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Monthly



## Tommy McDonald: The Sooner Who Never Lost



Read story on page 2

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# Celebrating Complete Former OU Stars

story and photo by Darl DeVault, contributing editor

**T**his year, Jalen Hurts made history as the first quarterback from the University of Oklahoma to win an NFL Super Bowl. His versatility with the Philadelphia Eagles was highlighted when he was named MVP of the big game.

It's a fitting milestone for a player who has left an indelible mark in the league. Two years ago, Hurts first led the Eagles to the Super Bowl, only to lose to Kansas City.

Interestingly, Tommy McDonald, another legendary former Sooner, played seven stellar years in the NFL as an Eagle. Though not surpassed by Hurts in college, his legacy certainly set a high bar with his remarkable achievements. We look back with respect and appreciation for the path he paved for future players.

McDonald, a dynamic running back, receiver, and halfback passer from Bud Wilkinson's illustrious era of 47-straight wins at OU, remains a shining example of a complete football star. This writing celebrates the 70th anniversary of McDonald's contribution to Oklahoma's back-to-back national championships in 1955 and 1956. His versatility and achievements as a Sooner who never lost a game further highlights his talent and determination.

Despite standing 5-foot-9 and weighing 175 pounds, McDonald displayed his high school track-star speed as an offensive powerhouse. He also excelled on defense, making notable contributions.

His agility and speed at halfback made him a standout as the designated passer on option plays in OU's split-T formation. Remarkably, McDonald stands out as the only player in OU history to lead the team in all four offensive categories for a season during his time as a Sooner.

In 1955 and 1956, McDonald was the top rusher on the country's best rushing team.

In 1955, since OU quarterbacks seldom passed, he led the team in passing with a .708 completion percentage, which remains the best in team history for a season at 17-24. That year he also led in scoring to become the first Sooner to score a touchdown in every game of a season. OU led the nation in scoring with 36.5 points a game that year. In 1956, he led the team in receiving.

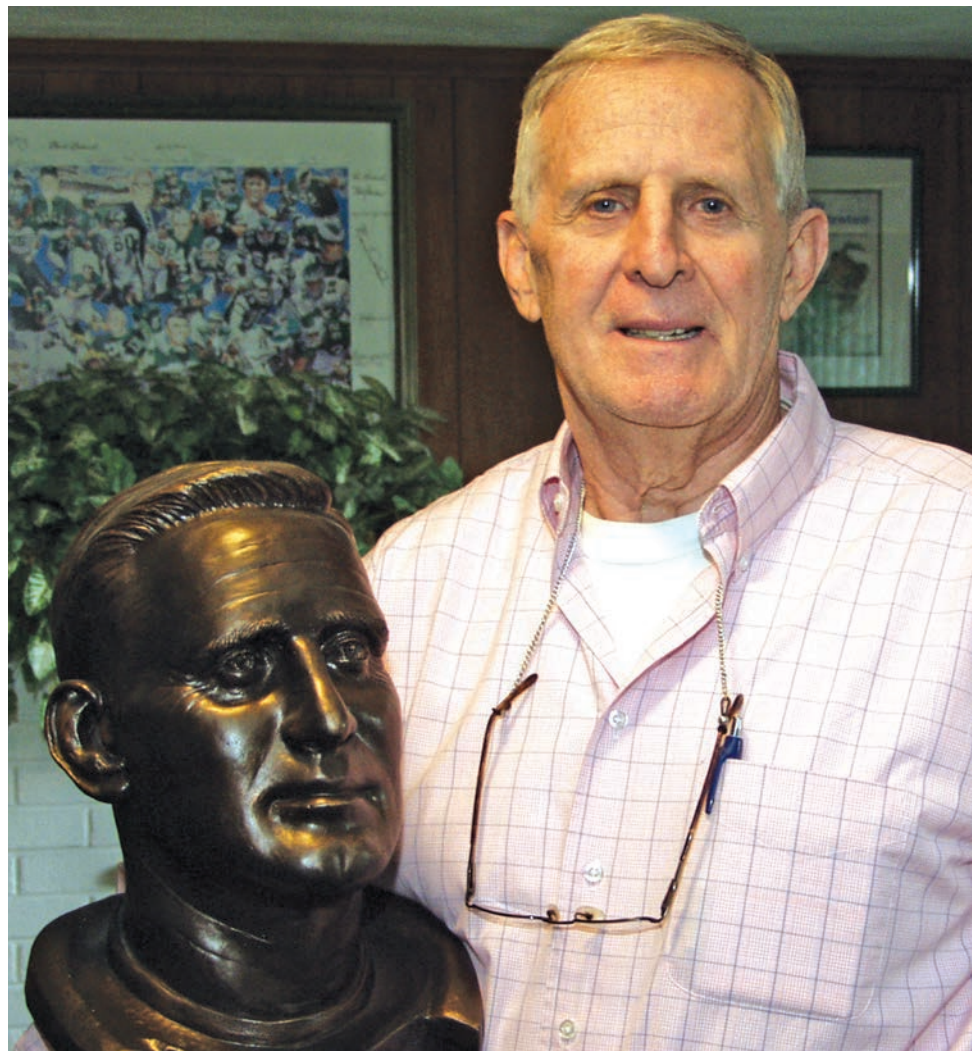
His talents extended to special teams, as he averaged 25 yards on kickoff returns and 15.8 yards on punt returns, further cementing his legacy in Sooner history.

Fast-forward to OU quarterback Jalen Hurts, who demonstrated versatility during his only season as a Sooner in 2019. In his first game with Oklahoma, after transferring from Alabama, Hurts was responsible for six TDs - three passing and three rushing. He completed 87 percent of his 23 pass attempts while running for a career-high 176 yards on 11 yards per attempt. He had 508 yards of total offense against Houston.

Later, Hurts made headlines by becoming the first in 69 years to throw, run, and catch for a TD in one game against Oklahoma State. This followed in McDonald's footsteps of showcasing multifaceted skills. McDonald was the first OU player to accomplish this feat in 1956 against Colorado.

It's also worth recognizing that McDonald's contributions weren't limited to offense. His defensive skills were remarkable, especially considering how the game is played differently today, with athletes often specializing in just one position. McDonald flourished as a defensive halfback, leading his team with six interceptions his senior year. Incredibly, that 1956 squad still holds the OU record for the least passing yardage allowed in a season—just 555 yards.

More than just numbers and records, McDonald's influence was felt in the very tempo of OU's offensive play, a legacy that endures to this day. Coach Wilkinson often attributed OU's fast-paced, rapid-fire



Tommy McDonald - The Sooner who never lost a game.

style to McDonald's relentless competitiveness and enthusiasm. "Tommy McDonald believes that any play that doesn't result in a touchdown is a failure," Wilkinson said, underscoring McDonald's determination to quickly return to the huddle after every run, eager to make the next attempt count.

Wilkinson adapted his teams to that tempo to establish the Sooners as one of the most storied teams in college ball. OU set an uneclipsed NCAA record of not losing a conference 74 straight times until 1959. They earned one of the best records in modern football history, with a 145-29-4 record over 17 years.

Wilkinson adjusted his teams to that tempo to establish the Sooners as one of the most storied programs in college football. OU set an unmatched NCAA record by not losing a conference game for 74 straight times until 1959. They achieved one of the best records in modern football history, boasting a 145-29-4 record over 17 years.

Even more impressive is after all these years, McDonald's yards-per-play average still stands as the highest for any running back at OU, showcasing his enduring impact and skill. His average of 9.31 yards per play outshines



Jalen Hurts - first quarterback from OU to win an NFL Super Bowl

many greats that followed, with only one other back, Greg Pruitt, coming close.

McDonald's journey to football greatness didn't end with college. He transitioned seamlessly to the NFL, where he enjoyed an illustrious 12-year career, defying expectations for a man of his size. During a remarkable first five-year span, he was named a Pro Bowler five times and led the league in receiving yards and TDs, showcasing his talent on a new stage.

