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Also in

Page 8, Governor this issue | Stitt Highlights OVNM Page 10, Dr. Tunstall is on a Mission

Page 22, Historic Route 66 Treasure Still Sizzlin'

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Standing from left: Steve Wilson, Director; Becky Kromer, Assistant Audiologist; Meggan Mott, Patient Coordinator; Patricia Box, Patient Coordinator; Amber Cromack, Bookkeeper; Joy Daniels, Insurance Coordinator; Marcia Freeman, Patient Coordinator; Karren Brown, Inventory Coordinator; Stuart Long, Technician Seated from left: Nell Wilson, Audiologist; Kerri Stueve, Audiologist; Jeri Mills, Audiologist; Cary Cuddeback, Audiologist; Paul Depp, Audiologist

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By Van Mitchell, staff writer

For over 41 years, Audio Recovery Inc. has been an Oklahoma City staple, dedicated to helping Oklahomans protect and improve their hearing health.

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Audio Recovery has more than 600 Google reviews with a 4.9-star rating out of 5 stars. One review stated, "They have a wonderful staff that's highly skilled and great products!"

The Silent Impact of Hearing Loss

Hearing loss is one of the world's most common, yet undertreated, health conditions, affecting millions globally. It often develops so gradually that people don't notice the subtle changes until a loved one points it out.

"People usually don't realize it's happening," Steve Wilson, Clinic Manager explains. "That's why it often goes untreated for so long."

The good news? Hearing loss is frequently both preventable and highly treatable. Regular evaluations and recognizing early signs are crucial for maintaining healthy hearing and staying connected to the world around you. Wilson encourages everyone to schedule a professional evaluation. "Taking charge of your hearing health can make a tremendous difference in your quality of life."

Reconnecting with Modern Technology

Untreated hearing loss is linked to serious issues like depression, anxiety, and cognitive decline. Fortunately, today's hearing aids do more than just amplify sound; they help individuals reconnect with loved

See HEARING page 4

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HEARING con't. from page 2

ones and participate more fully in social activities, improving mood and enhancing social engagement.

Wilson notes, "Hearing aids have evolved and now we're seeing major advancements. Modern devices can detect your environment and automatically adjust for clearer sound whether it's wind or background noise."

A Commitment to Continuous Care

Audio Recovery's service extends beyond the initial fitting. They provide expert repair and maintenance services, handling in-house fixes whenever possible. For more extensive repairs, they offer a patient-first solution:

"If it needs to be sent back to the manufacturer for repair, we provide a loaner of the same model, so patients aren't without their hearing aids," Wilson says.

He also reminds new users that adaptation is a process. "Hearing doesn't come back instantly. You must wear your hearing aids every day. It usually takes about a month for your brain to adjust."

Experience Excellence

Through the month of December receive great savings - up to \$1500 off a pair of premium level hearing aids. If you think you're dealing with hearing loss, don't just keep struggling. Set an appointment today. It's a great time to take charge and experience the difference.

Visit Audio Recovery Inc. at 3400 NW 56th St., Oklahoma City, OK The clinic is open Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 73112. 5 p.m., and Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. To schedule an appointment or for more information, call (405) 407-1517 or visit their website at audiorecovery.com.



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Editor/Owner/Publisher - Steven R. Eldridge

Writers: Bobby Anderson, Staff Writer,

James Coburn, Staff Writer, Van Mitchell, Staff Writer, Marise Boehs, Vickie Jenkins, Darl DeVault. Email submissions or requests for advertising info to: news@

seniornewsandliving.com

Advertising

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VillagesOKC and Concordia Partner to Lead Oklahomans in Fearless Aging





Danny Eischen, CEO, Concordia

Marilyn Olson, Executive Director, Villiage OKC

Since 2017, VillagesOKC has worked to build a community of neighbors helping neighbors, empowering adults to age with vitality, purpose, and confidence. From smartphone classes and Positive Aging seminars to GIFT (Gathering Information for Transitions) workshops, VillagesOKC has created a thriving network where learning, planning, serving and connecting flourish.

Now, VillagesOKC is taking an exciting step forward. To strengthen and expand its mission, VillagesOKC has entered into a strategic partnership with Concordia Life Plan Community. This partnership provides new resources, including office space, technology, administrative support, and expanded wellness programming, at no additional cost to the organization. VillagesOKC remains an independent nonprofit governed by its own Board of Directors.

"For nearly two decades, Concordia has served older adults and their families with excellence," said Marilyn Olson, VillagesOKC executive director. "Their leadership helped launch VillagesOKC, and this collaboration ensures our mission will continue to thrive. Together, we are leading Oklahomans in Fearless Aging by empowering individuals to age with vitality and purpose."

Danny Eischen, CEO of Concordia, was VillagesOKC's founding board president. "My connection to VillagesOKC goes back to its beginning, and I've seen firsthand the power of community in helping adults age with vitality and purpose.

"It is an honor to partner with VillagesOKC in this next chapter," Eischen said. "Together, we can do more than either organization could do aloneexpanding programs, deepening community, and inspiring Fearless Aging. We are building a hub for Fearless Aging and inviting others to join us as we continue to grow our partnership network."

Beginning in January, Eischen will assume the role of director and oversee operations. Olson will move into a role which will give more time to engage with community partners.

Olson said VillagesOKC members will see the same faces, the same programs, and the same mission they know and trust, strengthened with new opportunities for connection, wellness, and service.

VillagesOKC has relocated its offices to Concordia at 7707 W. Britton Rd., Oklahoma City, OK 73132. An open house will be held December 2 to honor Olson's years of service as executive director and to celebrate the new partnership.



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WRITING SKILLS REDIRECTED AFTER RETIREMENT

Story and photos by Darl DeVault, contributing editor

John Carpenter, 71, of Choctaw, Okla., has been enjoying his retirement since 2011, only to recently discover he could sharpen his writing skills and write for publication. He first became a confident writer as a federal probation officer, writing presentence reports for the federal court.

"I would interview defendants who had been convicted or pleaded guilty to confirm what I learned about their backgrounds," Carpenter said in an interview. "The background investigation included any criminal history, information about the offense, family history, employment history, and physical health, including issues like substance abuse. A victim impact statement would also be included if applicable."

His detailed report to the court assisted the judge in determining an appropriate sentence for each defendant. He wrote hundreds of presentence reports in the last 20 years of his career.

In retirement, Carpenter said he was glad his court-involved report-writing days were over. He started posting more frequently on Facebook to improve his writing skills and enjoyed sharing his work. This community engagement motivated him to continue writing and grow as a writer, showing how social involvement as a senior can support personal development.

