 Philharmonic concert of virtuoso violinists, Joshua Bell. (www.okcphil.org) I bought my single ticket as soon as they were offered, and reserved my



The late Florence Birdwell is to be honored at the Prairie Sky Opera Gala, October 14.



Terry Zinn and violinist Joshua Bell after a past Oklahoma concert.

orchestra aisle seat. I have experience this artistic talent the last three times Bell performed in Oklahoma. It is also said that the greatest compliment you can give, is if you would do it again. Needless to say my compliments to Joshua Bell (joshuabell.com). He is scheduled to perform Mendelssohn: Violin concerto in E Minor, op 64 and Beethoven: Symphony No. 7 in A Major, op 92. But anything Bell performs is exceptional.

Reserve it and enjoy it.

Mr. Terry Zinn - Travel Editor

Past President: International Food Wine and Travel Writers Association

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BBT 3 Musketeers bars got their name because they used to come with three flavors.

The original 3 Musketeers bars of the 1930s came in three-packs, with a different nougat flavor in each: vanilla, chocolate, or strawberry. World War II rations made that

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triple threat expensive, so the company cut down to one.

BBT The British royal family is named after Windsor.

You'd think Windsor Castle was named after the House of Windsor, but it's the other way around. The royal family changed its name from Saxe-Coburg-Gotha in 1917 so it would sound less German and chose Windsor because they had ties with the English town.

HEALTH

STILLWATER MEDICAL FIRST IN STATE TO LAUNCH CERIBELL RAPID EEG BRAIN MONITORING

Stillwater Medical announced the launch of a new Ceribell Rapid EEG Brain Monitoring which provides Stillwater Medical clinicians with immediate access to EEG information, allowing triage for at-risk patients in just 5-minutes and continues to monitor for treatment optimization.

The Ceribell Rapid EEG Brain Monitoring system was developed to address limitations in EEG acquisition and interpretation so patients at risk of seizure can be triaged more quickly. The device consists of a simple headband, pocket-sized recorder with intuitive software, and an on-line portal for remote viewing. Using the Ceribell system, physicians can review EEG data, assess response to treatment and

optimize care, all in real-time.

Mary Beth Hunziker, MSN, RN, ACNS-BC, CCRN, Director of Stillwater Medical's ICU, explained that critically ill patients are at substantial risk of seizures that cannot always be detected by outward signs, and without rapid diagnosis it can lead to permanent brain injury, higher risk of morbidity and mortality, and longer hospital stays. She said Ceribell can be set up by any healthcare provider in just 5-minutes, even those with no previous training in EEG.

Guidelines from the Neurocritical Care Society recommend EEG should be initiated within 15-60 minutes when these seizures are suspected. Meeting these guidelines has proven



difficult due to the limitations of conventional EEG systems, which were not designed for use in emergency situations. Without Rapid EEG, even top academic centers with 24/7 EEG capability experience a 4-hour wait-time for conventional equipment.

"This device is a game changer for Stillwater Medical," said Hunziker. "It will provide our clinicians with the diagnostic information they need to make informed treatment decisions for some of our most vulnerable patients quickly. It's another great example of our Stillwater Medical leadership putting patient safety at

the forefront."

"Ceribell founders saw that critically ill patients often experience undiagnosed non-convulsive seizure as a result of lack of access to EEG. Some suffered major neurological deficits while others simply did not make it. It is our mission to ensure no patients suffer unnecessary brain injury as a result of not having prompt EEG. We are excited to see visionary pioneer health care practitioners at Stillwater Medical adopting the technology and transforming their EEG capability." Jane Chao, PhD, Co-founder and CEO of Ceribell.



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became less popular and the meaning of the Duns cap was turned on its head, becoming something of a joke.

BBT Lobsters taste with their feet

Tiny bristles inside a lobster's little pincers are their equivalent to human taste buds. Meanwhile, lobsters' teeth are in one of their three stomachs. Lobsters are one of these foods some professional chefs cook in the microwave



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Integris Bass Baptist Health Center Volunteer Still Giving Back at 102

Volunteers at INTEGRIS Bass Baptist Health Center contribute their time and talents to help patients in a number of ways. Ruby Wilson gives her time and talent through crocheting beautiful lap blankets and baby caps. The thing about Ruby is, she will celebrate her 102nd birthday later this month.

Ruby has been a Bass volunteer since 2018, and in that time has contributed nearly 2,500 hours and crocheted dozens of items for babies and cancer patients.

"We offer the afghans to all of our patients receiving treatment," oncology nurse Sandy Gordon said. "The patients are always excited to receive the blankets, and it's nice that we can offer them. It's always a feel-good moment. They often comment about the beautiful colors and how warm and comforting it is to have the handmade blanket."

Ruby resides at Golden Oaks Village in Enid and still lives independently. While her mobility is limited, she still gets around in her little red power chair. When Ruby is not busy crocheting, she enjoys playing cards and bingo with her friends and reading.

According to Ruby's daughter-in-law, Sherry Wilson, who is also a volunteer at Bass, Ruby finds great joy and pride in serving her community.

We are grateful for Ruby, Sherry and all of our incredible volunteers at INTEGRIS Health, and we wish Ruby a very happy birthday!



Ruby celebrated her 102nd birthday later this month.

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Edmond Resident Places Top 10 at Pageant

Story and photo by Van Mitchell, Staff Writer

RIGHT: Roxanne Parks of Edmond recently placed in the Top 10 in the Ms. Senior America Pageant held in Hershey, Penn.

Roxanne Parks of Edmond wants seniors to know that life is worth living, and to embrace it to its fullest.

That's the message the Oklahoma contestant presented at the 2022 Ms. Senior America Pageant held in early September in Hershey, Penn. With 44 states represented, Parks was a top 10 pageant finalist.

"I was able to be one of the finalists," Parks said. "The competition was so stiff I was surprised that I was a finalist. The top placeholders were singers and a concert pianist. I did a spoken word monologue."

According to the Ms. Senior America Pageant website, today's seniors seek personal growth through continuing education and community service in forums responsive to their special needs and lifestyles, and Senior America is there to encourage those activities through the Ms. Senior America Pageant, and other activities designed to promote the dignity and value of America's seniors.

Parks said being a finalist was a goal she wanted to achieve.

"That was a big goal of mine because the state of Oklahoma hadn't finished in the top 10 since 2011," she said. "We wanted to show up and show well with our senior community. We wanted to have a comeback and we are here. We were super excited to do so."

Parks is the author of two books, certified life coach, and corporate care chaplain working with corporations on mental health initiatives. She also has a weekly podcast called "The Hidden Jewels."

"The Hidden Jewels podcast is about telling seniors that while they may not have a title like Vice-President, they have a lot to say about a life well-lived," she said.

Parks said she never saw herself as a pageant contestant until she joined an organization called The Cameo Club, which promotes the well-being and successes of seniors over age 60. That led to her becoming a contestant in the 2016 Ms. Oklahoma Senior America Pageant.



"The Lord really convinced me that I should be a part of this (pageant)," she said. "At the last minute in 2016, I entered the pageant, and I got first runner-up."

The Ms. Oklahoma Senior America Pageant is an event for women ages 60-and-up. Participants compete in a variety of competitions including talent, evening wear, interview with a judges panel, and discuss their philosophy of life, said Carol Kalenburger, serves as the Oklahoma State Administrator for Ms. Senior America.

"The Ms. Oklahoma Senior America Pageant is not a beauty pageant," she said. "The pageant redefines and gives honor to the senior women in all her glory. The goal of the pageant is to enrich and empower the lives of all seniors, and promote senior women and their accomplishments, as well as championing healthy aging, wellness, and mental well-being. These ladies are talented and dynamic. It proves that just because a woman reaches a certain age, her talents do not cease."