His pivotal 35-yard TD catch played a crucial role in helping the Eagles clinch the NFL Cham-

See STARS Page 4

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# STARS

Continued from Page 2

pionship in 1960 against Green Bay. This proved to be Vince Lombardi's only postseason loss in his historic Packers coaching career.

McDonald always acknowledged that his success was not a solo journey but a collective effort. He credited his coaches, teammates, and the passionate OU fans, who served as the '12th man' on the field, for their unwavering support that propelled him to greatness.

McDonald, who died in 2018 at 84, looked back over his career and remained grateful for the early opportunities that OU provided him. He said Coach Wilkinson's recruitment opened doors he might never have accessed otherwise. Reflecting on his experience in 1998, he expressed his appreciation, stating, "I'm just glad I got a scholarship here."

McDonald said he realized that NFL scouts properly recognized his talent mainly because of the national championship teams he played on in college.

In 1961, he led the NFL in reception yardage (1,144) and TDs (13). That year, in a game against the New York Giants, he caught seven passes for 237 yards and two TDs, which is still to this day the Eagles' single-game best.

As his versatility continued in the NFL, he finished his career with 495 receptions for 8,410 yards and 84 TDs, the second-highest total of touchdown receptions in NFL history at the time.

He also gained 1,459 yards and a TD returning punts and kick-offs on special teams, giving him 9,891 career all-purpose yards. This prompted his well-deserved enshrinement into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1998.

Tommy McDonald's story is inspiring and embodies the spirit and legacy of Oklahoma football. As Sooner fans celebrate Jalen Hurts' success as the first former OU QB to win a Super Bowl, it is evident that their contributions continue to resonate. These two talented OU football players remind us of the greatness that emerges from hard work, determination, and a love for the game.

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# Newly Renamed OKC Comets Start Play

story and photo by  
Darl DeVault, contributing editor

As the 2024 World Series Champion Los Angeles Dodgers Triple-A affiliate since 2015 takes the field this year at the Chickasaw Bricktown Ballpark downtown as the OKC Comets on April 1st, they will be paying homage to Oklahoma MLB legend Mickey Mantle. The team's home opener in the Pacific Coast League featuring postgame fireworks on a \$2 Tuesday is against the El Paso Chihuahuas (San Diego Padres).

The "one step away from the major leagues" players will wear his nickname as their club name and brand. He was known for his Commerce, Oklahoma hometown, as the "the Commerce Comet" during his Yankee Hall of Fame career as the greatest switch hitter ever in baseball.

The team's light blue and red colors and logo, featuring a baseball shooting through the sky like a comet, honor the only switch-hitter to hit more than 50 home runs in a season. Mantle achieved this feat in 1956 with 52 home runs and in 1961 with 54.

"We wanted our new name and brand to reflect Oklahoma's rich baseball history and our affiliation with the Dodgers but is also uniquely ours and embraces the future of our city and state," said Michael Byrnes, Comets president/general manager. "Mickey Mantle - the Commerce Comet - is an iconic baseball figure for our state, our city, our team, and our ballpark, which enables us to have a bit of fun bringing our new identity to life for our fans."

His large bronze statue outside the Mickey Mantle Gate on the third base plaza at the ballpark commemorates his 18 productive NY Yankee MLB seasons from 1951 to 1968. He won seven World Series titles, three MVPs, a triple crown, and hit 536 home runs.

"We appreciate our community of fans who provided input into the new name and brand and who have supported this team throughout the years - since 1962," Byrnes said. "Our commitment is to continue to provide the same fun, family-friendly game day experience our fans have come to



From left, Mickey Mantle's son Danny Mantle, 64, poses with Michael Byrnes, president and general manager of the OKC Comets, and Mickey Mantle's grandson Will Mantle at a press function held at Chickasaw Bricktown Ballpark on February 25, where the team discussed his grandfather's nickname, "The Commerce Comet," as the new namesake for the Comets.

expect - now with new signage, new uniforms and mascots."

The rich Oklahoma City minor league tradition continues as the parent LA Dodgers have the highest payroll in MLB at \$303,851,665.

The Triple-A games feature an Automated Ball-Strike System in its third year. It uses radar technology to precisely define the strike zone and call pitches accordingly, including a limited number of challenges to the call. The ABS was used in 60 percent of the 2025 MLB Spring Training Games to determine whether the big leagues will adopt it soon.

Single-game tickets for all 75 Comets' home games are on sale now. Those ticket prices begin at \$12 and can be purchased online at [okccomets.com](http://okccomets.com). Group and season ticket packages are also currently available. Fans can now secure their tickets for key games such as Opening Night, Independence Day, Star Wars Night, Faith and Family Night, and OKC's first-ever Bluey Night and Harry Potter Night by purchasing a new OKC Comets Flex Plan. The OKC Comets Flex Plan allows fans to buy tickets for two, four or six games of their choice based on date,

promotion or opponent. The Flex Plan includes a special price lower than regular single-game pricing, providing a 10 percent savings when purchasing two games, 20 percent savings for four games and a 30 percent savings for six games.

Visit [okccomets.com](http://okccomets.com) to view the complete 2025 schedule. For additional information, please call (405) 218-2182.

Weekly promotions include \$2 Tuesdays, Fireworks Fridays and Family Sundays. Seventeen fireworks nights dot the schedule, including the home opener. The team will have back-to-back fireworks nights for an Independence Day celebration on July 4-5.

The April schedule includes theme nights, including April 4's "In Our OKC Era Night" and April 19's "First Responders Night," plus a Comets hat giveaway to the first 1,000 fans through the gates on April 5.

On In My OKC Era Night - April 4, fans can enjoy friendship bracelet making, a costume contest, music-themed entertainment and contests throughout this evening celebrating pop superstardom. A postgame fireworks show is scheduled to follow. On First

Responders Night - April 19, they will be recognized for their service to the community as the Comets recognize the 30th anniversary of the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City.

First responders who assisted in the aftermath of the bombing will be honored on the field, and representatives from the Oklahoma City Police Department, EMSA and Oklahoma City Fire Department are scheduled to throw out first pitches before the game. A parade of emergency vehicles will travel around the warning track pregame, and additional vehicles will be on display throughout the evening.

The Comets will take the field wearing the team's City Celebration jerseys and 405 hats.

On Family Sundays, select Comets players will sign autographs for fans on the concourse prior to the first pitch. Following those games, kids can take the field to run the bases like their favorite pros.

Fans can purchase the new OKC Comets merchandise online or at the Team Store on the west side of the ballpark.

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# Stretch Zone Helping People Stay Active, Kickstart Healthier Lifestyle

Story by  
Van Mitchell, Staff Writer

Between long hours at a desk or being stuck indoors for long periods of time, stretching offers proven benefits like increased mobility, improved health, and overall wellness.

Stretch Zone, the nation's leading practitioner-assisted stretching provider, offers in-person assessments at any of its 380+ locations to showcase how stretching helps individuals stay active, reduce stress, and kickstart a healthier year.

Utilizing patented and proprietary equipment, Stretch Zone practitioners follow specific protocols to properly position, stabilize, and manipulate muscles using powerful principles of neuromuscular behavior.

Joe Uvino, esq, co-owner of five Oklahoma City and Edmond Stretch Zone franchise locations, said he became a believer in Stretch Zone while he was a client living in Florida.

"We have a condo in Boca Raton," he said. "I was a client for probably two years at the East Boca location. "One day I was laying on one of the tables and there was somebody on the next table saying that they had bought a franchise up in Michigan. So, I said, "Well, this could be a good business opportunity for Oklahoma. My daughter lives out here. I thought maybe Oklahoma City would be right for something like this. We opened our first one in June of 2023 and we now have five of them."

Uvino, who co-owns the metro franchises with his wife, Wendy, and daughter, Christine, said Stretch Zone's a franchise that began about 12 years ago in south Florida with a couple of locations and now has close to 400 locations in the US.

