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Tinker AFB Remembrance Event

The 72nd Air Base Wing (ABW) hosted a 9/11 ceremony outside and inside the Tinker Event Center on Sept. 11.

Story and photos by Richard Stephens, staff writer

Outside, after presenting the colors, taps was played and salutes were rendered. As Nathan Schooling, Tinker's Fire Chief, recounted the events of 9/11, Airman Marissa Daniels, 72 ABW Security Forces, rang a bell for each time a commercial airplane struck a Twin Tower, the Pentagon, and Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

Col. Fencisco Harris, 72 ABW and installation commander, reflected how 9/11 affected him as a young Airman at McConnell AFB, Kansas, and how the attacks reshaped the world. Lt. Col. Rudy McIntire, 72 ABW Security Forces Commander, gave examples how the security forces mission dramatically changed after 9/11 and how deployments affected Airmen.

Oklahoma City Fire Chief Richard Kelley offered a broader national perspective, describing the attacks and his experience standing at Ground Zero two months later during a Rand review of the response. He said, "In just 102 minutes, nearly 3,000 lives were taken. Today, we gather not to simply remember a tragedy. We gather to remember the people, the lives lost, the fearless responders, and the resilience of the American spirit." He ended by saying he wants the enduring image of September 11 to "be of the rising people, perseverance, the strength of helping hands, and the resilience of a nation that came together."

Responding to uncertainty

Inside, after breakfast, four panelists shared how they responded during 9/11. Three were assigned to the 552nd Air Control Wing at the time: retired Brig. Gen. Ben Robinson, commander; retired Col. Jimmy Patterson, a senior pilot; and retired Lt. Col. David Hannah, a mission crew commander who launched an E-3 that day. Retired Master Sgt. "Jay" Orr, then assigned to Andrews AFB flying UH-1N helicopters, completed the panel.

Orr described the surreal quiet over Washington, D.C., as he flew his military helicopter because no other aircraft were airborne. "We proceeded our mission and flew right by the Pentagon and saw where the aircraft had impacted on the Pentagon...All the passengers on board, flight crew - we were just in awe, just silence. Not a dry eye on that aircraft that day."

Hanna remembered the day's rules of engagement for aircraft with a suspicious profile: "We were given the authority to engage and shoot it down." Robinson added, "Imagine you're an aircrew member on a military airplane and you've just been given the authority to direct a fighter to shoot down a civilian airplane full of innocent people. That's what that came to."

To get members of his wing out of waiting lines to enter Tinker and fix and fly jets, Robinson, Col. Altendorf and a security forces Airman identified a good place in the back of the base and cut a hole through the perimeter fence – yes, cut - with bolt cutters. "So, he (Altendorf) proceeds to cut a nice hole through the fence, big enough to drive through," said Robinson. Local police departments were notified, police car lights flashed to direct service members to enter and the new "AWACS" gate



Al DeRubbio, age 65, climbed steps to honor his younger brother, David DeRubbio, a NYC firefighter who died on 9-11. His group of 22 came from Wichita Falls, Texas.

worked.

Climbing for the Fallen

The 15th annual 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb honored first responders and civilians from Flights 93 and 11 who perished in New York City that terrible day and raised money for the Oklahoma Firefighters Foundation. The Foundation provides free lodging for Oklahoma families and first responders visiting firefighters and burn victims receiving medical care.

Five hundred and thirty-nine firefighters, law enforcement officers, and EMTs from 122 departments in five states and civilians paid \$54.31 and climbed a total of 110 floors in three towers in downtown Oklahoma City. Co-coordinators John

See **EVENTS** page 4

Jason Young (right),
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EVENTS con't. from page 2

Linley and Sherry Summers, helped by 100 volunteers, held a well-organized event.

"The Oklahoma Firefighters Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization who helps cover hotel costs for first responders, burn survivors, and their families in their time of need while their loved one is hospitalized," emailed Linley. "Since our last Stair Climb...we have helped 18 families, 379 nightly stays, covering \$36,000 of expenses."

The purpose matters

Before climbing, participants shared why they return each year. Dylan Pearson, of the Chickasha Fire Department, said, "Well, on a personal level, maintaining a fitness goal is pretty important, so it kind of serves as a benchmark for that... Being a firefighter is a fairly closeknit brotherhood and we don't forget them. They went out there to do a job. We try to finish that climb for them."

Mark Tate, a 71-year-old retired Lawton fire fighter, has participated 12 times "It's just remembering those who sacrificed and supporting our local guys. It's something that we still get to do with the fire department." He added, "It's very humbling to represent those who have given their all."

Stair climbing

After honoring our national symbols, taps and bagpipes were played and retired Midwest City firefighter and emergency manager Mike Bowers spoke. Climbers ascended stairwells about 8:47 a.m., when Flight 11 hit the north tower of the World Trade Center. Unlike the heroes of that day who made a one-

way trip, climbers rode elevators down.