The next Ms. Oklahoma Senior America Pageant will be held April 15, 2023 at the new Performing Arts Center in Mustang.

Parks said the 2022 national pageant was the first in-person pageant since 2019, with other pageants being held virtually due to COVID-19.

She said during the COVID years, Ms. Oklahoma Senior Pageant officials utilized first runner-up contestants from the state pageant to



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See PAGEANT 19

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CELEBRATE AUTUMN BY “FALL PROOFING” YOUR HOME

Story by Joyce Clark, Executive Director - Saint Ann Retirement Center

Senior living communities are a popular choice for people with a history of falling down because typically the building has design features to help reduce fall risk. Minimum thresholds, walk-in showers, handrails, contrasting colors, low-pile flooring, and non-glare lighting are examples of some senior living building amenities that help to lower fall incidents. You can implement these and other safety enhancements in your own home.

As people age they experience physical and lifestyle changes that can also lead to falls. Health conditions such as Parkinson’s disease, stroke, heart arrhythmias, dehydration, inner ear problems, vertigo, and urinary tract infection can increase a person’s chance of falling. Other risk factors include:

- Dizziness
- Foot problems like numbness, corns, bunions, ingrown nails, or ulcerations
- Cataracts, glaucoma, depth perception and vision problems
- Weak muscles or poor balance
- Confusion or memory loss
- Drinking too much alcohol
- Vitamin D deficiency

It is a good idea to show a complete list of all medications, herbs, and remedies to your physician at each visit to help maintain safety and good health. Medication side effects or taking a number of medications at the same time can also increase fall risk. Even some over-the-counter medicines can affect balance and walking steadiness. Medications that most commonly cause blurred vision, dizziness, unsteadiness, drowsiness, or difficulty thinking include:

- Blood pressure lowering medications
- Sleep aids and sedatives
- Antidepressants and psychotropics
- Anticonvulsants for epilepsy

Some other general tips to reduce fall risk are:

- Have your eyes and vision examined annually.
- Stay physically active. Exercise helps to prevent falls, especially activities that enhance balance and coordination. A

lot of exercise and stretching can be done from or using a sturdy chair for balance.

- Wear shoes with non-slip soles. Socks can be a slipping risk.
- Wear pants and clothing that are properly hemmed and don’t drag on the ground.
- Take your time moving from a lying or sitting position to standing.
- Use the arms of sturdy furniture when you sit down, reach, or stand up.
- Use a reacher to retrieve items from the floor without bending over and from high shelves without using a footstool. You can use a reacher to wipe up spills while seated or standing.
- Keep a mobile telephone nearby in an easy to reach location.
- Wear an emergency call pendant or have “Alexa” in different rooms programmed to call for help when requested.

FLOORS AND FURNITURE

- Clean up clutter. Move newspapers, furniture, plants, and electrical cords out of traffic areas.
- Store clothing, towels, and household items where you can safely reach them.
- Eliminate uneven floor surfaces. Replace high doorway thresholds between rooms with low, beveled ones, or remove them.
- Replace thick carpets with dense, low-pile carpet or leave the floors uncovered.
- Arrange furniture to give you plenty of room to walk freely.
- Secure carpets to the floor and stairs. Remove throw rugs. Use non-slip rugs or attach rugs to the floor with double-sided tape.
- Put non-slip tape strips on steps, bathtub, and floors.

BATHROOM

- Use a shower chair / bench.
- Rinse all soap from tub / shower before getting out.
- Install adjustable height or hand-held showerhead.
- Mount grab bars with secure reinforcement at the toilet, bath, and shower walls.
- Secure bath mats with non-slip, double-sided rug tape.
- Install a night-light to help you get to the bathroom safely. There are also motion detector versions that automatically light up as you approach the area.

BEDROOM

- Sit in a sturdy armchair to dress and undress.
- Use a long-handled shoehorn to put on shoes without bending over.
- Use a dressing stick to pull on pants or skirts, take off socks, and reach hanging clothes.
- Place a portable commode or a plastic urinal near your bed.

KITCHEN

- Keep clean pans on the stove or in a countertop rack instead of hanging or putting them in a cabinet.
- Store plates, bowls, cups, and other frequently used items in an easily accessible drawer or shelf.



Joyce Clark, Executive Director of Saint Ann Retirement Center in Oklahoma City.

- Sit in a sturdy chair when you cut vegetables or do other kitchen tasks.
- Install slide-out shelving or a lazy susan.
- Use a wheeled cart for extra storage and to help move heavy items. For example, use it to move a dish from the refrigerator to the oven.
- Keep the floor dry. Have paper towels and a reacher handy for cleanup.

STAIRWAYS

- Make sure handrails are securely fastened.
- Install handrails on both sides of steps.
- Put non-slip tape on steps.
- Turn on lights before going up or down stairs.
- Take a pause before going up or down stairs.

LIGHTING

- Place nightlights in hallways, bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchen, and stairways.
- Install light switches at the top and bottom of stairs.
- Place a lamp near your bed. Touch on/off lamps are easier to use.
- Add lighting to dark spaces, entrances, and walkways. Motion detector lights can be a good option when they are set to stay on for a while.
- Keep a flashlight by your bed and in other easy to find locations in case the power goes out.
- Use light bulbs that have the highest wattage recommended for the fixture.

About Joyce: Joyce Clark is the Campus Director of Saint Ann Retirement Center, which offers independent and assisted living. She says watching people regain their strength, balance, and health is one of her team’s greatest rewards.

Clark encourages people to be extra careful at home getting in and out of the bathtub, where many people tend to fall. Call Lisa at Saint Ann Retirement Center, (405) 721-0747 Ext #322, if you would like more tips and helpful information.

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PAGEANT

Continued from Page 17

serve as the Oklahoma delegate at the Ms. Senior America Pageant.

"Through the COVID years, they shut down the pageants just like they shut down the world," Parks said. "In 2021, they called me, being a prior first runner-up, I would represent our state as Ms. Oklahoma Senior America, and vie for the title."

Kalenburger said Parks continues to promote both the state and national pageants, and promotes seniors everywhere.

"She will promote Ms. Senior America for the state of Oklahoma by speaking, and trying to get more contestants, and sharing her

life experience," she said. "Seniors are the backbone of America and America's most valuable treasure. It is upon their knowledge, experience and resources that the younger generation has an opportunity to build a better society. Senior women are inspiring role models and mentors, not only to their peers, but to the younger generation."

Parks said she enjoys reaching all generations of people.

"I like to spend every moment that I can building and encouraging others," she said. "Every day we have choices in front of us. It takes courage to stay out there and stay in the game. I am proud of those that do, and I challenge us to that every day until we die instead of hiding away."

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Archery Seasons Among Openers Set Oct. 1

Oct. 1 will be a busy day for thousands of “stick-and-string” hunters in Oklahoma. That Saturday is when several archery hunting seasons will open across the state. Those seasons are:

- Deer archery, running through Jan. 15, 2023.
- Elk archery, on private lands through Jan. 15, 2023 (or until quota is met).
- Black bear archery, running through Oct. 16.
- Fall turkey archery, running through Jan. 15, 2023.
- Pronghorn antelope archery, running through Oct. 14.

The popularity of archery hunting continues to grow in Oklahoma. For the third year in a row, archery deer hunters set a record with 36,522 deer taken, which accounted for 31 percent of all deer harvested in the state last year.

The annual Game Harvest Survey (GHS), a scientific survey conducted by the Wildlife Department, has been tracking hunter metrics for decades. The GHS estimated that 117,216 archers took to the field this past season with a deer license in hand.

“Another off-season has come and gone. Big game hunters will be heading back to the woods come October 1st and have a lot to look forward to,” said Dallas Barber, Big Game Biologist with the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation.