Carla Guthrie, a senior from Italy, joined his local yoga class, which he still teaches. Carpenter learned she had written a short fiction story published in 2023 in the anthology "C05m0 Pr1m0" in Italy.

He said he always wondered if any of the pieces he posted on Facebook had any literary merit.

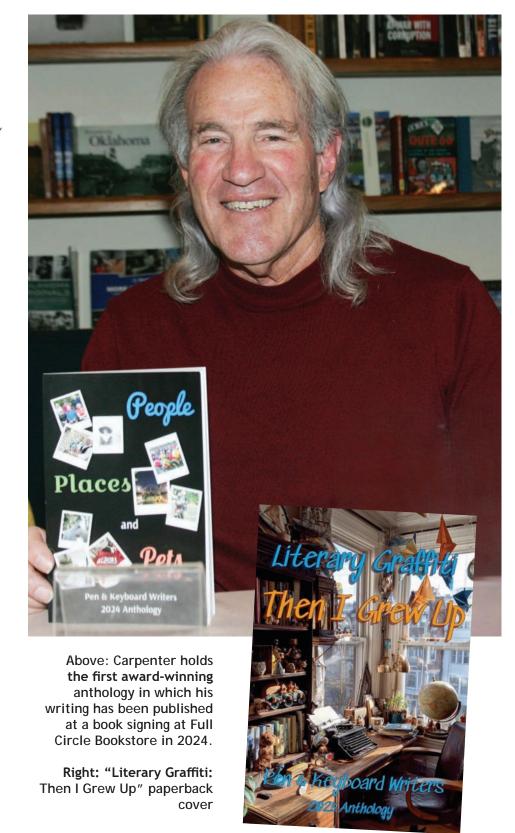
Carpenter asked Guthrie if she would look at one of his pieces and told her he enjoyed writing but was unsure if his work was any good. She advised him that if he wanted to take writing seriously, he should check out the local writing club she belonged to, "Pen & Keyboard Writers."

The Edmond club was founded in August of 2002 as an affiliate of Oklahoma Writers' Foundation, Inc. (OWFI), which is sponsored in part by the Oklahoma Arts Council. The 25-member club meets once a month on Zoom.

Carpenter said the club offers a friendly, safe atmosphere for mainly sharing fiction writing and discussing challenges. They are busy showing how writing community involvement can support growth and inspire others to join.

His wife, Jo Hogan, also dabbled in writing over the years, and together they joined Pen & Keyboard Writers in early 2024. He said they have discovered it to be a supportive community that encourages their writing journeys. Members of Pen & Keyboard Writers are authors of published and unpublished novels, short stories, children's books, poetry, and non-fiction. The club had produced an anthology, "Celebrating the Seasons," a few years before. They were making plans to publish a follow-up, "People, Places, and Pets," which won an award later that year. At one of his first Zoom meetings, Carpenter learned the club needed one more story to complete the anthology.

Carpenter submitted his nonfiction article about a 1975 trip to Dallas to attend a Rolling Stones concert. After reviewing and incorporating fellow club members' suggested changes, he realized how much he still had to learn. He saw the feedback as a valuable growth opportunity to improve his



craft, illustrating the importance of embracing constructive criticism.

With the invaluable help from his wife and other club members, Carpenter diligently made the necessary revisions. His manuscript was accepted into the anthology. In November 2024, he proudly crossed the threshold into the world of published writers — a moment that filled him with immense pride and a sense of achievement!

With his story in the anthology, Carpenter attended book signings with club members at the Full Circle Book Store and Belle Isle Library in Oklahoma City, as well as at CD Harris and Design Company in Luther.

"The shared joy and camaraderie during these events strengthened the sense of community and support that my wife and I first discovered in the writing club," Carpenter said.

Soon, Carpenter learned about an OWFI writing contest. Many members of Pen & Keyboard entered the yearly event, and some were winners. He submitted a couple of pieces to the competition, and although he did not place, he learned many valuable lessons about writing and the process. The experience, while challenging, bolstered his resilience and determination to grow as a writer.

See CARPENTER page 12

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Gov. Stitt Highlights Oklahoma Veteran News Magazine

by Darl DeVault, contributing editor

Oklahoma's first statewide veteran news magazine, now in its eighth month of publication, has received an official commendation from Governor Kevin Stitt for its outstanding service and contributions to the state's military community. The honor recognizes the magazine's rapid growth and its commitment to sharing stories and resources vital to Oklahoma's more than 300,000 veterans and their families. The launch of the monthly free "Oklahoma Veteran News Magazine" highlights its mission to honor service members and their families. It invites all Oklahomans to support this important effort.

"We encourage citizens to join in celebrating the missions of our five major military installations and supporting our new publication," Copublisher Steven Eldredge said. "We are proud to share this free monthly magazine published to increase awareness and support of our service members and our people's support for them among patriotic Oklahomans."

Oklahoma takes pride in hosting some of America's largest and most significant military installations, which serve as regional economic powerhouses and are often the largest local employers.

Altus Air Force Base, Fort Sill, McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, Tinker Air Force Base, and Vance Air Force Base host thousands of service members and their families. They all employ thousands of patriotic civilian Oklahomans and play a vital role in national defense. Oklahoma's National Guard, Reserves, and their civilian workers also support our military's important role in keeping our country free.

The publishers say this new magazine will aim to strengthen pride and unity among all Oklahomans by highlighting the state's values and priorities for its military community as the Oklahoma Standard. Oklahoma's Patriots, stationed at these installations, have a significant impact on the economy and community. Their contributions, including job creation, business partnerships, and infrastructure development, are a source of pride for the state.

"Oklahoma Veteran News Magazine" seeks to elevate awareness and respect for veterans' service in Oklahoma and to highlight how our state offers nationally ranked tax benefits to veterans who retire here, honoring their sacrifices while defending American freedoms. By helping to connect veterans with resources, the "Oklahoma Veteran News Magazine" aims to inspire community engagement. It does this by sharing stories of veteran achievements and providing updates on benefits and services.

The publication acts as an important platform to raise awareness of veteran businesses in our communities. It showcases these businesses so other veterans can recognize them as vital resources, thereby boosting the state's support for its military community. As its statewide distribution continues to grow, this magazine will become a vital part of the state's identity and its dedication to the military community. It strives to pay tribute to the service and sacrifice of all Oklahoma veterans and their families.