I walked the first 29 floors with them, starting and stopping along the way. The stairwell was warm with little air conditioning, I sweated through slacks and a shirt and my heart palpitated. Law enforcement officers wore 20-30 pounds of gear and firefighters, 40-50 pounds – much more strenuous!

Groups of family clapped and cheered for participants as they walked between the Oklahoma Tower and the South and North Leadership Square Towers at 211 N. Robinson Ave.

Carrying their weight

At the finish line, turnout gear and hair were soaked with sweat, faces flushed, and legs exhausted — but climbers completed a great test of will power and endurance. They placed tags bearing the names of those they honored on an Accountability Board, rang a bell for closure, and reunited with family.

Among the climbers was Al DeRubbio, 65, accompanied by 21 others from Wichita Falls, Texas. "All four of my brothers were fire department of New York" he said. "They were all there that day. All of them. Three made it out. Dave (fourth brother) didn't make it out." One brother, Don, was a battalion chief. "He was guiding people into the building because he was a chief. And then my other two brothers arrived after the towers collapsed and they were on the pile a little bit." The two brothers were sent home to ensure their safety. "We lost Dave on 9/11, and I just wanted to do something to remember, you know, not only him, but all the firefighters, and all the current firefighters throughout our country" he explained.

The climb was a physical and emotional journey — one that keeps participants returning year after year.

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Giving Straight Answers to Common Estate Planning Questions

By Tamara Cain, Attorney and Estate
Planning Educator, Cain, Cain & Janik

Q: I want to make things as easy as possible for my children and other loved ones when my estate plan is eventually needed. How does good estate planning help me do that?



A: We hear this from prospective clients all the time. They aren't necessarily coming to us with a complicated legal problem. Often, their motivation is much more personal: "I don't want to leave a mess for my children." They want to take care of things now so that when disability or death occurs, the people they love aren't left trying to figure everything out during an already difficult time.

That's one of the primary goals of our planning process at Estate Planners for Life™. We look at the entire picture, not just the legal documents, and identify ways to make things simpler and more organized. Over a lifetime, people accumulate bank and investment accounts, retirement plans, insurance policies, real estate, mineral interests and other assets. We help clients sort through what they own, how it's owned and how it all fits into the estate plan.

As part of that process, we work with each client to prepare an Asset Review Report listing their assets, ownership and beneficiary designations. Combined with the estate plan itself, that report eventually provides the family with a roadmap. Instead of searching through filing cabinets, old statements and emails to reconstruct Mom and Dad's financial life, they have an organized record to guide them. Just as importantly, they have an established relationship with our law firm with professionals who know the plan and can help them carry it out.

We also coordinate the assets with the estate plan. Even a properly drafted trust won't accomplish everything intended if assets haven't been properly funded into it or beneficiary designations and ownership arrangements work against the plan. That's why funding is an important part of our planning process. The goal isn't simply good documents. It's making sure the documents and assets work together. At Estate Planners for Life™, we also help clients prepare their people. Trustees, powers of attorney, health care agents and other helpers don't need to become estate planning experts, but they should understand the roles they may someday be asked to perform. Many clients elect to have a Family Orientation Meeting, where we help introduce the plan to their adult children, explain roles and responsibilities, and make sure everyone knows where to turn when questions arise.

After 35 years of practicing law, I've learned that making things easier on your family doesn't happen by accident. It takes a process: simplifying where possible, getting organized, coordinating the assets with the plan, and preparing the people who will someday carry it out.

Our clients don't just want documents. They want a plan designed to make things easier for the people they love. One of the best things you can leave your family isn't just an inheritance. It's a clear, organized estate plan that makes it easier for them to carry out your wishes when the time comes.

Nelson Cruz Honored by OKC HOF

Story and photos by Darl DeVault, contributing editor

Retired Major League Baseball star Nelson Cruz thanked the OKC community and his former manager for helping him develop, and he revealed what drove his success at his induction into the OKC Triple-A Baseball Hall of Fame on August 29, 2026.

He played for parts of four seasons with the RedHawks between 2007 and 2010 during the team's affiliation with the Texas Rangers. In 155 total games, Cruz hit 52 home runs and amassed 148 RBI. Speaking before a game to the Chickasaw Bricktown Ballpark fans, Cruz focused on his connection to the local fans whose support made him feel like a true member of the community rather than just a player trying to make the big leagues.

"From the bottom of my heart, my family, Oklahoma, thank you for embracing me like one of you guys," Cruz told the crowd. "I enjoy every moment because you guys make me feel part of you, feel part of the team."

In a social media comment about the event, he reinforced this sentiment, writing, "Oklahoma City will always be a special part of my journey and my story."

Cruz attributed much of his development and enjoyment of the game to Bobby Jones, who managed the then-RedHawks during Cruz's tenure. He highlighted Jones' ability to balance instruction with freedom. "Jones taught me also to have fun and enjoy baseball," Cruz said. "He always gave you the freedom to play, to let you be yourself."