“Populations are in good shape even amid the drought conditions that

plagued much of the state during the summer. These first few weeks can be tough due to warm conditions, so archery hunters might place more effort in that first and last hour of legal shooting light.”

Barber said the early season is an ideal time to capitalize on antlerless deer opportunities. Why not fill the freezer before focusing on bagging that big buck?

According to the 2021-22 Big Game Harvest Report published in the September/October issue of Outdoor Oklahoma magazine, archery hunters took 16,097 antlerless deer compared to 20,425 antlered deer.

“Doe harvest is critical to keeping a herd healthy,” he said. “It’s again time for hunters to meet the challenge to **let young bucks grow and take a doe.**”

In southeastern Oklahoma, archery hunters took 66 black bears last year. Senior Wildlife Biologist Jeff Ford said the summer’s hot and dry conditions could make this year’s bear hunting more challenging.

“These conditions may affect the fall mast crop, making it harder to find some good bear sign in the woods. So concentrate on water resources to find sign. Bears will frequent watering holes when the weather is hot.

“I would say the most important thing is to find an area with fresh bear sign and then just stay with it. Most successful bear hunters start early in the season, and you may have to sit all day.”

Ford suggests public land hunters should scout as early as possible for areas with acorns (preferably white oak), which are most preferred by bears. “The acorns will start falling around the first of October, and bears are going to be searching them out.”

Bear hunters (including lifetime license holders) must buy a bear license before the season opens, as those licenses will not be sold after Sept. 30.

For complete regulations — including required licenses, open areas, harvest quotas, and reporting requirements — consult the 2022-23 Oklahoma Fishing and Hunting Regulations online at www.wildlifedepartment.com, on the Go Outdoors Oklahoma mobile app or Apple or Android, or in print free at license dealers statewide.

CROSSWORD CORNER

Across

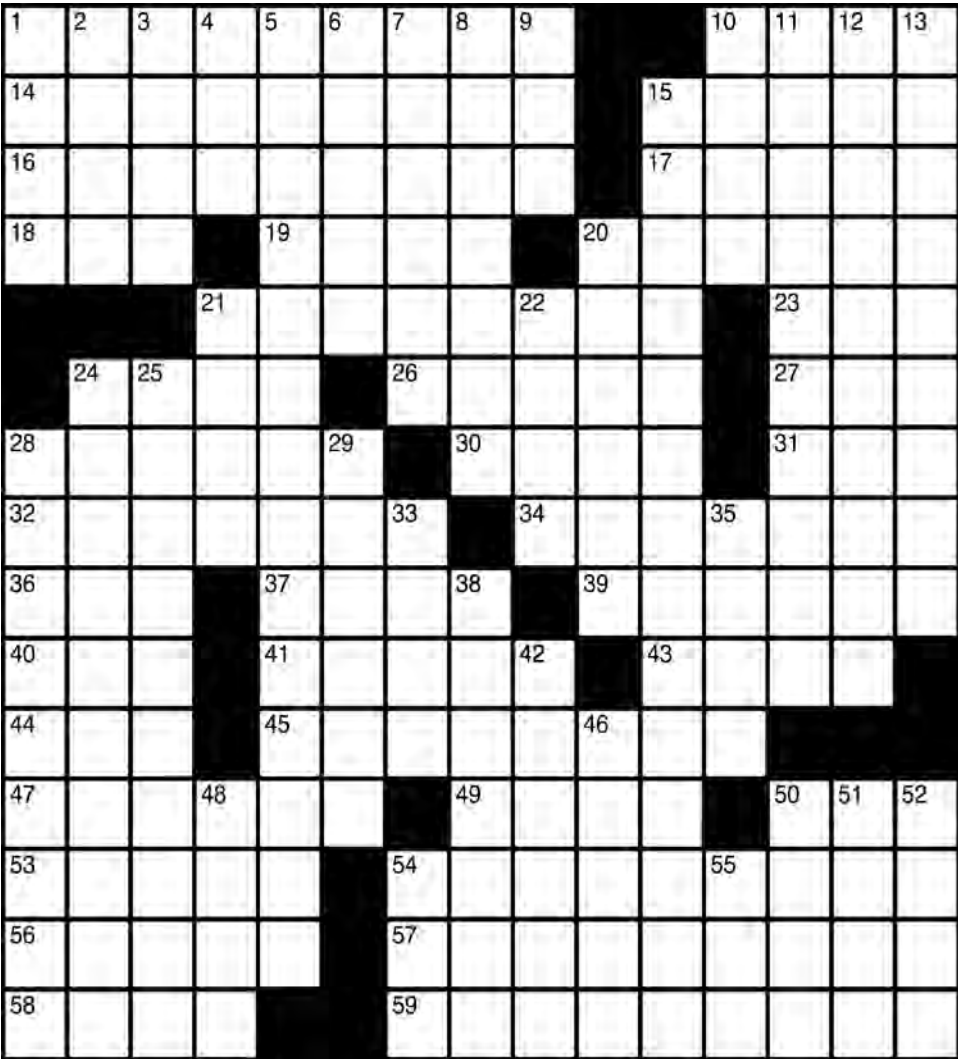
- 1 Heard but not seen, as sound effects
10 Disconcerts
14 In a fog
15 Shore seen on TV
16 Tests
17 Film composer
Morricone
18 ___-Caps
19 Stand up
20 ___ Waters, most senior Black woman in Congress
21 Reached the nadir, with “out”
23 Waffle center?
24 ___ spot
26 Court figures
27 Bluffer’s objective
28 Casual Fridays attire, perhaps
30 Account
31 ___ Valley: Tucson suburb
32 Begrudges
34 Breville product
36 “___ luck?”
37 Five carats
39 Tswana for “fly”
40 Bridge action
41 Sights seen by seers, maybe
43 Throw
44 Doce meses
45 Valiant
47 Abstract

Down

- 49 Plant with corms
50 Greek letter used in the Shrödinger equation
53 Put forward
54 Black Sabbath devotee, say
56 Hirsch of “Once Upon a Time in Hollywood”
57 Fair-haired
58 Estonian neighbor
59 Reels
1 Decides
2 Flowerless plant
3 Texas river named for its chilly waters
4 Busy pro around this time
5 “Seriously ... ”
6 Distinction
7 Celebrates big-time
8 Let
9 They’re seen in some wars
10 Spell
11 She plays Sheldon’s grandma (Meemaw) on “Young Sheldon”
12 Much of Vancouver Island
13 Skechers milieu
15 The Israel Museum display
20 Wine denigrated in “Sideways”

21 Make madeleines, e.g.

- 22 Heart
24 Conformist’s phrase
25 “Not too much”
28 Fourth-grade teacher in Springfield Elementary School
29 Automotive suspension components
33 First name in desserts
35 See 55-Down
38 Blue- or gray-furred cat
42 Wrap snugly
46 Small-muzzled horses
48 TD Garden NBAer
50 Four-time Gold Glove winner Tony
51 ___ City: Baghdad suburb
52 Ancient midpoint marker, more or less
54 Family figures
55 With 35-Down, precarious place



Answers on page 27

OKLAHOMA HISTORY

Oct./Nov. 2022 Events

For a full list of events/details visit: www.okhistory.org/calendar/ohs

"Americana: A Musical Tour of the USA" featuring Jonas Nordwall September 26, 7 p.m.–8:30 p.m. Oklahoma History Center, 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive Oklahoma City, OK 73105. The fall performance of the Kilgen Organ series will feature organist Jonas Nordwall, presenting musical selections that follow the theme "Americana: A Musical Tour of the USA."