"The goal is to probably double that in the next three years throughout the U.S.," he said.

Tony Zaccario, President of Stretch Zone said in a press release that Stretch Zone represents a transformative health and wellness company for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

"Our model and proprietary



Joe Uvino, left, is the co-owner of five Oklahoma City and Edmond Stretch Zone franchise locations. Pictured with Uvino is Adam Holzworth who works at their Edmond location.

system delivers success for our franchise partners, which are supported by a network of reliable, adaptable and results-driven professionals," he said. "At Stretch Zone, creating a welcoming environment for everyone, whether it be a franchisee, practitioner or client, is our top priority and the reason we have sustained such strong brand recognition."

Jorden Gold, Founder and Chief Stretching Officer of Stretch Zone, added in a press release he is thrilled with Stretch Zone's mission.

"We started the practitioner-assisted stretching vertical, and it's thrilling to see consumers embrace its health and wellness benefits and watch our patented Stretch Zone Method® catch fire," he said. "Likewise, countless franchise owners are realizing the value in investing in Stretch Zone and its potential to help clients improve

their wellness and overall mobility regardless of their age, lifestyle or physical needs."

Uvino said the Stretch Zone training/hiring program is quite rigorous. "The training program is very rigorous. The hiring program is rigorous," he said. "UCO, OSU, OU all have kinesiology programs and exercise science programs, so we hire out of those. So, coming in here, a practitioner understands the body, understands the muscles and that practitioner goes through a five-day extensive training program. We're the only stretching operation that has accredited stretch people. Here, if you don't pass the five-day class, you can't work for us."

Uvino also said hiring the right people is challenging.

"Our hardest thing is acquiring and training high caliber talent. It's hard to find people willing to do this. It's not easy work," he said. "If you have back-to-back stretches,

it's pretty physical."

He said firefighters have proven to be quality hires.

"What we're finding is some of the best employees are firemen because they work four days a week and they're off four days and they're always looking for a side job to make some extra money," he said. "And they're strong and most of them have the background either as an EMT or somebody that knows the body and is easily trained. They're very disciplined in what they do. We've had good luck hiring firefighters."

Uvino added "We have one OSU professor, with his PhD in kinesiology. He was here all last summer stretching people because he wanted something to do for the summer. He comes down to our Edmond location on Saturdays and stretches people because he

Continued next page



**ZONE**

Continued from Page 8

likes to do it. I think the clients appreciate that we hire only people who know the body and we're not bringing in some personal trainer who really doesn't know the stretches or has their own method of stretching."

Uvino said Stretch Zone has stretching protocols to ensure client safety. "What makes Stretch Zone different from other stretching places is that the belts you see on our stretching tables are patented. The founder, Jordan Gold, got a patent on these. The belts are used to stabilize people, so that no matter which stretch practitioner stretches you, you're going to get a consistent stretch," he said.

Uvino said the first visit to the Stretch Zone is complimentary.

"The first time you come in here it's complimentary. A potential client will sit for 15 minutes or so with an intake person who will go through your whole history and determine areas that are troublesome. The intake person will then hand you over to one of the practitioners for 30 minutes of stretching," he said. "The practitioner, along with the intake person then develop a

protocol for the client."

Uvino said Stretch Zone accepts HSA and FSA health insurance plans, as well as private pay.

"We recommend, if people can afford it, to get stretched twice a week, for at least two to three months, and they will see appreciable benefit and then, maybe, just go on a once-a-week program," he said.

Uvino, a New York City native, attended undergraduate and law school at the University of Oklahoma, and spent time afterward living in Oklahoma before returning home in 1990.

His daughter, Christine Ballinger, now manages the five metro locations. "We're a family-owned business," Uvino said. "Our daughter lives here full-time, so she runs it." Uvino said over the course of the next few years, he sees further expansion.

"I think seven would be a good number," he said. "We've got five now and we blanket the city nicely. But I think if we were a little further west and a little further south and east we would be capturing the Tinker Air Force Base area, Midwest City, Norman and Yukon."

For more information visit [www.stretchzone.com](http://www.stretchzone.com)

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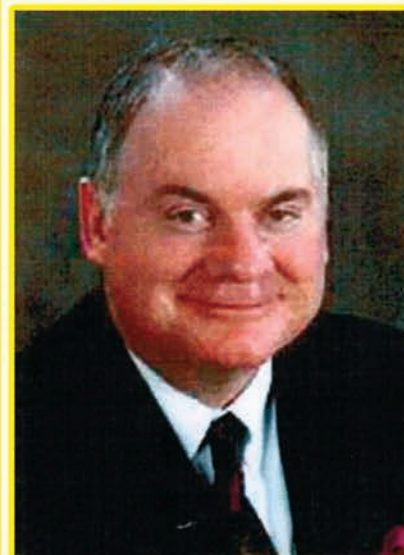
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# Technology keeps VillagesOKC members connected

By Eddie Roach,  
VillagesOKC Media

The recent icy weather did not slow down staff at VillagesOKC. Because of familiarity with digital technology, they didn't miss a beat.

"Our office was closed," said VillagesOKC Office Manager Britni Bergman. "But, our technology-savvy seniors made it happen with a Zoom meeting. That's just one example of how



Steve McMaster

learning and using technology helps keep older adults connected."

In addition to the use of Zoom and Google Meet to share information virtually, VOKC members have free access to workshops for both Apple and Android mobile devices so they can make the most of their phones and tablets.

Steve McMaster, a retired senior engineer who led software development projects at Lucent Technologies and the FAA, hosts a monthly Android class. The 90-minute class is usually the second Tuesday of the month.

"This is a fantastic opportunity to connect with fellow Android enthusiasts, share your knowledge, and collaborate on what we'd like to explore in future meetings," McMaster said. "Whether you're a beginner or a seasoned Android user, you'll leave with new insights, tips, and tricks."

Jeff Albright, owner of iCan Help, an on-site and in-home Apple Training service, is in his third year of offering iPhone classes at VillagesOKC. Albright is an expert with over 17 years of experience. The class is usually the third Wednesday of the month.

It's 90 minutes of training and troubleshooting with an expert on any and all Apple devices. Participants are encouraged to bring their iPhones or iPads and all their questions. Members may attend this class as many times as they like for free. Non-members are welcome to attend for \$20.00 each class. "The main reason I love teaching older adults is what I learned at the Apple store when I first got there," Albright said. "They called them 'Wow Moments.' It's whenever I would teach someone how to do something they had not experienced before or had no clue where to begin. I would enjoy walking them through that in a way that draws them along by their own intuition."

That's the experience VOKC member Jim Olson had in the iPhone classes he attended.



Jeff Albright

"He has lots of helpful hints to help use the iPhone better," Olson said about Albright. "One of the benefits I received from the class is how to save the battery on my phone, which is one of my issues."

Check the VOKC calendar at [LoveYourAge.org](http://LoveYourAge.org) or call (405) 990-6637 for upcoming class dates.



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# OPINION

## THE SAVVY SENIOR

Dear Savvy Senior,

### Is a Reverse Mortgage a Good Idea?

*What can you tell me about reverse mortgages? When my husband passed away last year my income dropped almost in half, and I've been struggling to keep up with my monthly living expenses.*

**Senior Homeowner**

Dear Senior,

For retirees who own their home and want to stay living there, but could use some extra cash, a reverse mortgage is a viable financial tool, but there's a lot to know and consider to be sure it's a good option for you.

**Let's start with the basics.**

A reverse mortgage is a unique type of loan that allows older homeowners to borrow money against the equity in their house (or condo) that doesn't have to be repaid until the homeowner dies, sells the house or moves out for at least 12 months. At that point, you or your heirs will have to pay back the loan plus accrued interest and fees (usually by selling the home), but you will never owe more than the value of your home.

It's also important to understand that with a reverse mortgage, you, not the bank, own the house, so you're still required to pay your property taxes, homeowners' insurance and upkeep. Not paying them can result in foreclosure. To be eligible, you must be 62 years of age or older, have at least 50 percent equity in your home, and currently be living there.