Reflecting on his dominant 2008 season in OKC—where he was named Pacific Coast League MVP—Cruz revealed that the pressure of impending fatherhood drove his performance. "With the birth of my first son approaching at the time, I felt an urgency to perform," Cruz said. He explained that his goal was to secure a promotion to the Majors "to be able to provide for my growing family."

That 2008 campaign with the Texas Rangers affiliate Oklahoma RedHawks (now the Oklahoma City Comets) was historic and dominant. His MVP season is best defined by a rare blend of power and speed on the basepaths. He became the first of now three players in the franchise's "Bricktown Era" to record at least 20 (37) home runs and 20 stolen bases in a single season.

He translated his 2008 Triple-A success to immediately excel in the Majors, hitting .330 with a 1.030 OPS in 31 games for Texas to close the year,

Cruz built a reputation as one of the most feared power hitters of his generation, playing outfield and designated hitter. He transitioned from an everyday outfielder into one of the most prolific full-time designated hitters in baseball history.

Cruz played MLB 1,010 games as a defensive position player in the field. He spent the vast majority of his defensive innings in the corners of the outfield. Cruz played MLB 1,411 games as a designated hitter. He holds the MLB record for the second-most career home runs hit strictly while occupying the DH slot in a lineup, trailing only Hall of Famer David Ortiz.

He amassed 464 career home runs, 2,053 hits, and seven All-Star selections over 19 seasons. His 346 home runs during the 2010s were the most by any player within the decade.

He is best known for his historic 2011 postseason run and for adapting remarkably well to new managers, hitting more than

See **CRUZ** page 8

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CRUZ con't. from page 7



Nelson Cruz in an LA Dodgers uniform before his induction into the OKC Triple-A Baseball Hall of Fame.

He was recently hired as a Special Assistant for the Los Angeles Dodgers.

40 home runs for three different franchises (Rangers, Orioles, Mariners)—a rare feat in MLB history.

He earned the nickname “Boomstick” and appeared in 50 MLB postseason games, hitting 18 home runs and driving in 38 runs with a .278 batting average. He homered in the postseason for four teams (Rangers, Orioles, Twins, Rays). Named the 2011 ALCS MVP against the Detroit Tigers, he hit the first walk-off grand slam in MLB postseason history in Game 2. He finished the series with 6 home runs and 13 RBIs in just six games, batting .364.

Nelson played for eight MLB teams in 19 seasons. He was 26 when he first played for the RedHawks and 43 when he signed a one-day honorary contract to officially retire from MLB as a member of the Seattle Mariners on March 28, 2024.

His decade-long sustained commitment to his hometown of Las Matas de Santa Cruz, Dominican Republic, earned him the 2021 MLB Roberto Clemente Award for his humanitarian efforts.

Often stepping in where local resources were lacking, he made key contributions to humanitarian infrastructure.

After a childhood friend lost their home to a fire because the town lacked firefighting equipment, Cruz personally purchased and donated a fire truck to the community and 80 uniforms to help protect firefighters. He also donated ambulances because the nearest hospital is approximately an hour away.

He organizes annual healthcare access clinics, bringing dentists and optometrists to the town to provide free checkups, medicine, and eyewear. In 2020 alone, these clinics served 500 patients. His foundation, Boomstick23 Foundation, began construction on a police station and also donated \$400,000 in medical equipment and food aid to the Dominican Republic.

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Cruz provided direct financial support to nearly 1,200 families in his hometown to help them weather the economic shutdown. He also ensured more than 700 families were fed during the crisis. Cruz also built an education and technical center to supply computers to help young student-athletes continue their education while training.

Cruz also acknowledged the honor of being the first Latino inductee since the Hall of Fame’s revival in 2023. His induction coincided with the “Cielo Azul de Oklahoma City” weekend, a celebration of the team’s Hispanic and Latino fans, making his selection particularly timely.

His was a rare working induction into the Hall of Fame, since he was later in the dugout with the Oklahoma Comets that evening as a recently hired Special Assistant for the Los Angeles Dodgers, the Comets’ MLB team.

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9/11 Remembered 25 Years Later

America was attacked. That week, an Airman helped a Crisis Action Team and Oklahoma units responded during America's national emergency.

By Airman Freddy Flightline

Today, I live in Oklahoma, but on September 11, 2001, at 0615 hours (all times here are Pacific Standard Time), I was driving to work at March Air Reserve Base, California, and the radio news announced a second World Trade Center tower in New York City had been hit by an airplane and smoke was billowing out.

It was early in California and the base was at its normal Force Condition Bravo, so entry was easy. The other Wing Plans staff and I watched events live on CNN. We were astonished and sad to see two towers on fire and people jumping out of them to their death. By 0700, CNN announced American Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon. This was no accident. These were acts of war.