Presente in Oklahoma! September 27, 11 a.m.–1 p.m. September 15 to October 15 is Hispanic American Heritage Month. To celebrate the significant contributions of Latinos in the state of Oklahoma, the OHS Multicultural Office is planning "Presente in Oklahoma!," a panel discussion focusing on Hispanic history to be held at the Oklahoma History Center on Tuesday, September 27, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The panel will consist of historians, scholars, and representatives from Hispanic families with deep roots in Oklahoma.

Annual Quilt Show opens Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum, 1141 Pawnee Bill Road Pawnee, OK 74058 Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum will host its annual Quilt Show during the month of October, featuring heirloom and modern quilts from across the state. Cimarron Valley Quilt Guild and Pawnee Bill Quilt Guild members are instrumental in putting together this yearly event. The show opens on Saturday, October 1, and closes on Sunday, October 30.

Research Center Book Sale The Oklahoma Historical Society's John and Eleanor Kirkpatrick Research Center will host its book sale Wednesday, October 5, through Saturday, October 8, at the Oklahoma History Center, located at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive in Oklahoma City. The sale is open from 10 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, and from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday. The sale will include books on a variety of topics, featuring many rare and out-of-print titles.

"History Never Dies" Halloween Carnival Oklahoma Territorial Museum and Carnegie Library, 406 East Oklahoma Avenue Guthrie, OK 73044. The Oklahoma Territorial Museum in Guthrie will host its "History Never Dies" Halloween Carnival on Saturday, October 29, from 5 to 7 p.m. This free, family-friendly event returns with a Hocus Pocus theme. At the two-hour event, families can enjoy carnival games, prizes, food, candy, and Halloween-themed activities both inside and outside of the museum.

Doaksville Historic Candlelight Tour Fort Towson Historic Site, HC 63, Box 1580 Fort Towson, OK 74735. Experience the history of southeastern Oklahoma at the annual Doaksville Candlelight Tours. Tours will be held Friday, October 7, and Saturday, October 8, beginning at 6:30 p.m., with the last tour departing at 10 p.m. A guide will take visitors on a 45-minute walking tour through the streets of this once prominent town. The venues on the tour will cover specific historic events in Doaksville's history.

Quilting workshop with Martha Ray Sod House Museum, 4628 State Highway 8 Aline, OK 73716. Visit the Sod House Museum southeast of Aline for a quilting workshop on Saturday. The workshop will take place from 9 to 11 a.m. with instructor Martha Ray, and the cost is \$5 per person. For more information, please contact Director Renee Trindle at 580-463-2441 or sodhouse@history.ok.gov.

History and Haunts at the Overholser October 8, 15, 22, 28, 6 p.m.–8 p.m. Visit the Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion for History and Haunts at the Overholser! The tours will begin with a brief introduction in the Overholser Mansion Carriage House followed by a rare glimpse inside the Henry and Anna Overholser Mansion after dark. See the home in its nighttime splendor, learn the history of the home and its former occupants, and discover why some say they are still roaming the halls! The tour will give time for guests to explore the historic home on their own. Tickets are \$25 per person and each night is limited to 30 attendees, tickets are non-refundable. Purchase tickets online: <https://www.preservationok.org/historyandhaunts>

Folklife Festival Oklahoma History Center, 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive Oklahoma City, OK 73105. On Saturday, October 15, the Oklahoma History Center will host the annual Folklife Festival. The Folklife Festival is designed to engage visitors with opportunities to experience other cultures and traditions. Visitors are there to participate in the activities, not just observe.

Will's Cowboy Trader Days at the Ranch Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch, 9501 East 380 Road Oologah, OK 74053. On the third Saturday of the month from April to October, make the trip to the Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch in Oologah to take part in Will's Cowboy Trader Days. See locally handcrafted

and homemade items, saddles, cowboy hats, tack, boots, and a variety of work created by local artisans from October 15, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is FREE.

Cemetery Symbols: Carved in Stone Oklahoma History Center, 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive Oklahoma City, OK 73105. Join the Oklahoma History Center to explore the meaning behind historic gravestones on Saturday, October 29, from 1 to 3 p.m. Gravestones and cemeteries are rich in a language of symbols. Symbols can be difficult to interpret because their meaning changes over time. By examining the grave markers, one can learn more than just the person's name. This in-person class for ages 16 and up will provide the skills necessary to investigate the past through tombstones.

Ghost Stories Candlelight Tour Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum, 1141 Pawnee Bill Road Pawnee, OK 74058. Visit the Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum to take part in a Ghost Stories Candlelight Tour for one night only on Saturday, October 29, from 6:30 to 9 p.m. Guides will lead guests through an outdoor tour in the park telling spine-tingling, ghostly tales about Oklahoma, the surrounding area, and the Pawnee Bill Ranch. The tours will leave every 30 minutes from the museum building that night, so bundle up for cool weather. Admission is \$5 per person.

Blacksmithing Demonstrations with the Saltfork Craftsmen November 5, Cherokee Strip Museum and Rose Hill School, 2617 West Fir Street Perry, OK 73077. Visit the Cherokee Strip Museum in Perry to watch the Saltfork Craftsmen give a Blacksmithing Demonstration in the blacksmith shop. The demonstration will take place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Guests can enjoy watching the craftsmen work and will have an opportunity for safe hands-on experiences. This event is for those who enjoy watching craftsmen at work, and for young and old alike to try their hand at the craft. The forge will be lighted at 10:00 a.m.

Cast-Iron Cooking class Chisholm Trail Museum and Horizon Hill, 605 Zellers Avenue Kingfisher, OK 73750. The Chisholm Trail Museum in Kingfisher will host a Cast-Iron Cooking class on Saturday, November 5, from noon to 4 p.m. In this casual, fun class, students will learn to care for and cook in cast-iron cookware. Participants will create a Dutch oven delight and participate in a group meal. The class will explore historical and modern recipes while learning backyard cooking skills. This class is restricted to children ages 10 and older with an adult.

Daughter of Dawn film screening at the Poncan Theatre November 6, 2 p.m.–3 p.m. Poncan Theatre, 104 East Grand Avenue Ponca City, OK 74601. On Sunday, November 6, at 2 p.m. the Pioneer Woman Museum and Statue will host a film screening of "The Daughter of Dawn" at the Poncan Theatre, located at 104 E. Grand Ave. in Ponca City. Rather than a set ticket price, patrons are encouraged to give a donation as admission to the screening. The program begins at 2 p.m.

Choctaw Code Talkers documentary film screening November 12, 1 p.m.–3 p.m. Oklahoma History Center, 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive Oklahoma City, OK 73105. In honor of Native American Heritage Month, on Saturday, November 12, from 1 to 3 p.m., the Oklahoma History Center will screen the documentary of Choctaw Code Talkers. In 1918, although the Choctaw soldiers of the US American Expeditionary Forces were not considered citizens of the country, they served, using the Choctaw language as a powerful tool against the German Forces in World War I.

Rushmore Four performances at the Oklahoma History Center November 16, 2 p.m. Oklahoma History Center, 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive Oklahoma City, OK 73105. On Wednesday, November 16, the Rushmore Four, a program featuring the presidents who appear on Mount Rushmore, will be returning to the Oklahoma History Center! Performances are scheduled for 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. There is no charge for the 2 p.m. performance, however, patrons are required to pre-register. Admission for the evening performance is \$10 for Historical Society members and \$20 for nonmembers.

"Hunter Trapper" living history program Fort Gibson Historic Site, 907 North Garrison Avenue Fort Gibson, OK 74434. On Friday, November 18, and Saturday, November 19, 2022, from 10 a.m. to noon and again from 1 to 3 p.m., the Fort Gibson Historic Site will hold a living history program about the practices of hunters and trappers of the area. Visitors will learn about the trade through a hands-on examination of the different animal furs and by seeing the different equipment, tools, and paraphernalia involved in making a successful hunting season.