You will also need to undergo a financial assessment to determine whether you can afford to continue paying your property taxes and insurance. Depending on your financial situation, you may be required to put part of your loan into an escrow account to pay future bills. If the financial assessment

finds that you cannot pay your insurance and taxes and have enough cash left to live on, you'll be denied.

**Loan Details**

More than 90 percent of all reverse mortgages offered are Home Equity Conversion Mortgages (HECM), which are FHA insured and offered through private mortgage lenders and banks. HECM's have home value limits that vary by county but cannot exceed \$1,209,750 in 2025.

How much you can actually get through a reverse mortgage depends on your age (the older you are the more you can get), your home's value and the prevailing interest rates. Generally, most people can borrow somewhere between 40 and 60 percent of the home's value. To estimate how much you can borrow, use the reverse mortgage calculator at <https://www.reversemortgage.org>.

To receive your money, you can opt for a lump sum, a line of credit, regular monthly checks or a combination of these. But be aware the reverse mortgages aren't cheap. You'll have to pay an origination fee, which is the greater of \$2,500 or 2 percent of the first \$200,000 of your home's value plus 1 percent of the amount over \$200,000. HECM origination fees are capped at \$6,000. You'll also be charged an initial mortgage insurance premium, which is 2 percent of the loan amount, along with closing costs that will likely run several thousand dollars. Any amount you borrow, including these fees and insurance, accrues interest, which means your debt grows over time.

To learn more, see the National Council on Aging's online booklet "Use Your Home to Stay at Home" at [NCOA.org/article/use-your-home-to-stay-at-home](http://NCOA.org/article/use-your-home-to-stay-at-home). Also be aware that because reverse mortgages are complex loans, all borrowers are required to get counseling through a HUD approved independent counseling agency before taking one out. Most agencies charge between \$125 and \$200. To locate one near you, visit [Go.usa.gov/v2H](http://Go.usa.gov/v2H), or call 800-569-4287.

**Other Options**

If a reverse mortgage doesn't suit you, you could also tap your home equity by getting a regular home equity loan or line of credit. This type of borrowing requires you to make payments, and lenders can freeze or lower limits on lines of credit, but the borrowing costs are much lower. Or you could also sell your home and move somewhere cheaper.

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

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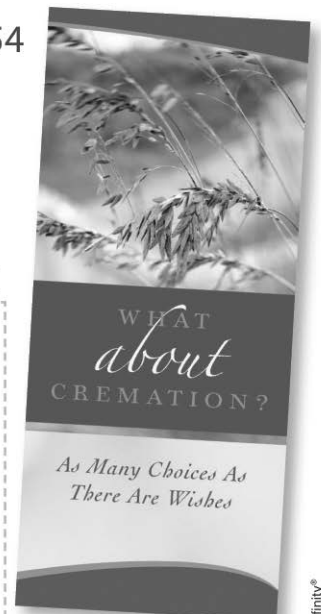
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# SNL Metro Libraries March Events



## Senior Events at the Metropolitan Library System This Spring

Whether you're looking to stay active or connect with others, the library offers a variety of programs focused on fitness, literature and personal growth. For a full calendar of events, visit <https://www.metrolibrary.org>.

S.A.L.T. Council (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together) - Gain valuable insights on how to protect yourself from scams and crimes targeting seniors in this collaborative program with law enforcement.

- Warr Acres Library: March 3 at 10 a.m.

Total Wellness Classes - Learn practical tips on weight loss, healthy eating and exercise to help prevent diabetes and heart disease, presented by the Oklahoma City-County Health Department.

- Almonte Library: March 4 at 10 a.m.

Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) - Stay active with SAIL, a program designed to improve muscle strength, range of motion and daily living activities. Exercises can be modified for all fitness levels.

- The Village Library: March 3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, 26, and 31 at 10 a.m.
- Choctaw Library: March 5, 12, and 26 at 10 a.m.

Featured Event: Literary Voices® with Jodi Picoult: The biggest literary event of the year is almost here! Join us for Literary Voices®, presented by the Library Endowment Trust, featuring bestselling author Jodi Picoult on April 9. This special evening will offer insightful conversation and storytelling with one of today's most celebrated authors. Jodi Picoult has over 40 million books in print, with 14 consecutive #1 New York Times bestsellers. Her novels tackle timely social issues and have been adapted into major films. Notable works include "My Sister's Keeper," "Nineteen Minutes," and "Small Great Things." Her latest novel, "By Any Other Name," reimagines women's voices throughout history, shedding light on untold stories. All proceeds from Literary Voices® 2025 benefit the Library Endowment Trust, which funds literacy programs, outreach services and staff scholarships. A major focus is supporting Dolly Parton's Imagination Library in Oklahoma County, ensuring young children have access to books that inspire a lifelong love of reading.

- Date: April 9

- Location: The Oklahoma Golf & Country Club

For tickets and details: Visit <https://literaryvoices.org>, email [development@metrolibrary.org](mailto:development@metrolibrary.org), or call 405-606-3760.



Jodi Picoult

photo by Deborah Feingold

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# SNL CENTENARIANS OF OK



## Lois Warren

(Right) **100 years old.** Lois Warren of Norman enjoys line dancing, arts, crafts, and traveling. She explored the world during her husband's military service and later took 28 cruises. Christmas is her favorite holiday, and with 11 children, Santa had his hands full. Her three rules? Be kind, be kind, be kind. And always share a smile—it might be the only one someone gets that day.

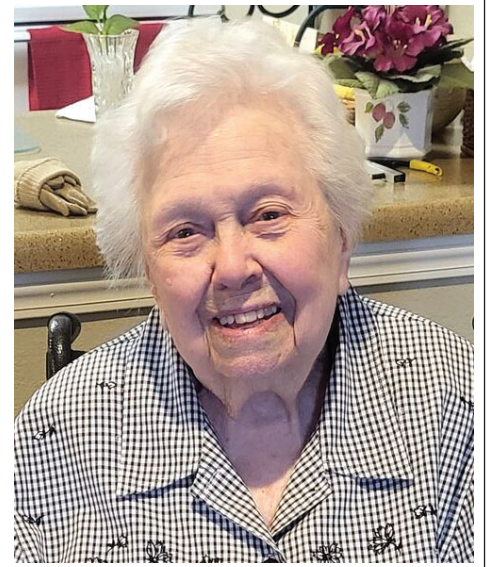


## Joyce McCary

(Left) **100 years old.** Joyce (Buswell) McCary of Lawton was born on February 20, 1925, in Chattanooga, Tillman County, OK. She was a farm wife, homemaker and mother, so she never really retired. Christmas is her favorite holiday because of all the family dinners and special memories. She enjoys playing bingo and visiting with family and friends and is a fine example of living life honestly, with integrity, and full of hard work.

## Beth Dietz

(Right) **100 years old.** Beth Dietz celebrated her 100th birthday on February 18th! She has lived in many places around the world. Beth once road a camel and has driven through the Khyber Pass, a legendary trade route that connects Pakistan and Afghanistan. Her encouraging words of wisdom are: Write Down Special Dates so You Will Remember Them!



## Judy Davidson

(Right) **110 years old.** Judy was born February 18, 1925, in Dallas. She earned a degree from Ohio Wesleyan University and dedicated her life to being a homemaker and mother. A Church of Christ member, her favorite hymn is 'Just a Closer Walk with Thee.' She loves Christmas for its colors, family dinners, and memories. Judy has traveled to Singapore, Greece, New Zealand, Japan, Turkey, Western Europe, and across the U.S. Her most memorable event in 100 years was television's introduction after WWII.



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# Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City Ranks Among Newsweek's World's Best Hospitals

Residents can get care at one of the world's best hospitals without leaving home.

For the second consecutive year, Newsweek magazine named Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City one of the World's Best Hospitals. Mercy is the top-ranked Oklahoma City hospital on the list, coming in fourth across Oklahoma.