Joining Crisis Action Team (CAT)

Major Mark Wittemann, the Chief of Wing Plans, asked me to work in the 452d Air Mobility Wing's CAT. My role? Action officer supporting Colonel Timothy Wrighton, the wing commander, and his Group and Squadron Commanders.

A CAT provides centralized command and control of a unit's resources and flows taskers. Information provided here is below the controlled unclassified information level.

Before 0730, National Command authorities put military units on high-alert status. HQ Fourth Air Force tasked us to provide information: initiate Force Protection Condition Delta (high state); provide status of aircraft, personnel and logistics stocks; support Operation NOBLE EAGLE (ONE); and more. We requested this information from base squadrons and flights. Impact? Several gates closed. Open gates heavily guarded by Security Forces personnel. Everyone's identification card and vehicle registration were checked. Long lines to enter.

In between telephone calls and reports, we were told about United Flight 92 crashing in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Later, we learned passengers, led by Todd Beamer, shouted, "Let's roll" and thwarted that hijack attempt.

Everywhere, lock down for force protection. We wondered, what was next?

Before 9/11 ended, 150 members of Congress sang, "God Bless America," together – solidarity.

That night, I activated the Deployment Control Center after my CAT shift to provide any assistance needed (fuel, supplies, etc.) to 150 Federal Emergency Management Administration personnel, search dogs and 48 tons of cargo deploying on three, C-141B airplanes to NYC. I worked in the CAT for months.

Only military aircraft flew in America's airspace until September 14. During Operation NOBLE EAGLE, Air Force active duty, Reserve and Guard fighters performed Combat Air Patrols, alert for another terrorist attack.

Oklahoma Military Response

During the first week after September 11, 2001—Sept. 11 through Sept. 17—Oklahoma installation personnel had four priorities: immediate force protection, homeland air defense, emergency medical support for New York, and preparing military infrastructure and personnel for a much larger national mobilization.

"The 552nd (Air Control Wing) was one of the first units to be tasked by the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) to protect the airspace over North America," reads the 552 ACW unit history. Within hours, AWACS were patrolling the skies over North America in homeland defense.

One 552nd aircraft got tasked "to be the first airplane to orbit over the White House about 45 minutes after the first tower was hit," remembered Colonel Patricia Sheets, former 552 ACW operations director.

According to 507th Air Refueling Wing's vice-commander Col. Mike Mahon, they had eight KC-135s available at Tinker AFB. "We were all contacted and our jets were in the air the next day. Refueling fully-armed F-16s in U.S. airspace is a game changer."

General Charles Johnson, former Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center commander, said he knew there would be some kind of response. "I had over one-third of the B-1s in the Air Force inventory parked at Tinker undergoing a major modification....So our job was to get those back operational."

On Sept. 12, thirteen members of the 97th Medical Group, Altus AFB, deployed to McGuire AFB, New Jersey, aboard a C-17 to provide medical assistance to victims of the terrorist attacks.

America's homeland had been attacked. We were mad. We wanted to do something: wave flags from vehicles and in yards, enlist in the military armed forces, give blood - something. We would not be cowered.

Later, we enjoyed Toby Keith's song, "Courtesy Of The Red, White And Blue (The Angry American)": "Oh, justice will be served/And there's gonna battle will rage/This big dog will fight/ When you rattle his cage/And you'll be sorry that you messed with/The U.S. of A."

Responding with Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, U.S. military and civilians deployed to 13 locations in 10 countries in and near Afghanistan.

OPINION



When Home Care Isn't Enough

Dear Savvy Senior

My mother has several chronic health conditions and needs a home caregiver to help with daily activities. I know she wants to stay at home as long as possible, but how do I know when it's time to consider an assisted living facility or nursing home?
--Exhausted Daughter

Dear Exhausted,

Most older adults hope to remain in their own home as long as possible, and with the right support many can. But there may come a point when home care is no longer enough to meet a person's medical, safety or social needs. While moving to an assisted living facility or nursing home is never easy, recognizing the warning signs early can help you avoid a crisis and make the transition less stressful.
If you answer "yes" to several of the following questions, it may be time to start exploring other care options.

Is home care becoming too expensive?

Eight to 10 hours of care a day, seven days a week, can easily cost \$100,000 a year or more. That's well above the median annual cost of a one-bedroom assisted living apartment (about \$70,000), though still less

than a private room in a nursing home (about \$128,000), according to Genworth's Cost of Care Survey.

Does she need more medical care?

If your mother needs ongoing nursing care or frequent medical monitoring, a nursing home may be the better choice. If she mainly needs help with daily activities, assisted living may be enough.

Is she falling, forgetting medications or going to the hospital more often?

Frequent falls, medication mistakes and repeated hospitalizations are often signs that living at home is becoming unsafe.

Does she have dementia?

Wandering, confusion or unsafe behaviors can make home care increasingly difficult. Memory care communities provide a secure environment and specially trained staff.

Does it take two people to help her?

If she needs two people to assist with transfers, bathing or toileting, both the cost and safety risks of home care rise significantly.