"Holiday Special" Kilgen Organ Performance feat. Lance Luce Oklahoma History Center, 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive Oklahoma City, OK 73105. On Monday, November 28, from 7 to 8:30 p.m., the Oklahoma History Center will present the 2022 winter performance of the Kilgen Organ series featuring organist Lance Luce. The theme for the concert will be "Holiday Special." A short film and an audience sing-along are planned as a part of the performance. Lance Luce is an internationally acclaimed theatre organist.

TINSELTOWN TALKS:

The screen horrors of Lynda Day George

By Nick Thomas

While best known for joining the cast of the popular CBS spy series "Mission: Impossible" for the last two seasons in the early 70s, Lynda Day George became something of a minor horror movie icon before retiring from acting in the late 80s.

In the horror realm, she portrayed characters threatened by an army of ants ("Ants," 1977), a pack of wild dogs ("Day of the Animals," 1977), a demonic force ("Beyond Evil," 1980), a haunted mirror ("Fear No Evil," 1969), a chainsaw-wielding killer ("Pieces," 1982), and even a deranged undertaker's assistant in "Mortuary," her final film in 1983.

"I enjoyed doing them, but I also love comedy and drama," said Day George from her home in Sequim, Washington.

Off-screen, the actress also experienced considerable drama, although horror might be a more appropriate description of her

personal tragedies including the loss of two husbands – one succumbing to cancer and another from a sudden heart attack.

Actor Christopher George, Day George's second husband of some 13 years, died just weeks after the release of "Mortuary" which co-starred the husband-and-wife acting team. She continued to guest-star in another half-dozen TV shows during the remainder of the decade before officially retiring, eventually remarrying in 1990 and later moving to Washington.

"After Chris died, I needed to take care of my family," she explained. "I've also lost my mother, father, step-dad, and brother, so there's been a lot of loss to deal with. But right now, I'm feeling great living here in Washington and have a wonderful life with my daughter and friends. My house is between the ocean and an inlet, and I love it here. I do a lot of



Lynda Day George in her Sequim, Wash., garden.



Lynda Day George with Michael Ansara in Day of the Animals - Montoro Productions.

gardening and I'm involved with many local groups including the theater."

Despite the tragedies, Lynda has retained her genial nature and joyful spirit and still sports her trademark long blonde hair. Her positive attitude and sense of humor have clearly helped her survive the personal hardships as well as her past macabre movies such as the gruesome theme of "Day of the Animals," which depicted the cast being mauled by enraged birds, dogs, wolves, bears, rats, and snakes.

She remembers filming was periodically paused when fellow actors including Leslie Nielsen, Michael Ansara, and Richard Jaeckel would break out in laughter.

"We just had so much fun making it," she recalled. "Michael was a terrific, funny guy. Richard was a treasure, just a sweetheart. Every time I saw him after that he was just a big pile of sugar. And Leslie Nielsen could make you laugh at the drop of a hat – he was a one-man riot!"

In one scene, crazed dogs were required to leap through a cabin window and attack the characters. "I could be petting one, then the trainer would give a command and it would take off like a shot or become threatening and begin growling. They were terrific animal actors."

An animal lover herself who shares her home with several dogs and cats, Day George not only enjoyed working with the animals but, as a longtime environmentalist, embraced the movie for bringing attention to ozone layer depletion, a significant environmental concern in the 70s (and bizarrely responsible for the creatures' aggression in the film's script).

While the concerns of ozone depletion have been replaced by global warming worries, Day George remains optimistic about the planet's future despite widespread gloomy predictions.

"We have so many extraordinary people who are teaching us more and more about our planet. Bless them all."

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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Son of Edmond natives supports U.S. Navy's "Take Charge and Move Out" mission



Chief Petty Officer Joel Hall. Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class.

By Stephanie Fox, Navy Office of Community Outreach

TINKER AIR FORCE BASE, Okla. - Chief Petty Officer Joel Hall is serving in the U.S. Navy as part of the nation's nuclear deterrence mission at Strategic Communications Wing One (STRATCOMMWING ONE). Its TACAMO ("Take Charge and Move Out") mission provides airborne communication links to nuclear missile units of U.S. Strategic Command.

Hall, a 1994 Corona High School graduate, joined the Navy 24 years ago.

"I joined the Navy because I wanted to better myself," said Hall. "I thought the military could provide me with some much-needed structure."

Today, Hall's parents and family all live close by in Edmond, Oklahoma.

"Thank you to my wife and kids for their support," said Hall. "My parents were another reason I joined. I wanted them to be proud."

The Navy's presence aboard an Air Force base in the middle of America may seem like an odd location given its distance from any ocean; however, the central location allows for the deployment of aircraft to both coasts and the Gulf of Mexico on a moment's notice. This quick response is key to the success of the nuclear deterrence mission.

The Navy command consists of a Wing staff, the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training, and three Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadrons: The "Ironmen" of VQ 3, the "Shadows" of VQ 4 and the "Roughnecks" of VQ 7.

Hall serves as a Navy career counselor with VQ 4.

"My favorite thing about my job is getting to help other sailors," said Hall.

STRATCOMMWING One employs more than 1,300 active-duty sailors and 100 contractors to provide maintenance, security, operations, administration, training and logistic support for the Boeing E-6 Mercury aircraft fleet, an airborne command post and communications relay based on the Boeing 707.

Their mission stems from the original 1961 Cold War order known as "Take Charge and Move Out!" Adapted as TACAMO and now the command's nickname, the men and women of TACAMO continue to provide a survivable communication link between national decision makers and the nation's nuclear weapons.

The commander-in-chief issues orders to members of the military who operate nuclear weapons aboard submarines, aircraft or in land-based missile silos. Sailors aboard TACAMO E-6 Mercury aircraft provide the one-of-a-kind and most-survivable communication needed for this critical mission.

With more than 90 percent of all trade traveling by sea, and 95 percent of the world's international phone and internet traffic carried through fiber optic cables lying on the ocean floor, Navy officials continue to emphasize that the prosperity and security of the United States is directly linked to a strong and ready Navy.

Serving in the Navy means Hall is part of a team that is taking on new importance in America's focus on rebuilding military readiness, strengthening alliances and reforming business practices in support of the National Defense Strategy.

"The Navy contributes to the National Defense Strategy through our global presence," said Hall.

Hall and the sailors they serve with have many opportunities to achieve accomplishments during their military service.

"My proudest Navy accomplishment is getting to watch my junior sailors succeed," said Hall.

As Hall and other sailors continue to perform missions, they take pride in serving their country in the United States Navy. "Serving in the Navy gives me a sense of pride," added Hall. "I'm honored to have volunteered to do something that most people don't have the ability to."



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HEALTH

Yearly Celebration of Bicycling in Edmond

Story by Darl DeVault, Contributing Editor

One of the state's most family-oriented organized bicycle rides began on a clear morning after rain overnight Sunday, September 11, at Mitch Park, in Edmond. The event is one of the few in the state that allows seniors to ride with their grandkids over 12 years of age in what many term a Grand Event.

The ride offered 27, 40 and 64-mile courses starting in the 280-acre park. The Oklahoma Bicycle Society Streak has evolved into a family event using one of Edmond's premier parks as a base. Edmond's Johnny Carino's Italian Restaurant provided all registered riders a free lunch after the ride.

The ride was moved back to its normal September date because organizers moved it forward last year to avoid conflict with the Red Bud Classic bike ride that had moved later because of COVID-19.

Organizers emphasized the Streak is not a race, and they were proud

the ride was back to being later in the year when it was cooler temperatures. Riders could check their names against the posting of the lucky registered riders winning the 15 door prizes offered by local sponsors.

Again, the ride has been going on for so long that seniors have come to see it as an opportunity to help introduce their grandkids to an organized ride. Adult riders accompanied youth riders (ages 12-18).