"We're proud to rank so highly among our peers throughout the world, but we're not satisfied," said Bennett Geister, president of Mercy Oklahoma City Communities. "Mercy's caregivers come to work every day determined to provide the best medical care available and do it with uncommon compassion. We're driven every day to provide the best of ourselves for our patients and their families. We are blessed to be blessings to them."

Newsweek partners with Statista to analyze four types of data sources to select and rank the best hospitals in 30 countries with comparable data. The methodology included recommendations from medical experts; patient satisfaction surveys; hospital quality metrics on quality of care, hygiene, patient safety and waiting times; and an optional Statista patient-reported outcome measures survey.

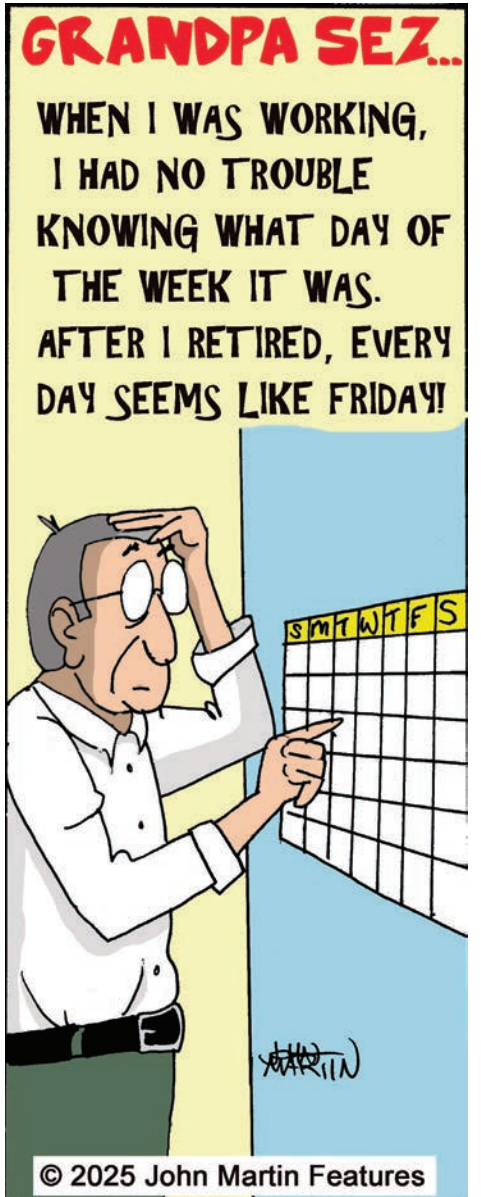
The World's Best Hospitals 2025 ranking includes hospitals from the U.S., Germany, Japan, France, Italy, United Kingdom, South Korea, Brazil, India, Spain, Canada, Australia, Mexico, Colombia, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Taiwan, United Arab

Emirates, Austria, Belgium, Chile, Malaysia, Thailand, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Israel and Singapore.

Newsweek also named three other Mercy hospitals among the World's Best Hospitals: Northwest Arkansas, St. Louis and Springfield.

You can see the awards list on Newsweek's website. In addition to the Newsweek ranking, Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City has a top safety grade from The Leapfrog Group, and been recognized as U.S. News & World Report's top OKC maternity hospital and a Gallagher Best-in-Class Employer.

For more information about Mercy Hospital visit <https://www.mercy.net> or call 405-755-1515



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**Sudoku Answers**

# Celebrate Native American Art in Abundance

story by  
Darl DeVault, contributing editor

Native American art enthusiasts have a unique opportunity from March 21-23 while attending the 39th Annual Red Earth Festival at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum. They can also take a short drive to view the most extensive retrospective of Oklahoma's internationally known Native American artist, Edgar Heap of Birds, for free. The historically significant thought-provoking Heap of Birds exhibit spans all 8,000 square feet of the Oklahoma Contemporary Art Center downtown, only 6 miles away.

Red Earth Festival starts with a ticketed Awards Ceremony and Celebration Dinner, held at 6 p.m. on Thursday, March 20th, at Coles Garden near the museum. This event is a unique opportunity to unite artists, leaders, and supporters in an elegant setting to celebrate achievement and tradition. The festival then runs from Friday through Sunday, featuring outdoor dance and musical performances, craft demonstrations and lectures, and the large juried Art Market.

The festival's 39-year rich history of promoting the traditions of Native American artists and dancers makes it a significant event. You can visit Red Earth Festival to see how it shares the richness and diversity of their heritage with the world. Festival attendees will view the creations of some of America's most celebrated Native artists as they present their work for sale.

Liichokoshkomo, the

Museum's interactive outdoor venue, showcases the West's diversity and serves as an educational platform. It features intertribal native dwellings as a backdrop for hands-on arts and crafts stations, artist demonstrations, live music, and special presentations of tribal dance throughout the weekend.

With tickets priced at \$20 per day or \$45 for all three days, Red Earth is an affordable and inclusive celebration of Native art. Children aged five and under can enter for free with a paying adult, making it a perfect family-friendly event. The festival is recognized as one of America's premier Native art festivals, honoring Indigenous artistry's spirit, resilience, and beauty.

Having traveled the world lecturing as a representative of Native American art and exhibiting at many prestigious museums, Heap of Birds will see his Contemporary Art Center retrospective close in stages. It will show in the Eleanor Kirkpatrick Main Gallery through August 4, and a significant part will remain in the Mary LeFlore Clements Gallery through October 20.

"I haven't had a show like this in my career, so it's a real special opportunity. I titled it "Honor Song" because I am being honored, while the real theme is to honor my art process, the content that reflects my involvement and honor for the other Indigenous populations across the planet," Heap of Birds said. "I've always set out to honor their wishes and histories by including them in my collaboration process. So,



World-renowned Native American artist Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds poses for a publicity photo for his "Honor Song" exhibit.

the "Honor Song" is also about honoring Indigenous youth, even children, because I work with children and elders who have part of the exhibit."

The show features many of his colorful prints, abstract paintings, drawings, glassworks, sculptures and conceptual art pieces.

Because it takes so long to take in the more than 100 art pieces from his 40-year career, art patrons are presented with an embarrassment of riches. They might want to alternate back and forth between Red Earth and the Contemporary show to take it all in. There's just that much to see. When headed out to Red Earth to see the Native American art for sale, patrons might want to stop by the Contemporary. Or on the way back. Or take two days to ensure they have a once-in-a-lifetime immersion in Native American art because the Heap of Birds art engages the mind.

Retired from teaching at the University of Oklahoma after 30 years of service, this professor emeritus in the Native American

Studies Department's creations are both intense individualism and communal. They express his unique vision and experiences, rooted in Cheyenne and Arapaho culture and collective identity. You can see more about his art at [eheapofbirds.com](http://eheapofbirds.com).

World-renowned for his "Social Justice Consciousness through Art," Heap of Birds' retrospective is complex and cognitively challenging. This agenda sometimes presents the viewer with such complexity that they become absorbed in the message so much that it is a while before they can move on to the next thing to take in.

Heap of Bird's social justice artistic expression raises viewers' awareness. It seeks to motivate people to take action on social issues by challenging the injustices done to the Native American community and inspiring positive change. Heap of Bird is known internationally for his thought-provoking advocacy pursuing Indigenous rights sovereignty in

Continued next page

39TH ANNUAL  
RED EARTH  
FESTIVAL  
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# FESTIVAL

Continued from Page 18

relationships to place.

Much of Heap of Birds' art is thought-provoking, as it is conceptual art. This type of art places the idea or concept as the most important aspect of the work. In some pieces, it is an interrogation of what language-based art can convey to the viewer.

His creations are known for his impactful use of language and stark visuals. His work frequently challenges dominant narratives and calls attention to injustices faced by Native Americans. For example, his public art installations often feature monochromatic signs with pointed messages that confront viewers with uncomfortable truths about colonialism and its legacies.