Co-publishers Steven Eldredge and Steve Sibley encourage Oklahomans to support the publication through subscriptions and article submissions. They ask everyone to share it with veterans in their communities, fostering a sense of belonging and collective pride. "Our magazine will honor the men and women who have taken the



oath to defend America in our great state and their families," Eldridge said. "We are proud to provide this free public service. Our goal is to raise public awareness and respect for our service men and women, ensuring their sacrifices are recognized and celebrated across Oklahoma and the world."



Oklahoma Veteran News Magazine is FREE for pickup in various racks around the Metro Area.

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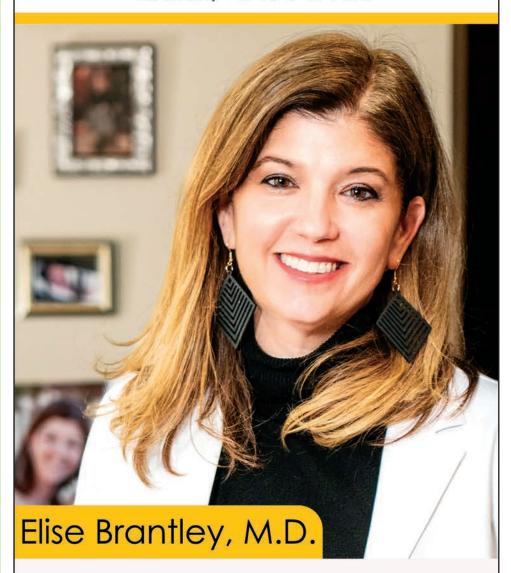
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ON A MISSION

By Van Mitchell, staff writer

Dr. Frank G. Tunstall has been on a lifelong mission to serve the Lord and teach others about Him.

Tunstall, a resident at Tealridge Retirement Community Independent Living, located at 2100 NE 140th Street in Edmond, has undertaken his latest mission with his new book "The Day That Changed Everything: Meditations on Christmas."

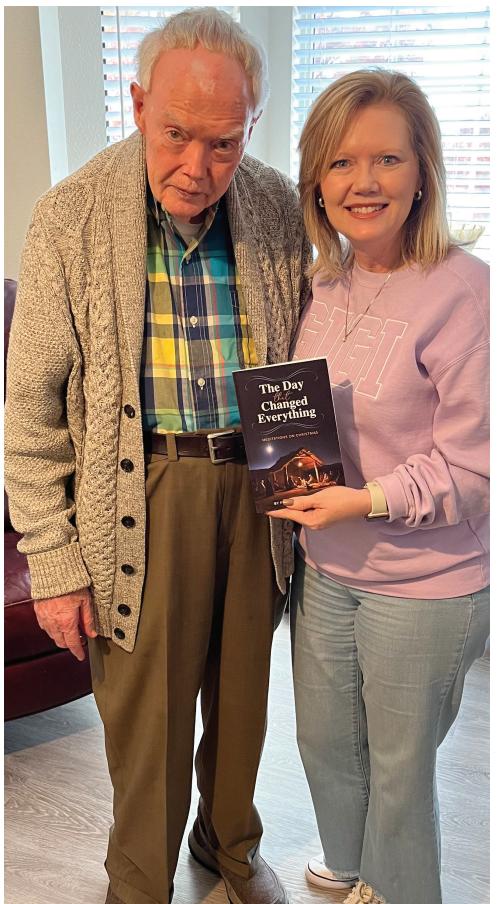
His book offers reflections designed to help readers redirect their attention from the commercial busyness of the season to the true meaning of Christmas – the birth of Jesus Christ.

Tunstall served as Bishop and superintendent at the Heartland Conference for eight years. He was the pioneer pastor of Northwest Christian Center in Oklahoma City. Having led the congregation for 23 years, he's been an ordained minister in the International Pentecostal Holiness Church for 62 years. He also served as president of Southwestern Christian University in Oklahoma City, and as editor in Chief of IPHC publications.

"I gave my heart to Jesus when I was in the seventh grade and I never looked back," he said. "I wanted us to get to a place where we remember the focus of the real meaning of Christmas."

Tunstall said a biblical Christmas has slowly been lost.

"The story of baby Jesus over the years has slowly faded into the public arena. The result is that a secular Christmas that has largely taken the place of Mary's baby, the son of God," he said. "My goal is to put baby Jesus back through Christmas. Jesus Christ is the son of God who died on the cross for our salvation."



Tunstall said God called him to write this book.

"I love Jesus and I wanted to write his story," he said. "I've got one goal and that is to love the Lord and serve Him and do what he's wanting me to do, and that's what I'm doing now. I want to get students and parents to recognize that Christmas is more than commercialization."

Dena Chitwood, Tunstall's daughter, said her father instilled in her family the importance of education and the true meaning of Christmas.

"We had a Christmas tree, we had Christmas presents, but Dad would always focus us back to the real reason why we were celebrating," she said. "He would always make sure as kids we understood that while all this (celebrating) was fun, it isn't the reason we celebrate Christmas."

Chitwood, a music teacher in the Bethany school district, said her father taught generations of students the importance of faith.

"He has many generations of students that he's taught over the years or pastored. I think people would say that even in his sermons, he was just helping us have a deep understanding of Scripture," she said.

Melissa Mahaffey, Executive Director Independent Living, said Tunstall is a positive example of seniors enjoying their passions.

"At Tealridge we love to know that our residents continue to live, grow and achieve goals. We seek to foster relationships and community through a loving atmosphere where respect and kindness are abundant," she said.

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See Sudoku Answers on Page: 19



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OPINION



How to Prepare Your Online Accounts Before You Die

Dear Savvy Senior

I recently had an estate plan drafted, including a will, power of attorney and advance directive, but I'm not sure what to do about all my online accounts – email, banking, and social media. What can I do to make sure my family can access what they need and protect my digital information after I'm gone. **Almost 80**

Dearr Almost

In addition to creating an estate plan, you should also make a "digital will" that lists all your online accounts and login information. This will help your loved ones access your electronic devices and online accounts more easily so they can manage your electronic affairs, according to your wishes, after you're gone.

Montana State University offers a Digital Assets Inventory Worksheet (see Montana.edu/estateplanning/digitalsssetsworksheet.pdf) to help you get started. Or consider purchasing a "password book" on Amazon for a few dollars. This will let you record and organize your online account information alphabetically. Here are a few other tips to help you prepare your digital life for your survivors.

Apple: If you're an iPhone, iPad or Mac user, you should nominate a "legacy contact" who can access your Apple account's data after you die. This is a secure way to give trusted people access to photos, files and messages. To set it up you'll need an Apple device with a fairly recent operating system. iPhones and iPads need iOS or iPadOS 15.2 and MacBooks need macOS Monterey 12.1.