Multiple rest stops with restrooms were open until 1 p.m. on the hilly 100K, 40- and 25-mile routes. The ride had not used the hilly courses in 15 years, taking the riders east of Edmond into the hills. The previous course, much flatter, went west around Piedmont.

"The course this year is not my idea of a family-friendly ride, which is how they market the Streak," said

Continued next page



In this Tony de la Vega photo, a senior pedals an E-bike that provides motor assistance on the hills during last year's Streak.



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BICYCLING

Continued from Page 24

longtime area rider Larry Floyd of Oklahoma City. "It was almost all uphill or downhill, and the road surface was like cobblestone in the parts of the course. The old route west toward Piedmont was much more fun and family-friendly."

Ample fluids and snack foods were available at the rest stops. Several local bicycle shops and volunteers provided SAG (Support and Gear) support.

The first 250 riders received event T-shirts, with more than 260 people riding that morning.

Proceeds from the OBS Streak supply helmets for kids who receive bikes from the Salvation Army Buck\$ 4 Bikes program for Christmas.

The OBS is a not-for-profit group dedicated to the promotion of bicycle

safety. It supports bicycling in all its forms and the furtherance of the sport by defending the rights of bicyclists. The OBS is active in working with the city, county and state governments as well as other organizations to improve cyclists' safety and rights and promote the construction of recreational trails and designated bike paths on streets and roads.

OBS organizes weekly rides all year for riders of all levels. See their website for more information about their activities: okcbike.org.

For the latest news on the club activities, upcoming rides throughout the state, and to further the enjoyment of bicycling, the club has an online monthly newsletter, The Pathfinder, available on the website. The club asks seniors to consider joining the OBS to learn more about how to help keep bicycling safe.



Training Offered to Help With Dementia Empathy and Care Strategies

The Oklahoma Dementia Care Network at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center will present a Training for Trainers for health professionals, in November. The event will be hosted by the Donald W. Reynolds Section of Geriatric Medicine at the OU College of Medicine and the department of Health Promotion Sciences at the OU Hudson College of Public Health.

The seminar is designed to elevate the level of care for persons living with dementia and to enhance encounters with older adults with cognitive impairment. Dementia is the loss of cognitive functioning that becomes more common as people grow older, affecting approximately one-third of persons over age 85.

OkDCN's Training for Trainers is offered at no cost to participants. Topics covered will include: person-centered dementia care, infection control in dementia care, skin integrity in dementia care and end of life in dementia care. Participating educators/coordinators will receive a certificate of completion. Presenters include: Thomas Teasdale, DrPH, FGSA, FAGHE; Andrea Golden-Pogue, R.N., MSN; and the OkDCN team.

The training is scheduled from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., November 17, at MetroTech Springlake Campus Business Development Center, 199 Springlake Drive, Room 123, Oklahoma City. To register, go to: ouhealth.com/events-calendar/event-signup/?Event=24744. For more information, please email your name, email and organization to okdcn@ouhsc.edu.



STRANGE BUT TRUE
SO THEY SAY...

BBT In the Philippines, McDonald's serves spaghetti

Some of these weird facts are very unexpected. The pasta comes with a beef tomato sauce and a piece of "McDo" fried chicken.

INTEGRIS Health Hosts Jim Thorpe Courage Awards

The INTEGRIS Health Jim Thorpe Rehabilitation Courage Award was established in 1994 to recognize and honor individuals who have overcome disabilities caused by injury or illness, by facing the physical and mental challenges of rehabilitation with courage and determination. The award is named after the man known as the World's Greatest Athlete, Jim Thorpe, and is presented annually.

On Tuesday, Sept. 20, INTEGRIS Health Jim Thorpe Rehabilitation hosted the 2022 Courage Award Luncheon to celebrate three inspirational men:



Jeremy Hoffman had an underlying health condition, so when he contracted COVID-19 in November of 2020, it was unclear if he would survive. The then 49-year-old from Edmond, fought tooth and nail to re-claim his life.



Michael Calloway of Norman and his wife, Lillie, are middle school sweethearts. They've been through a lot together, the good and the bad. But last November, a bout with COVID nearly took Michael's life and a subsequent stroke stole his ability to communicate. Their story is living proof that love really does endure all things.



Chad Breske, a Choctaw native, was a lineman for an electric company when the dangers of his job became his reality. As a result of the electrocution, he would lose both arms, two ribs, an ear and part of his skull. Still, he continues to push forward - for his children.

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COMMUNITY

U.S. Air Force Celebrates Two Anniversaries

Story and photos by Darl DeVault, Contributing Editor

Locally the U.S. Air Force's 75th-Anniversary celebration took place September 8 at the Oklahoma History Center featuring America's leading Vietnam War Ace, Edmond's retired Col. Chuck DeBellevue, who gave a narrative of his eventful missions.

The Air and Space Forces Association Gerrity Chapter #215, the Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission, and the Oklahoma Defense Industrial Association organized the event to celebrate America's dominance of the skies in armed combat.

To sustain an enduring advantage in its trailblazing 75-year history, the U.S. Air Force's place as the world's most capable and respected source of airpower is well-established. The presentation clarified why the last time an American combatant was killed on the ground by an adversary air force was April 15, 1953.

Retired Air Force Lt. Gen. David Deptula, dean of the Mitchell Institute

of Aerospace Power Studies, traveled from Washington, D.C., to moderate a discussion with DeBellevue on an educational panel wherein he recounted each of his six MiG kills in the skies of North Vietnam. The Mitchell Institute is the only aerospace power-focused think tank in the nation.

Edmond's DeBellevue, 77, is America's last ace to serve on active duty. In the Vietnam War he was a weapons systems officer (WSO) in the F-4 Phantom II fighter. Following his combat tour, DeBellevue attended pilot training and returned to the F-4. During the interview, he credited the real-time support of many people, from crew chiefs and maintainers to cooks and supply guys, for making the F4 effective in battle. While explaining each MiG kill, he said he was a part of an air combat crew with a real team spirit of agile thinking, persistence, and a certain disregard for



From left, retired Air Force Lt. Gen. David Deptula, wife Sally DeBellevue, and retired Col. Chuck DeBellevue pose during the reception.

the rules. DeBellevue commented, "The team that flew with us into Hanoi on a daily basis were all focused on the mission. You had to know we were going to get everyone home. If you had doubts or didn't feel good about the mission, not only would you not go with us, but we would not take you."

In 1972, Hanoi, the capital of North Vietnam, was the most heavily defended city in the world except Moscow, with the thickest air defense system that surface-to-air missiles (SAM), antiaircraft artillery (AAA), and interdiction MiGs could provide.

Early in the presentation, DeBellevue's wife, Sally, was recognized in the audience. DeBellevue explained that in 1972 the communications between him and his wife were by letter, so she got a letter every day that stated, "I was alive last week," knowing the time required for the letter to get to her.

The audience was comprised of 200 veterans and their wives and families, active duty and reserve service members, legislators, and defense and aerospace industry representatives.

The event also marked DeBellevue's 50th year to the day he became America's leading Vietnam War ace. In 1972, DeBellevue became one of only five Americans to achieve flying ace status and the first as a WSO, an integral part of two-person aircrews, with the emergence of air-to-air missiles as the primary weapons during aerial combat. He was credited with a total of six MiG kills, the most earned by any U.S. aviator during the Vietnam War and is a recipient of the Air Force Cross and three Silver Stars.

"A large part of the team did

not fly into combat but were so vitally important to the success of the missions we flew," DeBellevue said. "From getting the jets ready to ensuring the bombs and missiles were loaded and ready, to the electronic techs that kept the systems peaked, to the supply teams who kept the parts and fuel coming to the base, the support troops and, of course, the cook who had breakfast ready at 4:30 every morning, the team worked well together. They all put the confidence in the jet that allowed me to take it into North Vietnam every day and to know it was ready for whatever happened."