Beginning in 1988, his signature ongoing series of public artworks features signs acknowledging the Indigenous peoples who were the original inhabitants of the land where the

signs are displayed. His work maintains the functional aspect of the signs while adding a layer of social commentary. The signs often juxtapose the Indigenous names with the current place names, which highlights the displacement and erasure of Native history.

"We are deeply grateful for the support from the National Endowment for the Arts for Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds: Honor Song," said Trent Riley, Contemporary Arts Center executive director. "Their commitment to advancing the arts and promoting dialogue around important social issues is invaluable. With their support, we can further amplify the voices of Indigenous artists like Edgar Heap of Birds and foster meaningful conversations within our community."

Admission to Oklahoma Contemporary is free to ensure accessibility for all community members. Visit Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds: Honor Song | Oklahoma Contemporary to learn more about the exhibit.

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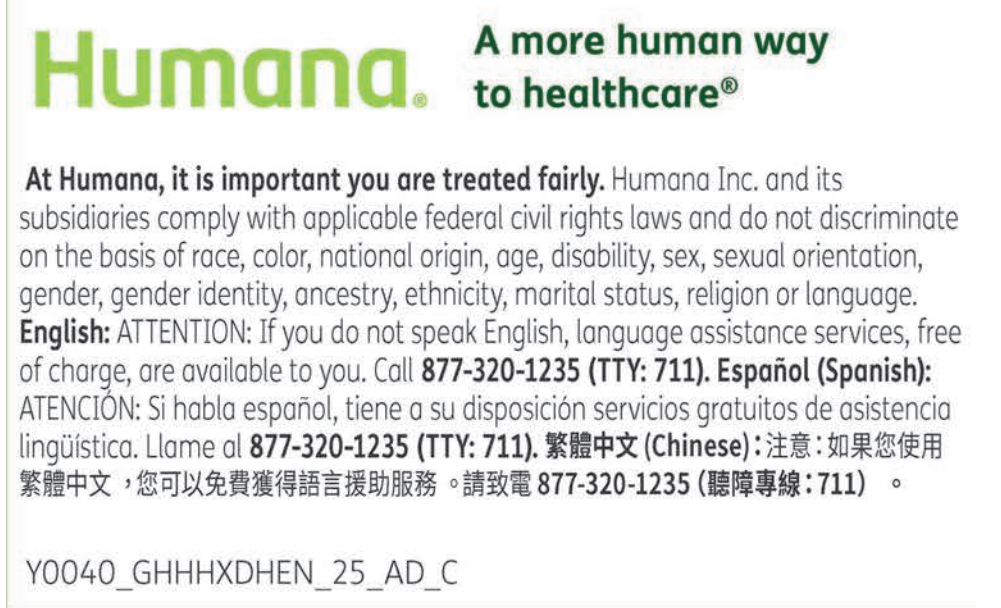
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# Cincie Upchego Latest TFCU Great Auto Loan Payoff Winner

TFCU member from El Reno, Oklahoma wins \$18,702 auto loan payoff

Tinker Federal Credit Union (TFCU) recently announced Cincie Upchego and her son, Seth Hill, of El Reno, Oklahoma are the latest winners of the TFCU Great Auto Loan Payoff. TFCU paid off the auto loan on their 2018 Dodge Challenger for \$18,702. Each quarter, members with a TFCU auto loan are automatically entered into the sweepstakes and selected at random as part of the TFCU Great Member Giveback.

"I'm thankful my mom helped me get my first car with a loan through Tinker Federal Credit Union and I'm really excited about getting it paid off," said Seth.

As a not-for-profit credit union, Tinker Federal Credit Union looks for ways to give back to its members all year long. The TFCU Great Auto Loan Payoff is just one of the ways members win with TFCU throughout the year.

To view past winner stories, review the official rules and learn more about the TFCU Great Auto Loan Payoff, visit <https://www.tinkerfcu.org/great-auto-loan-payoff>. To learn more about Tinker Federal Credit Union, visit <https://www.tinkerfcu.org>.



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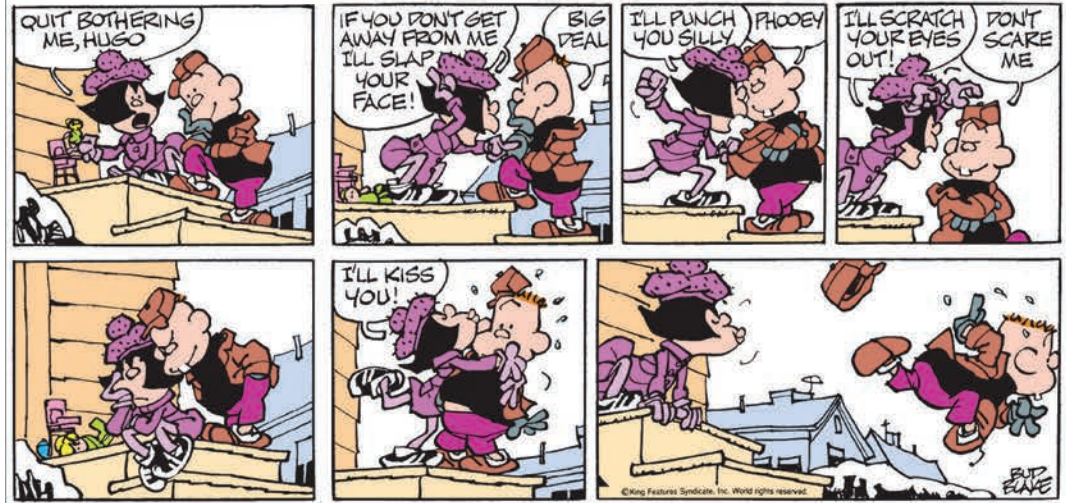
### Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



### TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



### The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



## King Crossword

#### ACROSS

- 1 Doubtfire or Dalloway
- 4 Pesky insect
- 8 Blaze
- 12 "Alley —"
- 13 Verdi heroine
- 14 Booty
- 15 Sugar suffix
- 16 Some online essays
- 18 Doppler device
- 20 "Diamonds" singer
- 21 Brzezinski of MSNBC
- 24 Group character
- 28 Coin that keeps turning up
- 32 Stitched
- 33 Artist Yoko
- 34 "— luck!"
- 36 Actor Stephen
- 37 Euro fraction
- 39 Pub game
- 41 Cognizant
- 43 "No seats" signs
- 44 Olympics chant
- 46 Loan shark's crime
- 50 Ginsberg and Kerouac, for two
- 55 — Maria

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1  | 2  | 3  |    | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  |    | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 12 |    |    |    | 13 |    |    |    |    | 14 |    |    |    |
| 15 |    |    |    | 16 |    |    |    | 17 |    |    |    |    |
| 18 |    |    | 19 |    |    |    | 20 |    |    |    |    |    |
|    |    |    | 21 |    | 22 | 23 |    | 24 |    | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 |    |    |    |    | 31 |    | 32 |    |    |    |
| 33 |    |    |    | 34 |    |    |    | 35 |    | 36 |    |    |
| 37 |    |    |    | 38 |    | 39 |    |    | 40 |    |    |    |
| 41 |    |    |    | 42 |    | 43 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|    |    |    |    | 44 |    | 45 |    | 46 |    | 47 | 48 | 49 |
| 50 | 51 | 52 |    |    |    | 53 | 54 |    |    | 55 |    |    |
| 56 |    |    |    |    |    | 57 |    |    |    | 58 |    |    |
| 59 |    |    |    |    |    | 60 |    |    |    | 61 |    |    |

- 56 Eyebrow shape
- 57 Microwave, slangily
- 58 Request
- 59 Citi Field team
- 60 Love god
- 61 "— a Rebel"
- 7 Labels
- 8 Parade attractions
- 9 Cyclades island
- 10 Decay
- 11 UFO engineers
- 17 Diner dessert
- 19 Sound booster
- 22 Handle
- 23 Poker payments
- 25 Medal earner
- 26 Actor Clive
- 27 Hitch
- 28 — Raton, Fla.
- 29 From the start
- 30 Lady of Spain
- 31 Belgian river
- 35 Stirs up
- 38 "We hold these — to be ..."
- 40 Letter addenda, for short
- 42 Sixth sense
- 45 Top-notch
- 47 Beehive State
- 48 Get up
- 49 Tibetan herd
- 50 "Kapow!"
- 51 Before
- 52 Play segment
- 53 Where Lux. is
- 54 Ring decision

#### DOWN

- 1 Heath
- 2 Activist Parks
- 3 Raced
- 4 Angel with a trumpet
- 5 Zero
- 6 Commotion

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### BIBLE WORD SEARCH

by Elie's Spiritual Treasures

Psalm 35:27b-28

may they always say, "The LORD be exalted, who delights in the well-being of his servant." My tongue will proclaim your righteousness, your praises all day long.