For iPhones, go to settings, tap Sign-in & Security and then Legacy Contact. You can name one or more people, and they don't need an Apple ID or device.

You'll have to share an access key with your contact. It can be a digital version sent electronically, or you can print a copy or save it as a screenshot or PDF.

Take note that there are some types of files you won't be able to pass on — including digital rights-protected music, movies and passwords stored in Apple's password manager. Legacy contacts can only access a deceased user's account for three years before Apple deletes the account.

Google: Google takes a different approach with its Inactive Account Manager (see Support.google.com/accounts/answer/3036546), which allows you to share your data with someone if it notices that you've stopped using your account.

When setting it up, you need to decide how long Google should wait – from three to 18 months – before considering your account inactive. Once that time is up, Google can notify up to 10 people.

You can choose what types of data they can access – including emails, photos, calendar entries and YouTube videos.

There's also an option to automatically delete your account after three months of inactivity, so your contacts will have to download any data before that deadline.

Facebook and Instagram: If you're on Facebook or Instagram, both of which are owned by the parent company Meta, you can have your accounts either memorialized or deleted after you die if the companies get a valid request from a family member or friend. See Facebook.com/help/1111566045566400 or Help.Instagram. com/264154560391256 for details.

Meta also strongly recommends Facebook users add a legacy contact to look after your memorial accounts – see Facebook. com/help/1070665206293088. Legacy contacts can do things like respond to new friend requests and update pinned posts, but they can't read private messages or remove or alter previous posts. You can only choose one person, who also must have a Facebook account.

Passwords: If you use a password manager – a service that creates, saves and manages passwords for all your online accounts – see if it has an emergency access feature. Some services, like Keeper, Bitwarden and NordPass, allow users to nominate one or more trusted contacts who can access your keys in case of an emergency or death.

Send your questions or comments to questions@savvysenior.org, or to Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070.

CARPENTER con't. from page 6

"The monthly Zoom meetings for the writing club were always engaging and fun," Carpenter said. "One month, Apollo 13 astronaut Fred Haise Jr. was our guest speaker, and he captivated the club for nearly two hours with stories from his adventurous life and details about writing and publishing his autobiography, 'Never Panic Early."

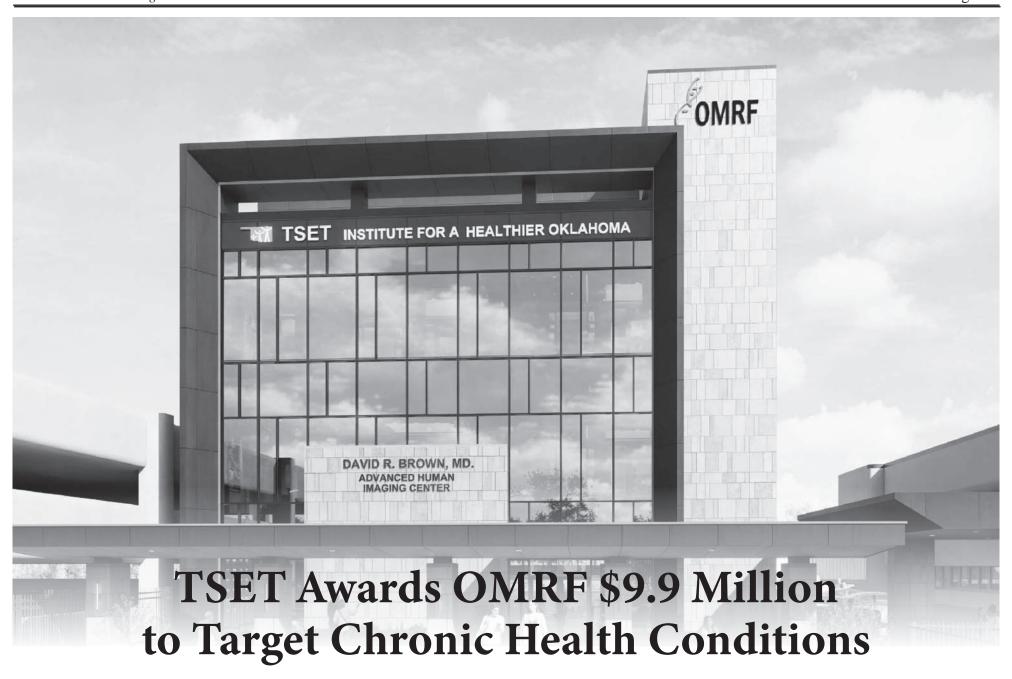
In early 2025, the club sought submissions for a third anthology, "Literary Graffiti: Then I Grew Up." "This time," Carpenter said, "I was able to observe the process of putting together the club anthology from the beginning and learned it really was a team project!"

The club members took turns reviewing and critiquing each other's writing as the final product took shape. The 2025 book is a collection of short stories about the art of growing up.

This new 264-page paperback anthology was published in November and is available on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and Walmart. Full Circle Bookstore has copies of the older anthologies on consignment. Carpenter is proud to note this new one features three of his stories and two of his wife's.

"The other stories submitted by the club's members are all top-drawer material," Carpenter said. "The club is anticipating another victory for the anthology in the 2026 OWFI contest."

Carpenter believes joining the club has spurred his desire to write more. He says it is as if he has chosen a new career in retirement. The axiom, "when one door closes, another opens," has proven true for Carpenter. He encourages everyone to see retirement as a new beginning and to seek a path to a more fulfilling life.



A \$9.9 million grant from the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust will help fund a new center at the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation focused on laboratory and clinical studies of chronic health conditions.

The grant, coupled with philanthropic gifts, will create the TSET Institute for a Healthier Oklahoma at OMRF.

TSET announced Nov. 20 that OMRF was among 13 recipients of Legacy Grants totaling \$150 million. TSET is a state agency created by Oklahoma voters in 2000 following the settlement of a lawsuit filed by Oklahoma and 45 other states against the tobacco industry.

The new TSET institute at OMRF will support clinical and "bench-to-bedside" research exploring the three root causes of chronic disease: inflammation, impaired immunity and accelerated aging, said OMRF's executive vice president and chief medical officer, Judith James, M.D., Ph.D.

"On average, Oklahomans die nearly seven years before people in healthier states," said James, who will lead the new institute. "It's not coincidental that we also have one of the nation's highest rates in diabetes, heart disease, tobacco and substance abuse, autoimmunity and cancer. Through this new focused endeavor, we hope to improve the health of all Oklahomans."