Deptula retired in 2010 after 34 years of service, where—among other accomplishments—he was the principal attack planner for the Desert Storm air campaign in 1991, commander of no-fly zone operations over Iraq, where he flew 82 combat missions as a general officer. He planned and orchestrated air operations over Afghanistan in 2001 in response to the 911 attacks.

Deptula observed DeBellevue's achievement in an interview, "We all know him as America's top ace of the Vietnam War and the last ace to serve on active duty in the United States Air Force. But there's a lot more to Chuck—excellence, teamwork, and dedication to duty are themes that resonate throughout his life. History books may celebrate him for his MiG kills, but what we are here to celebrate is a lifetime of service."

After the one-hour presentation, AAR, Boeing, Captain Bob Ford, the Air Warrior Courage Foundation, and the Retail Liquor Association of Oklahoma sponsored a defense and aerospace industry reception.

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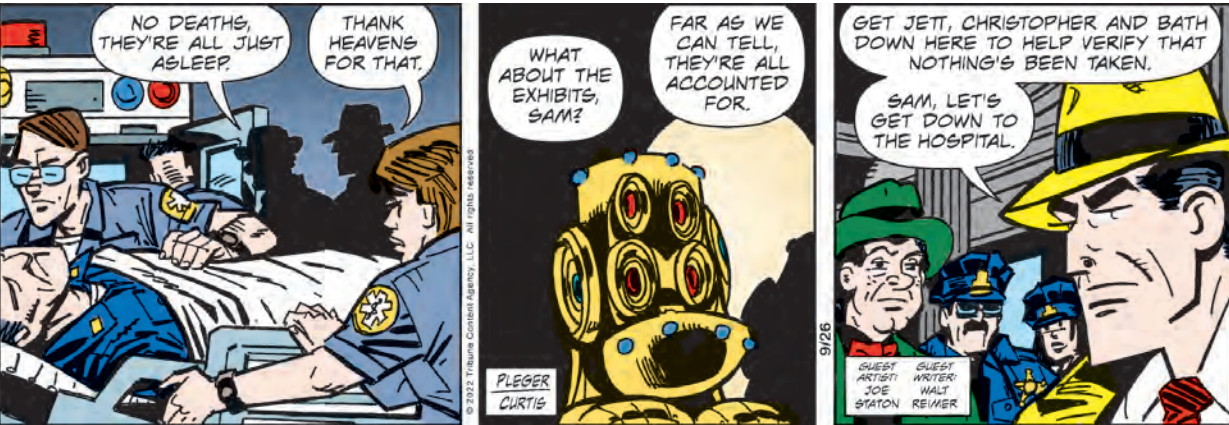
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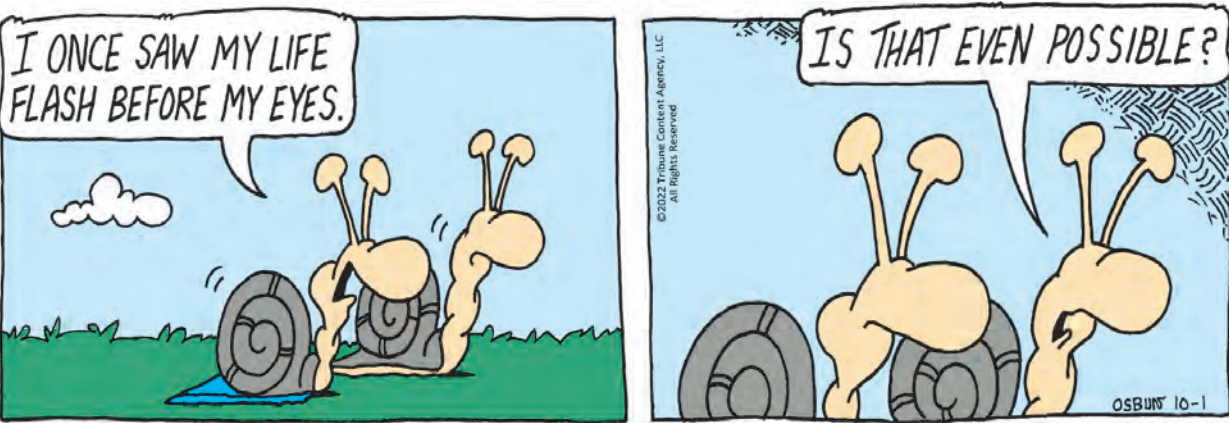
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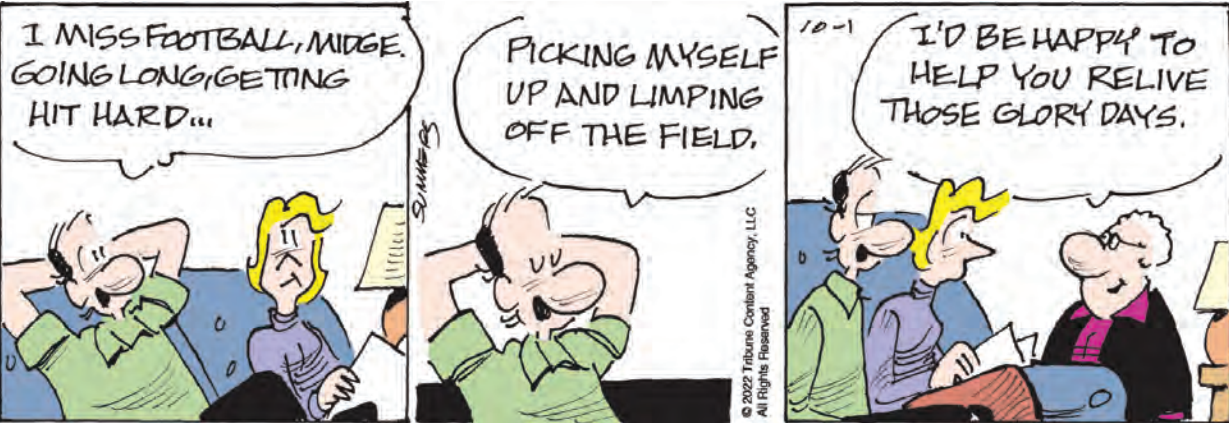
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JUMBLE

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(Answers next month)

September Jumbles: ISSUE DIMLY THRILL FLABBY
Answers Answer: The painting of the moonshiner's equipment was a — STILL LIFE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

12/25

IN A RACE WITH ANOTHER REINDEER, RUDOLPH —

MINION ALLEY - It's good to be a Minion



In the future, King Charles needs to take a few selfies

by Greg Schwem

At last check, the time spent waiting for a chance to file past Queen Elizabeth's coffin was estimated at 24 hours. Prior to her burial, the time spent waiting to file past Queen Elizabeth's coffin was estimated at 24 hours, a figure made slightly higher when Piers Morgan tried cutting in line.

Note, I have no proof Morgan actually did that; but the man seems capable, doesn't he?

It's probably a good thing the Queen was officially laid to rest yesterday. Had the public viewing at Westminster Hall lasted any longer, King Charles III may have been lying alongside his mum by the time some reached the queue's front.

As I watched new reports of the most publicized funeral since, well, since Elizabeth's former daughter-in-law, Princess Diana, I wondered what would make anyone stand on their feet that long, simply to spend a few moments reflecting in front of a flag-draped casket? Knowing my bladder's limitations, I would be forced to seek out a kindly looking British chap and ask that he hold my place while I ducked into a public loo. Sadly, I would have to repeat this process 24 times.

Then the answer came to me: The queen wasn't a fan of selfies.