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W A L W A Y S E R E  
M E M R J H I S D S  
W K P E U G N O T R  
S Y P R O C L A I M

Find the **bolded/underlined** words in the diagram. They run in all directions — forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

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### HOCUS-FOCUS

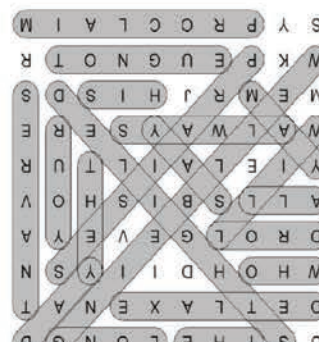
BY HENRY BOLTIHOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Sign is lower. 2. Log is moved. 3. Elbow patch is longer. 4. Cap is different. 5. Thumb is moved. 6. Jacket is different.



### BIBLE WORD SEARCH



Solution time: 24 mins.

Answers

### King Crossword

## Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

- TELEVISION: The show "Happy Days" is a spinoff of which older sitcom?
- LITERATURE: Which author created the character Hercule Poirot?
- U.S. PRESIDENTS: Where is Barack Obama's presidential library located?
- GEOGRAPHY: What river forms part of the border between the United States and Mexico?
- ASTRONOMY: Which planet in our solar system has the strongest gravitational field?
- U.S. STATES: Which four states intersect at the Four Corners monument?
- SCIENCE: What is anemophily?
- MOVIES: How much does an Oscar award trophy weigh?
- WEATHER: What is a haboob?
- MEASUREMENTS: How many millimeters are in a meter?

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- Love, American Style; 2. Agatha Christie; 3. Chicago, Illinois; 4. The Rio Grande; 5. Jupiter; 6. Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Colorado; 7. Pollination by the wind; 8. 8.5 pounds; 9. An intense dust storm; 10. 1,000

Trivia Test Answers

## SNL TRAVEL WITH NICK

# Take a Hike! To Maine's best lighthouses

By Nick Thomas

With more than five dozen lighthouses dotted along the Maine coastline, my 3-month stay in Bangor in 2023 was insufficient time to visit them all. But I did manage to travel to about a third and present here some of my favorites - a list, of course, that is highly subjective. These, and many others along the Maine coast, remain active and automated, often with museums, visitor centers, gift shops, and/or walking trails for visitors to explore.

### Pemaquid Point Lighthouse, Bristol

While the Pemaquid Point Lighthouse presents a picturesque sight from any angle, the breathtaking view from the rocks beneath at the entrance to Muscongus and John's Bays is postcard-perfect, elevating this lighthouse to the top of my list. For those able, climbing down the not-too-steep cliff face is a must to view the lighthouse overlooking the ocean waves lapping at the sea-level rocks below. This captivating landmark is located in the Town of Bristol.

Commissioned during the administration of President John Quincy Adams and originally built in 1827, the lighthouse soon began deteriorating due to poor construction and was rebuilt a decade later. The 38-foot (79-feet above sea level) lighthouse represents the state on the 2003 Maine State Quarter, part of the U.S. Mint's 50 State Quarters program that ran from 1999 to 2008.

### Portland Head Light

Located in Port Elizabeth, the Portland Head Light is an iconic white, conical lighthouse completed in 1791, making it the oldest lighthouse in Maine. Towering 80 feet above ground level (100 feet above the surrounding sea), it guards the entrance to Casco Bay and was commissioned by George Washington. While you can take long



Marshall Point Lighthouse, Port Clyde - Nick Thomas



Portland Head Light - Nick Thomas

walks around the lighthouse, the most stunning perspective is by boat on the bay to appreciate this coastal landmark wrapped on three sides by the raw nature of ocean waves crashing onto the rocks below.

### West Quoddy Head, Lubec

This distinctively red and white-striped West Quoddy Head Lighthouse in Lubec, is located on Maine's easternmost tip. Formerly a wooden structure built in 1808 during President Thomas Jefferson's administration, the original tower was replaced in 1858 by the current brick structure. At 49 feet tall, the lighthouse rises to almost twice that height above sea level, perched on the ocean cliff.

With more than 540 acres to explore, the lighthouse park includes 5 miles of scenic trails, ideal for bird spotting throughout the year, as well as ocean views for summer whale watching. Two rare bogs in the park are inhabited by a variety of seasonal flora including carnivorous pitcher plants.

Featured on a 25-cent U.S. postage stamp in 1990, West Quoddy Head is a grand sight especially in full sunlight, when the tower's 15 red and white candy stripes gleam against the ocean or park landscape. We arrived in the early morning, just before the sun pierced through, when the lighthouse was enveloped in an eerie coastal mist, creating an especially peaceful atmosphere.

### Rockland Harbor Breakwater Lighthouse, Rockland

Be prepared to squint into the distant Rockland harbor to see this 25-foot lighthouse built in 1902, barely a faint dot on the horizon. What's remarkable about this lighthouse is the astonishing almost mile-long (4,000-foot) rock breakwater, built before the lighthouse, that serves as a walkway for visitors to reach the lighthouse. Laid over a decade in the 1890s, the breakwater was constructed from almost 770,000 tons of massive stone blocks which are easy to navigate. Although challenging to photograph when approaching from the rock pathway since the lighthouse is barely visible behind the old keeper's residence, a floating fishing dock to the right of the lighthouse provides enough distance to frame both the lighthouse and the keeper's house.

### Marshall Point Lighthouse, Port Clyde

Built in 1832, the original structure was replaced by the current 31-foot lighthouse in 1857. Movie fans come from all over the world to visit this lighthouse in order to reproduce the final moments of Tom Hank's epic run to the Atlantic Ocean in the 1994 film, "Forrest Gump," that culminates on the footbridge leading to the lighthouse. During our visit, I spotted more than a dozen people (including my wife) doing the 150-foot 'Gump Run.'

Nick Thomas teaches at Auburn University at Montgomery, in Alabama, and has written features, columns, and interviews for numerous publications. See [www.getnickt.org](http://www.getnickt.org).



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# Softball in Oklahoma...

## IT'S A BIG DEAL!

Story and photos by Marise Boehs

Editor's Note: This is the first of a 3 part series about softball and what it means to our Metro area and the state of Oklahoma. To better understand the significance of where the sport is, we need to go back a few decades.

In 1976, Marita Hynes, an athlete at University of Central Oklahoma turned Putnam City High School coach, became OU's softball and field hockey coach. She left the post to take over as OU's coordinator of promotions in 1984. She was then promoted to OU's associate athletic director, where she pushed for more recognition of women's athletics and campaigned for the WCWS to be held in Oklahoma City.



**Marita Hynes at the WCWS in OKC, June, 2018**

In 1995, she hired Patty Gasso from Long Beach State in California to be the head softball coach for the Oklahoma Sooners.

That first year the OU Softball team went 43-23 and made the NCAA Regional Tournament. Five years later they were WCWS Champions (2000). Since then they have been to the WCWS sixteen times and won it all 7 more times for a total of 8 National Championships becoming the first team in college softball history to four-peat - 2021-2024. (A core group of players have 4 Championship rings, having won each year from freshman to senior.)