The new TSET institute will include:

- A Center for Healthy Aging, where Oklahomans will receive interventions that have proven through clinical studies to reduce physical and biological signs of aging.
- A 4,500-square-foot telehealth facility to provide subspecialty care to patients in practices throughout the state and to administer clinical trials to rural participants.

• A 33% capacity increase to OMRF's biorepository, which currently stores and processes samples from 71,000 participants in human clinical studies. Expansion of a new building that will house a state-of-the-art imaging center for OMRF's rheumatology and multiple sclerosis patients.

"We view these Legacy Grants as an opportunity to make an unprecedented investment in the health of current and future Oklahomans," said Julie Bisbee, TSET's executive director. "OMRF's proposal met our criteria for projects with the potential to truly tackle the underlying causes of chronic disease and premature death that affect people throughout the state. TSET is proud to build on OMRF's impressive track record for transformational lab research and clinical studies."

The Legacy Grants commemorate TSET's 25th anniversary. As part of a lawsuit settlement, tobacco companies make annual payments to TSET, resulting in an endowment currently valued at \$2 billion. The Legacy Grants were funded by investment revenue from that endowment.

OMRF scientists also receive smaller grants each year from another TSET program, the Oklahoma Center for Adult Stem Cell Research, or OCASCR. Those awards typically fund preliminary research or purchases of scientific equipment that enable scientists to apply for larger federal grants.

"We are deeply appreciative of TSET's continued support for our efforts to advance health for all Oklahomans," said OMRF President Andrew Weyrich, Ph.D. "The new TSET Institute for a Healthier Oklahoma at OMRF provides an avenue to tackle chronic disease research cohesively and collaboratively while involving study participants from communities throughout Oklahoma."



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Veterans Recognized

by Richard Stephens, Jr. and Don Nichols

EL RENO

The 14th Veterans Day celebration on Nov. 9 started with a parade downtown and finished with recognizing veterans at the Centre Theater. Hosted by the El Reno Chamber of Commerce, the theme was "Route to Freedom."

Thirty groups showed their support at 3:00 p.m. by marching downtown on a sunny but cold day. Following a horse-riding Girl Scout with an American flag were El Reno's High School Marching Band, Fire and Police Departments, Cruisers, and Round-Up Club, as well as the Heritage Express Trolley carrying veterans, U.S. Cavalry Association at Fort Reno, Disabled American Veterans, Make It Sew, Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes and others.

Afterwards, inside the Centre Theater, after opening with civic ceremonies, 2025's Veterans of the Year were recognized: Wilbur Ellis, Patrick Evans, Doug Lott, Daniel Taylor, Terry Walker and Gaylen Young. Each received a certificate and beautiful quilts made by sewers from the Make It Sew business. Owner MaCrae Putnam said, "These quilts represent a tangible hug to a chosen veteran."

Brian Rukes, a El Reno High School teacher, addressed the 150 attendees and said what "really bothers me and this goes back to the home, really, more than anything else, is when we stand up in the morning and we still say the Pledge of Allegiance, most of the students still stand....but very few students actually say the pledge." He requested school children to "say it proud, say it loud, say it so people can hear..."

"Freedom is not free," said Karen Nance, Executive Director of the El Reno Chamber of Commerce, "and what a blessing it is to honor those who have given us that freedom."

Caps off to you, veterans! Veterans Day activities in El Reno, Midwest City and Tahlequah typified how much Oklahomans value their veterans.

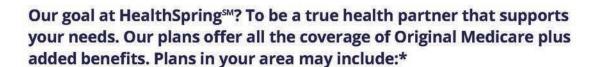


El Reno's Veterans of the Year for 2025 are, from left, Wilbur Ellis, Dan Taylor, Pat Evans, Terry Walker, Doug Lott and Gaylen Young. They were recognized in the Centre Theater, Nov. 9.

See VETERANS page 18

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"It was no way to live," she declares, "I was young and should've been living a bright, vibrant life. Instead, I was hopeless and felt like nothing would help me. Then I found acupuncture, and everything changed."

Soon after her incredible experience with the acupuncture, she made the life changing decision to abandon the family business and pursue her doctorate in acupuncture. "Acupuncture quite literally saved my life and I wanted to share that with the world," she proclaims. "This is why I often refer to my practice as 'The Last Resort With The Best Results.' You've been everywhere else and been given the same disheartening prognosis, prescribed the same medications and told, 'you're getting older' and 'this is just something you're going to have to live with." That has never sat well with me so I wanted to



offer people a real option for treatment and care."

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on an intimate level. And it brings me incredible joy when I get to say 'I can help you!'"

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VETERANS con't. from page 16

MIDWEST CITY

Sixty 60 groups participated in a half-mile long parade on Nov. 11. Hosted by the City of Midwest City, this year's Parade Marshal was Lt. Col (Ret.) Maury Hardy, a former member of the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) who exemplified the city's theme of "Proudly Honoring Our Military's AWACS" at Tinker AFB.

The Midwest City Fire and Police Honor Guard led the parade with groups like Parker Brothers Roofing, the Reserve Organization of America, Catholic War Veterans Post 168, Oklahoma County Sheriffs, St. Phillip Neri Middle School, and Dental Depot following, to the delight of onlookers.

With temperatures warming to the 50s, thousands of cheering, flag-waving onlookers lined the parade route that followed 15th Street, Douglas Avenue and Reno Avenue. About three thousand people were on hand.

Five Tulsa Warbirds PT-19s flew over the parade in the clear sky. Members of FMB Bank, Junior Service League and Rose State College carried a giant American flag. As a new addition to the parade, Mid-Del military families walked together in a show of support to our servicemen and servicewomen.

Lt Col (Ret.) Maury Hardy was the first AWACS pilot to fly out of Tinker AFB in 1977. He told the Midwest City Beacon about that first flight. "The first mission never got off the ground. It developed a fuel leak...There were hundreds of people watching us, because everyone wanted to see the first E-3 take off," he said. A few days later the same modified Boeing 707 finally took off.

Groups were happy to talk about participating. "It's a great opportunity for us to get out and be in the parade and say, 'Thank You," said Tony Bennett of VFW Post 7192. Carl Albert Marching Band Director Travis Miller said, "The Veterans Day parade is always one of the most favorite events we do because the meaning for us and because we bring music to our wonderful



remember veterans who gave their lives in Vietnam and to honor their families. Approximately 250 people attended.