Is her home still safe?

Stairs, narrow bathrooms and the lack of features like grab bars or a walk-in shower can increase the risk of falls. Home modifications may help, but they aren't always enough.

Is she isolated or neglecting personal care?

Loneliness, poor nutrition, weight loss, or neglecting bathing and grooming can all signal that she needs more support than can realistically be provided at home.

Is caregiving overwhelming?

If you're constantly worried, sleep-deprived or neglecting your own health, it may be time to consider a higher level of care. Planning ahead gives your family more choices and helps avoid making an important decision during a medical emergency.
Keep in mind that Medicare generally doesn't pay for long term stays in assisted living or nursing homes. It only covers limited skilled nursing care after a qualifying hospital stay. Understanding what Medicare covers and what it doesn't can help you avoid costly surprises.
If you're unsure what level of care your mother needs, an Aging Life Care professional (aginglifecare.org) can assess her situation and recommend appropriate options. An initial assessment can cost \$300 to \$800 or more. You can also use a senior care advising service like A Place for Mom (aplaceformom.com), which provides free guidance because it is compensated by participating care communities.
To research facilities, visit Caring.com. For Medicare-certified nursing homes, use Medicare's Care Compare tool at Medicare.gov/care-compare. You can also contact your local long-term care ombudsman (ltombudsman.org) to learn about complaints or quality concerns involving facilities you're considering.
The best time to choose a care community is before a crisis forces the decision, giving your mother more choices and your family greater peace of mind.

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



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60 Years of Czech Tradition Meets 100 Years of Route 66

Sixty years of Czech heritage will meet 100 years of Route 66 when the Oklahoma Czech Festival returns to downtown Yukon on Friday, Oct. 2, and Saturday, Oct. 3, for its milestone 60th anniversary celebration.

Fittingly held during the Route 66 Centennial year, the 2026 Oklahoma Czech Festival will celebrate under the theme "Czechin' Our Roots on Rt. 66," honoring both the Czech heritage that has helped shape Yukon and the historic highway that runs through the heart of the community.

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Visit These Exhibitors

Exhibitor	Booth
1-VOIP Enhanced Services	61
AARP Driver Safety	3-A
American Legion Post 111 Edmond OK	3-B
ArchWell Health	39
AudioNova	37
Bott Radio Network - OK	31
Brazito Coins	62
BVA Advanced Eye Care	65-B
Cain, Cain & Janik - Estate Planners For Life	50
Champlin Broadcasting - 99.7 The Wolf & Freedom 96.9	26
Club Pilates Yukon & North Edmond	45
CommunityCare	38
Day Roofing & Construction	57
Devoted Health	46
Dignity Memorial Funeral Services	84
Dr. Lauren Powell, The Culinary Doctor	32
Edward Jones	85
Eyemart Express	48
Family Nest OKC South	C
FirstLight Home Care	13
Ford Chiropractic Life Center	51
GlobalHealth	78
Grace Care	8
Guardian Angels Concierge Services, LLC	49
Hanson Chiropractic Center	75-B
Health 65	6
HealthSpring	23
Heartland Hospice	2
Hefner Mansions	10
Heritage Home Solutions	44
Homewatch Caregivers of Edmond	11
HomeWell Care Services OKC	86
Hope in Ink	9
Humana	73
LeafFilter Gutter Protection	55
Leafguard	16
Local Handyman, OKC	81
Luxery Bath OKC	63,64
Lynn Institute	77
McBride Orthopedic Hospital	30
Medical Research International	79
MedicarePrepare	43
Michael Cooper - Singing Hits of 60' & 70's	65-A
Ms Oklahoma Senior America	36
Natural Grocers	18

Exhibitor	Booth
Navigating Medicare	F
Nerve Renewal Neuropathy Clinic	A-B
Never Retire	42
NOVAL SeniorCare	25
Number 2 Pet Waste Removal	75-A
Oak Street Health	72
OHCA - Oklahoma's Living Choice	24
OKDHS - Oklahoma Department of Human Services	70
Oklahoma City-County Health Department	76
Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office	4
Oklahoma Department of Securities	53
Oklahoma Insurance Department	66-A
Oklahoma Senior Follies	69
Oklahoma Senior Games	68
Oklahoma Senior Journal	27
OLBPH	58
Perspire Suana Studio	60-B
PLAN Insurance	7
Renewal by Andersen	52
Resthaven Funeral Home & Memory Gardens	12
Saint Ann Assisted & Independent Living	35
Senior Benefits Consulting	40
Sibley Insurance Group	17
Socks for Seniors	60-A
South Pointe Rehab & Care Center	83
Southwest Long Term Care	14
SSM Health Behavioral Health	59
Statewide Remodeling	80
Stretch Zone	82
StretchLab	28,29
Tailored Remodeling	19
The Hugs Project	66-B
The Santa Market	5
TruLata	Entrance
U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission	74
United Healthcare Medicare & Retirement	15
Valir PACE	47
VillagesOKC	20
VIPcare	56
Virginia Miller Insurance	22
Visit Shawnee - City of Shawnee, OK	54
Vondel Smith / Mercer-Adams Funeral Service / Tribute Memorial Care	67
Warmar Technology Solutions,	34
YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City	21

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9:00 - Balance From the Ground Up

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9:30 - Healthy Eating & Blood Sugar Balance

Robin Marshall

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10:00 - Can You Trust What You See? Information in the Age of AI

Tiffany Corson Bednar

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11:00 - Medicine You Can Taste. Science You Can Use.