That's a little of the history. Today, the OU softball team is again ranked #1 in the nation AND Patty Gasso is going to coach the USA Olympic Team.

Saying softball is a big deal in Oklahoma might be a small understatement.

Next month we will look at high school softball. The 2025 OU team has two outstanding Oklahoma freshman.

Chaney Helton, from Coweta, is a left-handed-hitter and outfielder who was named to the Oklahoma All-State First Team as a senior and was back-to-back Class 5A-3 Player of the Year. She led Coweta to four consecutive regional championships, and Oklahoma Class 5A State Championship in 2020.

Kadey Lee McKay is from Caddo. She is a left-handed-hitting infielder who led Caddo fall fastpitch to three straight state championships. She is also an accomplished basketball player who earned three all-conference honors while guiding Caddo to three state tournament appearances including a finals berth as a junior. Kady is also National Honor Society member.

These freshmen are accustomed to winning! With a #1 ranking and an exciting lineup, this should be another exciting season for OU softball!

**At left, Patty Gasso statue at the entrance of the new Love's field on the campus of the University of Oklahoma.**



### OKLAHOMAN'S WIN BIG AT OU

While the OU softball teams have often relied heavily on California talent, there have always been Oklahoma women who excelled on the teams.



**Rylie Boone from Owasso High School won a national championship her freshman, sophomore, junior and senior years at OU.**



**Lynnsie Elam from Chickasha High School was a catcher for OU from 2018-2022, winning a national championship as a junior and senior.**

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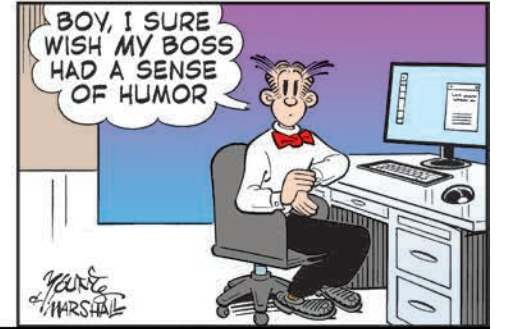
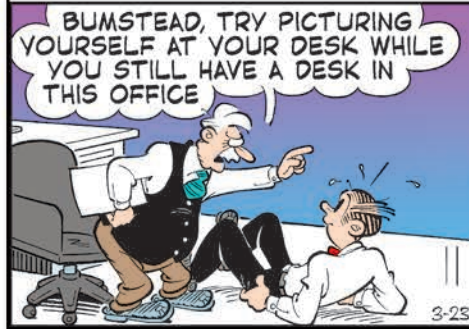
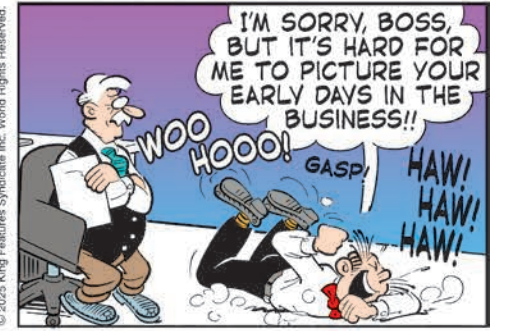
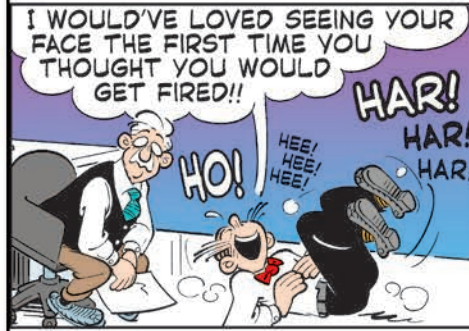
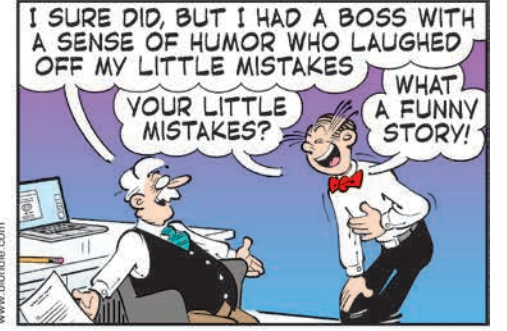
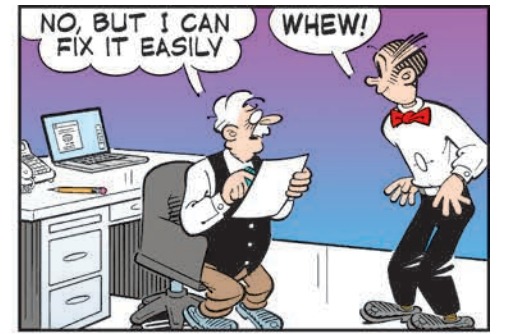
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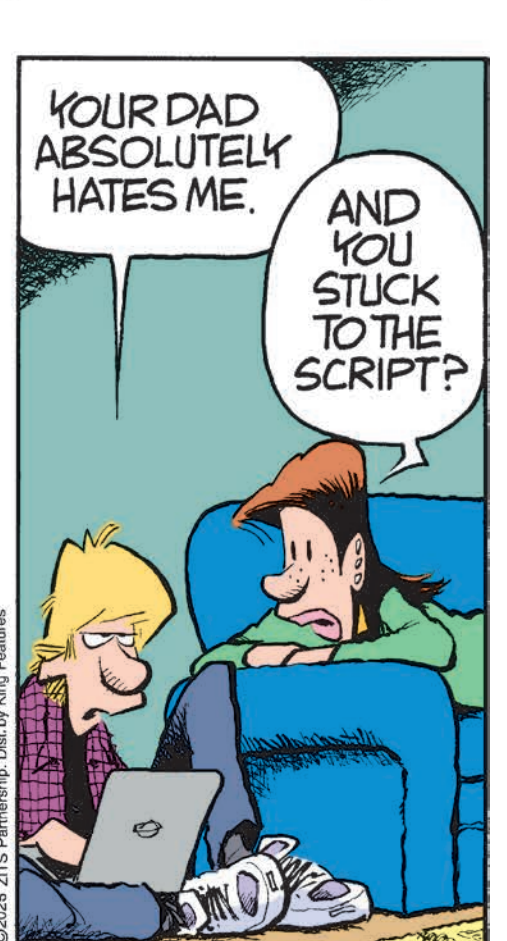
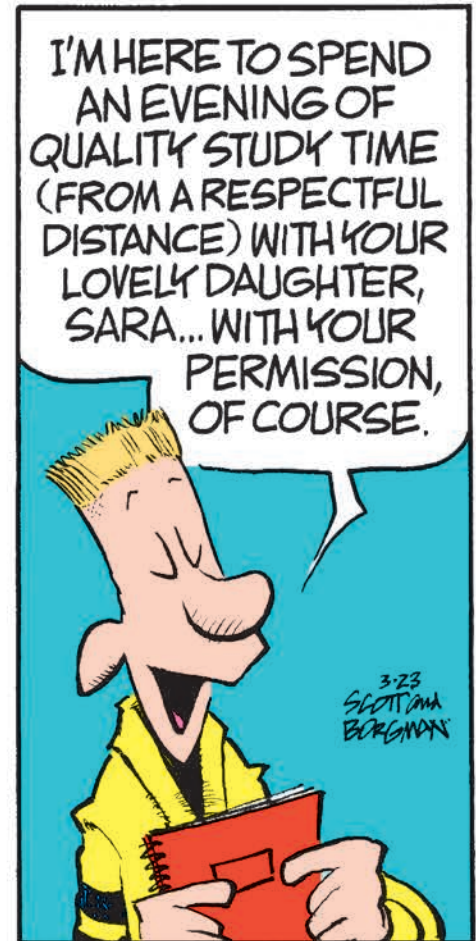


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