A central and moving part of the ceremony was several families of Vietnam veterans who honored their loved ones by laying wreathes. Modeled after the Laying of the Wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, each family advanced a wreath and placed it at the foot of the Purple Heart Monument. Troy Jackson, the tomb's artist, Harold Ogden, Paul Braun and Don Nichols attended along with Woody and Bonnie Bruchett and his wife, who were principal members who erected the Monument.

Day participants.

RIGHT: Woodrow and Bonnie Burchett are two of the founding members of the Military Order of the Purple Heart National Monument in Tahlequah.

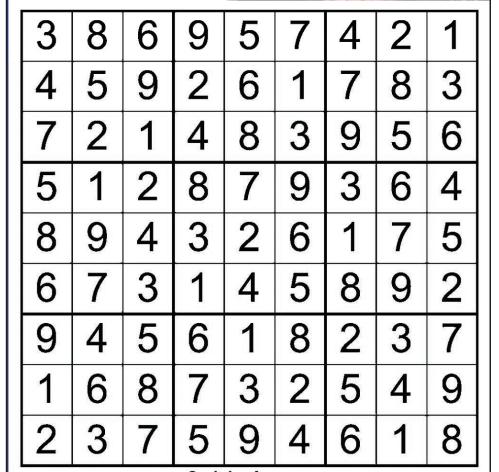




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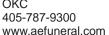


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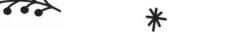




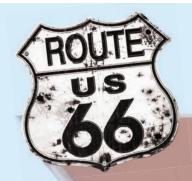












TREASURE STILL SIZZLING

by Vickie Jenkins, staff writer

If you travel long enough along Route 66, you eventually discover places that feel like they've been waiting just for you. Places that hold stories, memories, and characters shaped by the Mother Road itself. In Stroud, Oklahoma, that place is Rock Cafe, a modest sandstone building with a larger-than-life history. Built in 1939 from the very rock excavated during the construction of Route 66, the cafe stands as one of the most authentic and beloved landmarks on the old highway. Travelers may arrive for a meal, but they leave with a memory, a story, and often a new appreciation for the people who bring the cafe to life.

One of those people is Beverly Thomas, the longtime general manager who has spent 22 years inside the stone walls of Rock Cafe. "People don't just stop here for food," Beverly said. "They stop because this place feels like Route 66. It's something they've heard about all their lives, and when they walk in, it feels like stepping back in time."

Although the Rock Cafe was built in 1939 by Roy Reeves, he never operated it. Instead, the small stone building waited more than half a century for the right owner, someone with ambition, heart, and a little wanderlust. That person arrived in 1993 when Dawn Welch rolled into Stroud. She lived all over, even working for Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, but something about the Rock Cafe drew her in immediately. She leased it at first, learning the rhythms of small-town life, before finally purchasing it. "Dawn didn't even know anything about Route 66 when she got here," Beverly said with a laugh, "But she learned fast. She fell in love with this old place."

Dawn's love for the place grew into a passion for preserving the entire Mother Road. She went as far as Washington, D.C. where she spoke with members of Congress about funding to help keep mom-and-pop Route 66 businesses alive. "It takes a lot of courage to fight for small

towns," Beverly said. "Dawn knew these places mattered and she wanted the whole country to know too. Little did we know was that her advocacy and her personality would soon catch the attention of Hollywood."

In 2000, Pixar began researching Route 66 for a new animated film. Under the guide of historian Michael Wallis, the team traveled the entire highway, stopping at cafes, shops, motels, historic towns, and listening to stories from the people who lived there. When they walked into the Rock Cafe and met Dawn, something clicked. Her energy and her passion for Route 66 inspired the filmmakers. The conversations, the laughter, the loyalty, it all stayed with them. Eventually, Dawn became part of the creative inspiration for the character Sally Carrera, the blue Porsche voiced by Bonnie Hunt in Pixar's movie Cars.

From 2000-2006, the Pixar team visited the cafe multiple times, taking photos, asking questions, and absorbing the spirit of the place. Their admiration for Dawn's story led to an unexpected adventure for Dawn and Beverly. When Cars was finished, they were invited to the red-carpet premier. "It was unbelievable," Beverly said. "We met Paul Newman, Bonnie Hunt, Larry the Cable Guy, and Owen Wilson, everyone! I kept thinking, all of this because of our little cafe in Stroud," she smiled. After the film's release, visitors from all over the world poured into Rock Cafe to see the place that inspired a Disney classic.

Despite the fame, the Rock Cafe remains as warm and welcoming as it was in 1939. With a seating capacity of just 48, it still feels intimate and

full of character. The walls are decorated with memorabilia from Cars, Route 66 history, photographs, and antiques. But the heart of the cafe sits quietly in the kitchen with the original 1939 grill that has served thousands of meals over the decades. "That grill is the soul of the cafe," Beverly said. "It's still the same one we cook on every day, and yes, it still makes the best Reuben you'll ever taste."

Through the years, Dawn and Beverly's children have worked alongside them, making Rock Cafe a true family operation. "This cafe has raised our kids," Beverly said. "And the kids helped raise the cafe."

Today, visitors walk through the door smiling, whether they're first-time travelers or long term fans returning for another taste of history. People come in excited and leave smiling," Beverly said. "That's how we know we're doing something right." For nearly a century, Rock Cafe has stood strong, its stone walls, spirited staff and legendary grill providing that small-town treasures still matter. In Stroud,Oklahoma, the story of Rock Cafe continues to be written one traveler at a time.



Beverly Thomas is proud to be the General Manager, for the last 22 years, of this historic Route 66 landmark. Rock Cafe in Stroud, was built in 1939. Travelers come from all over the country to visit this historic Route 66 site.

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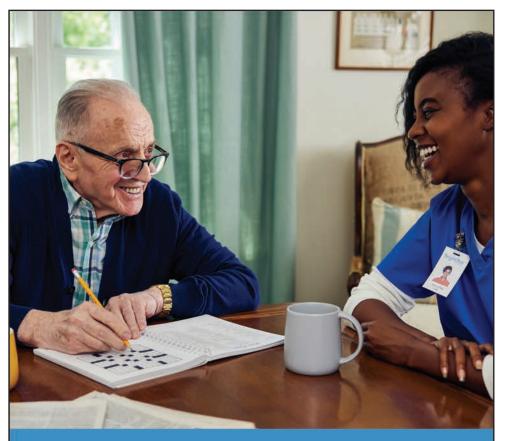
















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Returns to Automobile Alley

The Automobile Alley Association and Downtown Oklahoma City Partnership will host the 10th annual Lights On Broadway, part of Downtown in December presented by Devon. This beloved event returns Dec. 6, and Dec. 13, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. inviting visitors to shop local, explore the district, and enjoy cheerful seasonal programming.