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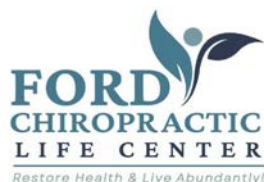
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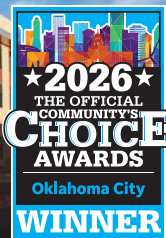
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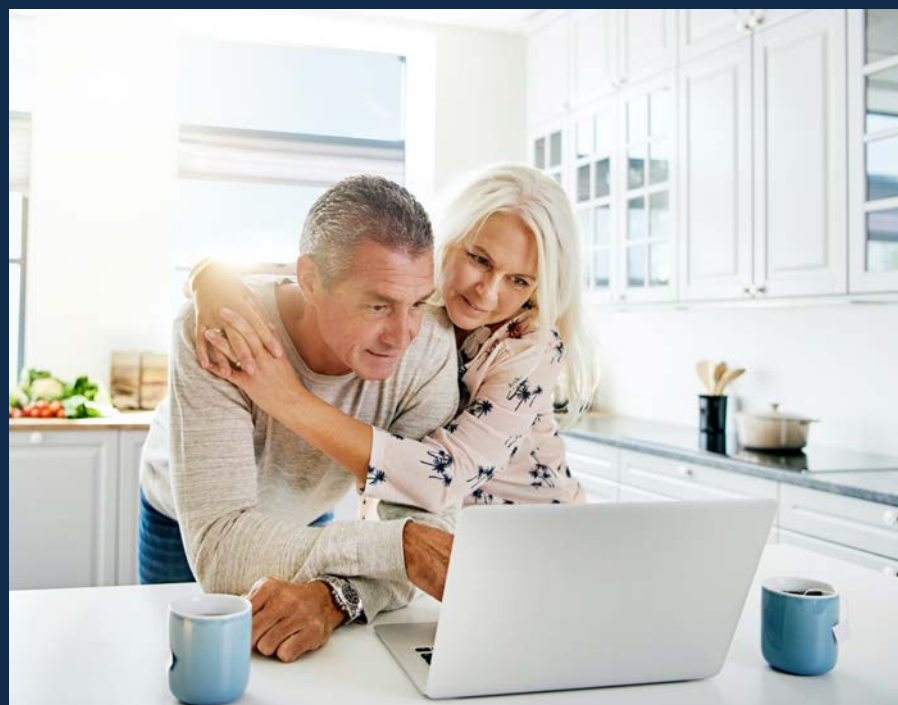
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FESTIVAL con't. from page 13

Czech festival in Oklahoma.

"For those of us who grew up with this festival, it's more than something that happens one weekend a year. It's part of our families and our memories, and we love sharing that with everyone who comes to Yukon," Oklahoma Czechs President Kim Landes Rex said. "You don't have to be Czech to be part of it. We hope that whether you grew up with these traditions or are experiencing them for the first time, you spend the day with us and leave feeling a little Czech yourself."

Festival activities will take place from 5–10 p.m. Friday and 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Saturday in downtown Yukon, with festivities centered around the Oklahoma Czechs, Inc. Building, 25 N. Fifth St. Saturday's signature parade steps off at 10 a.m. along Main Street/historic Route 66.

The parade is expected to feature more than 80 floats and entries, while the festival grounds will welcome close to 200 arts and crafts and food booths, along with a carnival and activities for visitors of all ages.

About the Oklahoma Czech Festival

The Oklahoma Czech Festival is a family-friendly event celebrating the heritage and traditions of the Czech community in Oklahoma. Since 1966, Oklahoma Czechs, Inc. has hosted the Oklahoma Czech Festival to preserve and share the customs and heritage the Czech and Slovak immigrants brought from their homeland. Yukon is proudly known as the Czech Capital of Oklahoma and celebrates its rich culture throughout the year. The 60th Annual Oklahoma Czech Festival will be held Oct. 2-3, 2026, in downtown Yukon. For more information, visit www.czechfestivaloklahoma.com.