Face it, when a famous person dies, social media immediately becomes littered with posts from users recounting the time they met the dearly departed, accompanied of course by a photo as proof. This year I often felt like I was the ONLY person who didn't meet Olivia Newton-John. Or Gilbert Gottfried. Or Vin Scully. Or Madeleine Albright. The list goes on and on.

Don't get me wrong, I have taken my share of celebrity selfies. When Magic Johnson, Pat Riley, or, heaven forbid, Bruce Springsteen enter immortality, I will be frantically scrolling my phone, eventually finding proof of my encounter, which I will post on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook along with the obligatory affirmation that, yes, all were nice, gracious and accommodating.

But, as I write this, it's been more than a week since Elizabeth's death and I have yet to see one photo of her with a random individual who encountered her in a restaurant, aboard a flight or in a public park and summoned the nerve to hold up an iPhone and say, "Your Majesty, would you mind?"

For someone who ruled over 50 countries, public access to Elizabeth seemed remarkably limited. One never saw her riding a bike like Joe Biden or, like his predecessor, crashing a wedding at one of her properties and attempting to justify it with a goofy thumbs-up gesture. Then again, I'm not sure Windsor Castle is for rent. I hope not, as I have two unmarried daughters who may be eyeing it as the ultimate destination wedding site.

I have seen photos of the queen with non-family members, but most were as famous, if not more so, than she. When your name is Mick Jagger or Elton John, and you are summoned to Buckingham Palace to be knighted, then I guess there are multiple opportunities for selfies.

It's rare, but occasionally I will see a selfie of a non-celebrity with Pope Francis, or one of his predecessors. It's not that difficult, considering tickets to a papal audience are free and the Pope has been known to wander into the crowds following masses. One just needs a readily available phone and a little luck.

Since Elizabeth's death, much has been made about the sheltered life she led after her coronation in 1953. I saw more photos of her with horses and corgis than I did with people. Charles, take note, you may not be the most popular monarch — you've already been met with shouts of, "Not my King" — but the desire to be close to your mother, even in death, shows that people still love the Royal Family.

Maybe it's time to reciprocate. Ditch the parades. Instead, take an



Greg Schwem is a corporate stand-up comedian and author.



King Charles III and members of the royal family follow behind the coffin of Queen Elizabeth II, draped in the Royal Standard with the Imperial State Crown and the Sovereign's orb and sceptre, as it is carried out of Westminster Abbey after her State Funeral. Picture date: Monday September 19, 2022. Photo by Danny Lawson/PA Wire/ABACAPRESS.COM

unannounced stroll through Hyde Park wearing jeans, sneak up behind a canoodling couple and ask how their day is going. Visit Wimbledon next summer and sit with the fans, as opposed to in the Royal Box. Cheer the loudest when phenom Carlos Alcaraz rips a backhand winner. Hell, start the wave. And yes, pose for selfies.

You will get thousands of "likes."

(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)

VOLUNTEER TWO HOURS A WEEK AS AN OMBUDSMAN

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 to become a designated volunteer and spend a minimum of 2 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 and pass a national background check.

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 October 10 & 11 (Monday and Tuesday) from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Areawide Aging Agency located at 4101 Perimeter Center Drive, Suite 310, Oklahoma City, OK. Both sessions must be completed to become a designated volunteer.

For more information or to RSVP for the upcoming training, contact Dana Crum, LTC Ombudsman Supervisor at (405) 942-8500 to RSVP. There are limited slots available, RSVP today.

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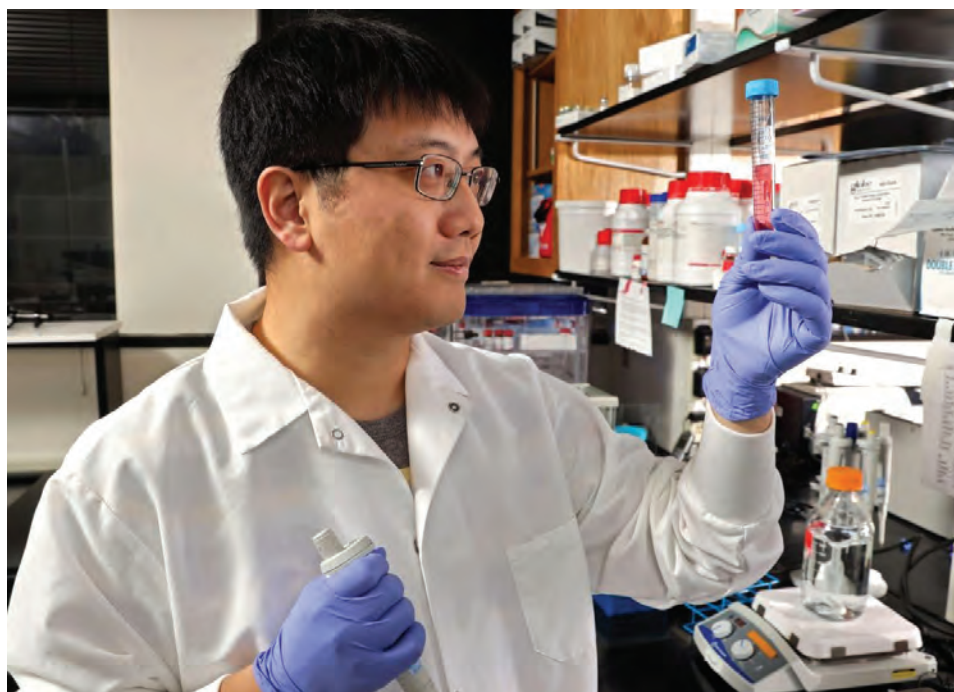
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OMRF receives \$2.1 million to study vessel development



Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientist Pengchun Yu, Ph.D.

The National Institutes of Health has awarded \$2.1 million to an Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientist for the continued study of lymphatic vessels.

Experiments funded by the five-year grant to vascular biologist Pengchun Yu, Ph.D., will focus on turning on and off the mechanisms that trigger production of these vessels.

Lymphatic vessels form one of the body's two superhighway systems. Blood vessels transport blood, oxygen and nutrients throughout the body. Lymphatic vessels collect lymph – the fluids that leak from blood vessels – and return it to the bloodstream.

While normally beneficial, lymphatic vessels sometimes sabotage healing. For instance, these vessels contribute to organ rejection after a transplant. The reason: Lymphatic vessels also transport immune cells, and these cells often recognize the donor organ as foreign.

Separately, cancer cells use lymphatic vessels to metastasize or spread to other parts of the body. "That's why during a breast cancer surgery, surgeons remove lymph nodes to find out how far tumor cells have traveled and to help reduce metastasis by disrupting their highway," said Yu, who joined OMRF in 2018 from Yale University.

However, removing the lymph nodes can lead to lymphedema, a chronic and potentially dangerous condition marked by painful swelling.

"In that case, when a patient is past the point of the cancer cells spreading, the surgeon would want to reconnect that highway to stop or treat lymphedema," Yu said. "They need strategies to disrupt and promote the growth of lymphatic vessels, as the situation requires."

With this new grant, Yu hopes to prove that a specific enzyme is key to producing lymphatic vessels. If correct, this hypothesis could lead to a therapy that inhibits the enzyme and suppresses the creation of these vessels when they might be detrimental. Another potential drug would have the opposite effect by promoting vessel production, he said.

OMRF Cardiovascular Biology Program chair Lijun Xia, M.D., Ph.D., said Yu's grant represents a critical step toward manipulating the lymphatic system for human health benefits. "Lymphatic vessels influence the health of several organs, but we lack a deep understanding of how they work," Xia said. "This research could be a major advancement in that effort."

Yu's grant, 1R01HL162985-01, is funded by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, a part of the NIH.

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