With more than 600,000 colorful LED lights, Automobile Alley once again lights up during the season along Broadway Avenue and side streets. The holiday light displays feature dazzling curtains of light, festive décor, and larger-than-life ornaments creating a magical backdrop for holiday shopping, dining, and memory-making through Jan. 11.

Families can enjoy free Photos with Santa every Saturday from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., sponsored by amshot. As a nod to the district's automobile history, Santa will be smiling in style with his 1929 Mercedes Benz in the parking lot at 1001 N Broadway Ave, just south of Shop Good. Guests are welcome to take photos with their own cameras.

Each Lights On Broadway date features a variety of free, family-friendly activities and entertainment, including Magic Elf performances in partnership with Arts Council OKC's Art Moves, live music, Thunder Drummers, balloon artists, free caricatures, face painting, and the Visit OKC mobile visitor center.

New this year, attendees can dance into the night at a Silent Disco OKC at NW 6th and Broadway, where there will be a DJ spinning festive playlists for all ages. Visitors can also enjoy expanded programming from district

favorites like Factory Obscura's Artist Market and Motors and the Alley. Oklahoma Contemporary will host their third Annual Dog Holiday Costume Contest Saturday, Dec. 6 at 4 p.m. on their North Lawn. Event check-in begins at 4 p.m., and judging starts promptly at 4:30 p.m.

Attendees are encouraged to arrive in style on the Oklahoma City Streetcar, which will offer free rides on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays through Jan. 4. On Nov. 29, visitors can stop by to meet the EMBARK team for free swag and refreshments. To learn more about the streetcar, visit OKCStreetcar.com.

Lights On Broadway is sponsored by BancFirst, amshot, RCB Bank, Hogan Taylor and IAFF Local 157 Firefighters. Attendees can find an event map and a full list of participating businesses and their offerings online. Business promotions and programming are subject to change and will vary each weekend. For more information, including locations and promotions, visit **DowntownInDecember.com.**





Amber Waves









by BUD BLAKE



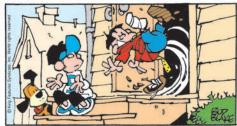












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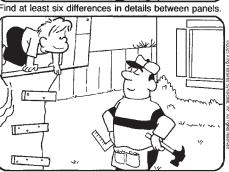
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by Jeff Pickering





Differences: I. Hammer is longer. S. Trechouse is not as wide. 3. Trec trunk is different. 4. House is wider. 5. Cap is different. 6. Hand is moved.

8. Capillaries. 9. 2017. 10. The pigment chlorophyll. of popping corn. 6. The remote island of St. Helena. 7. William Faulkner. 4. Composer John Williams. 5. Indigenous people in the Americas mastered the art I. "Modern Family." 2. Algiers. 3. "A Day in the Life," The Beatles.

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Roughly
- 5 Texter's "Wow!"
- 8 Nero's 1300
- 12 Stead
- 13 Museumfunding org.
- 14 Vicinity
- 15 In (miffed)
- 16 Deception
- 18 Fawcett of '70s TV
- 20 Goodies
- 21 Skater's leap
- 23 "Delicious!"
- 24 Tobago's island neighbor
- 28 Salon request
- 31 A billion years
- 32 Whiskey drinks
- 34 Fish eggs
- 35 Privation
- 37 Three-paneled artwork
- 39 "Friendly skies" co.

- 41 Chevy subcompact
- 42 Pulpit delivery 22 "Kinsey"
- 45 Painter Hopper
- 49 Homages
- 51 Always
- 53 Depot (Abbr.)
- 54 Sultry Horne
- 55 Pleads
- 56 Wager
- 57 Highlander

DOWN

- 1 "Frozen" snowman
- 2 TV host Kelly
- 3 Crystal gazer
- 4 Defeated in a footrace
- 5 Promptly
- 6 Mal de —
- 7 Pace
- 8 Cosmetics
- 9 Butter produc- 48 "Phooey!"
- 10 Birth doc.
- 11 Low isles

- 17 Sob
- 19 Pivot line
 - actress Linney
- 24 Aviv
- 25 Aussie hopper
- 26 Making certain
- 52 Forearm bone 27 Tries to convey
 - 29 Sinbad's bird
 - 30 "Whatever"
 - 33 Raced
 - 36 Brazilian dances
 - 38 Hair dryers
 - 40 Baseball's Gehrig
 - 42 Ticket half
 - 43 Stanley Gardner
 - 44 Fed. accident investigator
 - 46 Opposite of "sans'
 - 47 Gambling mecca

 - 50 Summer in **Paris**

by Fifi -Rodriguez 1. TELEVISION: Which TV sitcom

- features a French bulldog named Stel-
- 2. GEOGRAPHY: What is the capital of Algeria?
- 3. MUSIC: Which famous song starts with the line, "I read the news
- today, oh boy ..."?
 4. MOVIES: Who wrote "Hedwig's Theme," the main music in the Harry Potter movies?
- 5. FOOD & DRINK: What is the origin of popcorn?
- 6. HISTORY: Where was Napoleon Bonaparte exiled to after his defeat in 1815?
- 7. LITERATURE: Who wrote the novel "The Sound and the Fury"?
- 8. ANATOMY: What are the smallest blood vessels called? 9. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: In
- what year did the international version of TikTok launch?
- 10. SCIENCE: What substance makes plants green?







Solution time: 22 mins. **SIÐMSU**

— King Crossword

SNL TINSEL TOWN TALKS

By Nick Thomas

Since its debut as the Hallmark Channel in 2001, the network has become a beloved TV destination for millions of viewers, especially during the holiday season with its Christmas-themed features. While Hallmark has cultivated a recognizable roster of its own stars, their programs have also featured an impressive lineup of veteran film and television icons over the years, including Ed Asner, Christopher Lloyd, Shirley MacLaine, Roger Moore, Danny Glover, Burt Reynolds, and Carrie Fisher.

And Marilu Henner.

Best known to TV fans of the late 70s and early 80s hit the NBC comedy series "Taxi" where she played a part-time cabbie, Henner has continued to work in film and television including some 30 Hallmark productions such as their murder mystery movie series, "A Teagarden Mystery."

The channel does have its critics, given the often-repetitive nature of their movies and predictable happy boy-always-gets-girl outcome.

"Yeah, it's the same formula but it works," said Henner of the Christmas movies. "They're just kind of feel-good stories that the whole family can watch. There's always hot chocolate, cookies baking, cutting down their own Christmas tree, and of course a final kiss."