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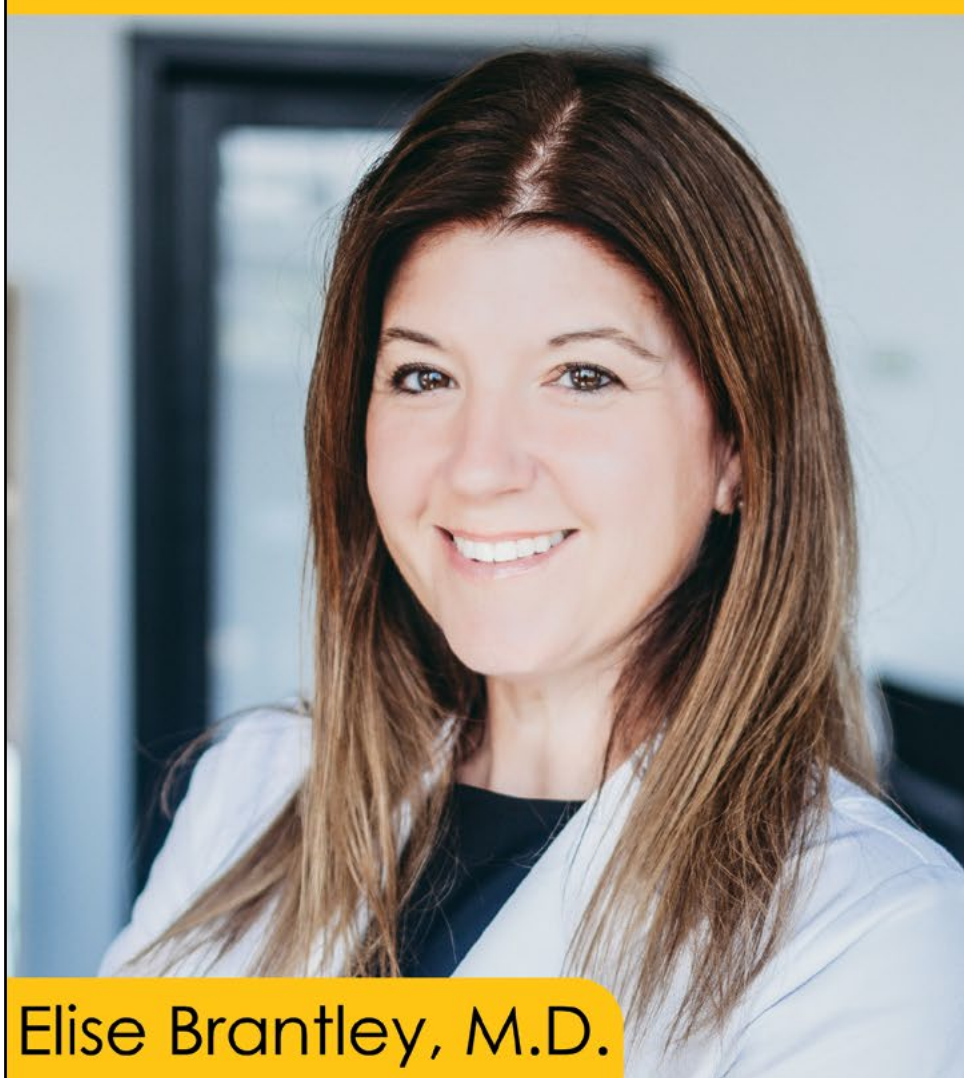


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Additional Screenings Added for New Route 66 Documentary

The Oklahoma Historical Society has multiple free screenings planned across the state for its new documentary “Crossroads of America: Oklahoma’s Route 66.” A trailer for the documentary is now available on the Oklahoma Historical Society’s YouTube channel. Additional screenings are being planned, and details will be announced at a later date.

The Oklahoma Historical Society, in collaboration with director Bryan Beasley, producers Jon and Jaime Roman, and with support from the Inasmuch Foundation, has produced “Crossroads of America: Oklahoma’s Route 66.” This documentary examines the evolution of Route 66 in Oklahoma, from the hardships of the Dust Bowl era to post-WWII road trips. It explores the highway’s history and future through interviews with historians, interactions with small-business owners and scenes created using virtual production technology filmed at the Cherokee Film Studios.



Screening Schedule

Thursday, October 1, at 4 p.m.
Showest 4 Theatre in
Weatherford

Friday, October 2, at 4 p.m.
Flix on 6 in Elk City

Thursday, October 15, at 7 p.m.
Showbiz Cinemas in Edmond
Reserve a spot

Thursday, October 22, at 7 p.m.
Circle Cinema in Tulsa

Tuesday, October 27, at 6 p.m.
Centre Theatre in El Reno

All screenings are free. Those interested in attending the events in Sapulpa or Edmond should reserve tickets in advance to secure a spot. All other screenings do not require a reservation. As additional screenings are added, the details will be posted on crossroadsok66.com.

Vietnamese American Heritage Community of OK and OK History Center

Vietnamese American Heritage Community of Oklahoma (VAHCOK) and the Oklahoma History Center Museum (OHCM) are partnering to present “Our Journeys,” a powerful multimedia exhibition created by Vietnamese Boat People (VBP), on view from September 12 to January 4, 2027, at the Oklahoma History Center Museum in Oklahoma City.