She especially remembers one film from 2020.

"Of all the Christmas movies I've done, 'Love, Lights, Hanukkah! is one of my favorites," she recalled. "The story is about a girl (played by Mia Kirshner) that I gave up for adoption when I was young. She finds out that she's not just all Italian but half Jewish after a DNA test and reconnects with me and my family. It's such a sweet holiday movie."

In 2022, she played Gramma Mia in "A Kismet Christmas" where she is the keeper of a famous family recipe for kismet cookies. If placed under one's pillow, the sweet treats allow the sleeper to dream of their true love kismet – a Turkish word synonymous with destiny.

"My character is very nurturing with a certain wisdom and she's always cooking, like me," said Henner. "We filmed in Victoria (Canada) and had some scenes in traditional Dickens-like costumes which was fun."

Henner has appeared in some 20 of the Hallmark Teagarden mysteries where she plays the mother of a librarian named Aurora Teagarden who belongs to a group of enthusiasts who study true historical crimes. Unlike other network or cable crime dramas, the on-screen violence is minimal.

"You're not going to see dead bodies or pools of blood everywhere, so I can watch it with my young niece," she explained.

"Taxi" was one of Henner's first on-screen appearances. Given the co-stars who would go on to become huge stars (including Danny DeVito, Judd Hirch, and Tony Danza), there are plenty of stories to share from the show's four seasons.

"Want to hear a great Danny DeVito story?" asked Henner, referring to the actor who played Louie, the grumpy cab dispatcher. "Danny was down to his last unemployment check, his last clean shirt, and he had no money when he read the script for 'Taxi' and felt it was a great part. He goes to the audition and is in a room full of studio suits with the script in his hand. He throws it down and says, 'Who wrote this 'crap' (censored!)? and they said 'that's our Louie.' He was the only truly irreplaceable character in the show."

"Taxi" may have launched Marilu's career, but at 73 she has made her mark on Hallmark.

Marilu Henner made her mark on Hallmark



Marilu Henner played Gramma Mia in Hallmark's "A Kismet Christmas"



Marilu Henner with co-star Mia Kirshner in Hallmark's "Love, Lights, Hanukkah!"



Marilu Henner in an episode of Taxi.

"First of all, they are really nice people to work with and I always have a great time with them," she said of her association with the network. "They pick interesting locations and there's always something in the characters that I relate to. People come up to me all the time and tell me how much they love Hallmark movies."

Nick Thomas teaches at Auburn University at Montgomery in Alabama and has written features, columns, and interviews for many newspapers and magazines. His book, "Raised by the Stars: Interviews with 29 Children of Hollywood Actors," featured a lengthy interview with June Lockhart talking about her father. See www.getnickt.org.



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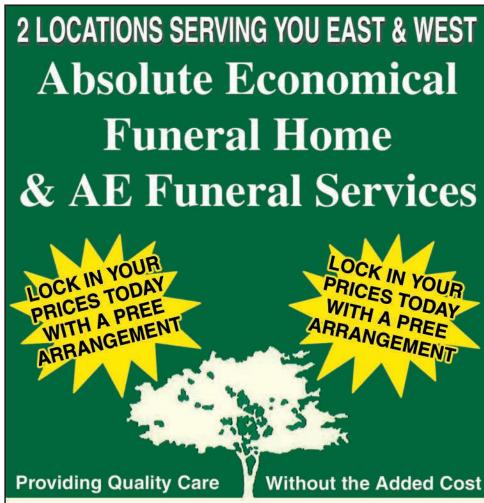
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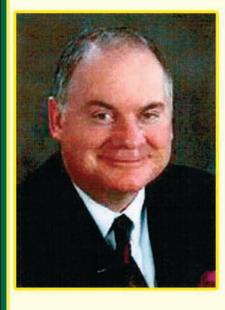
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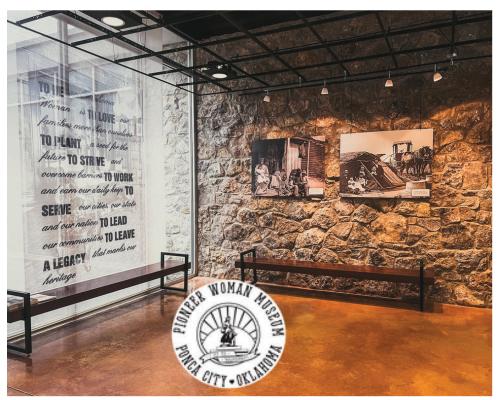


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Presentation at Pioneer Woman **Museum in Ponca City to Highlight Mourning Practices in Victorian Era**



On Saturday, December 13, from 1-2 p.m., the Pioneer Woman Museum and Statue will present a free lecture on 19th-century mourning practices and traditions of death in the Victorian era. Historical interpreter Keith Fagan will discuss the era's connection to the holiday season and ghost stories, most notably featured in Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol."

The Victorian era was the time period between 1837 and 1901. At that time, life expectancy was limited to around 50 years. During the 19th century, people died from disease due to a lack of medical care, inadequate food supplies, industrial accidents and war. Women often perished due to complications in childbirth, and children succumbed to disease. While the Industrial Revolution brought new advancements, it also created a hazardous environment for workers. Learn more about the elaborate customs of mourning practiced in the Victorian era, in which death was commonplace.

Mourners wore elaborate mourning clothing, placed flowers and stopped clocks at the time of death. In the Victorian era, public parks were being established and urban cemeteries offered picturesque spaces for interring family members. Stone monuments and gravestones became increasingly elaborate.

The lecture will take place during the annual Holiday Open House at the Pioneer Woman Museum and Statue, which will be held on Saturday, December 13, from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. The site will have free admission to all galleries, along with special holiday deals in the gift shop and a hot chocolate bar.

The Pioneer Woman Museum is located at 701 Monument Rd. in Ponca City. For more information, please call 580-765-6108 or visit pioneerwomanmuseum.com.

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



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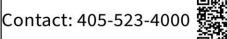




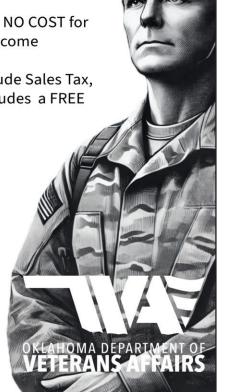












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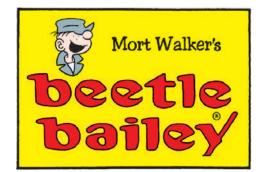
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