Centering the voices of Vietnamese Americans, “Our Journeys” brings to life deeply personal stories of migration, memory and resilience. Through oral histories, cherished artifacts and interactive elements, the exhibition invites visitors to explore the emotional and historical threads that connect generations across the diaspora.

Since 2018, VBP has documented the untold stories of the Vietnamese refugee experience through its award-winning podcast, educational workshops and grassroots storytelling initiatives. “Our Journeys” is the culmination of this work—transforming audio into a deeply human, visual and participatory experience.

The exhibition invites visitors through a self-guided collection of personal narratives and objects contributed by storytellers—each one carrying the weight of history, loss and hope. In the final section of the show, a global map invites guests to pause and chart their own journeys of migration, weaving together a collective story of displacement and homecoming.

OHCM staff have developed an Oklahoma-specific component to the exhibition, threading a local narrative into this global



Rabbit Creek School Added to National Register of Historic Places



The Oklahoma Historical Society and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) are pleased to announce the National Register of Historic Places designation for the following property in Oklahoma. The National Register of Historic Places is our nation's official list of properties significant in our past.

Cotton County
Rabbit Creek School

Intersections of N2540 and E2010 roads (south of Randlett)

The Rabbit Creek School in Cotton County has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its significance as a two-room schoolhouse designed and built during the Works Progress Administration (WPA) era. Appropriated in 1935 with construction finished by 1937, Rabbit Creek School employed 26 local workers through the New Deal Federal Relief Program, bringing much-needed employment to Cotton County during the Great Depression. Approximately 29 students across the county would make up Rabbit Creek's first class in 1937 under the tutelage of husband-and-wife instructors James and Vera Killingsworth. Miss Ella Green would be employed as the school cook. Rabbit Creek would serve students of rural Cotton County until its closure in 1956.

Listing in the National Register of Historic Places is an honorific designation that provides recognition, limited protection, and, in some cases, financial incentives for these important properties. The SHPO identifies, evaluates, and nominates properties for this special designation.

The State Historic Preservation Office 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.

Museum to Host Traveling Exhibition Presented by Vietnamese Boat People

story through interpretive panels and artifact cases drawn from Oklahoma City's Vietnamese American community.

"At the heart of 'Our Journeys' is the belief that storytelling is both inheritance and offering," says Tracey Nguyễn Mang, founder of VBP. "We're thrilled to return to Oklahoma City and reconnect with the community that welcomed us so warmly in 2023. Through the exhibition, local programming and more community recordings, we hope to continue preserving and sharing the stories of Oklahoma City's Vietnamese community. 'Our Journeys' isn't just about where we've come from—it's about honoring the strength and resilience of refugees and immigrants around the world, and how sharing our stories can help guide others forward."

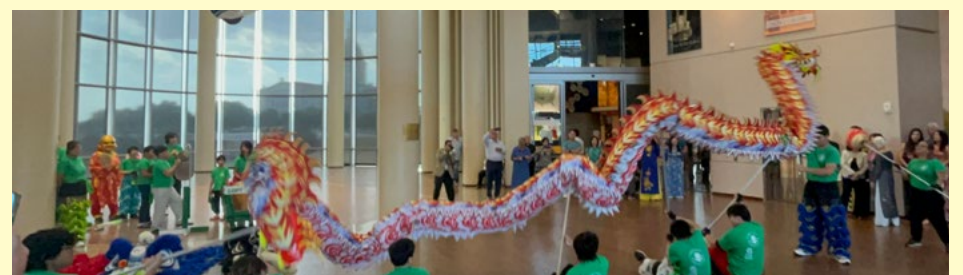
"This partnership is especially meaningful as we mark 50 years of Vietnamese American history and honor the veterans and refugees whose sacrifices, resilience and contributions helped shape Oklahoma," said Thuan Nguyen, president of VAHCOK. "By partnering with the Oklahoma History Center Museum, we can preserve these stories and ensure that the Vietnamese and broader Asian American experience is recognized as an important part of our state's history for generations to come."

"Stories recorded, preserved and handed down through the generations foster connection and understanding," said Michaela Wegman, museum curator at the OHCM. "This exhibition gives us an opportunity to share the journeys of Vietnamese refugees and a moment of global history that is vitally important for many who

have made Oklahoma City their home."

"Our Journeys" is open to the public from September 12 to January 4, 2027, in the Sam Noble Gallery at the Oklahoma History Center Museum, located at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive, Oklahoma City, OK, 73105. The museum welcomes guests Monday through Saturday between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. A series of public programs and community events will accompany the exhibition, including film screenings, author talks and community recordings. For a full list of upcoming events, visit okhistory.org/our-journeys.

"Our Journeys" was made possible with generous support from the Henry Luce Foundation, New Jersey Council for the Humanities, the Asian Women Giving Circle and other community donors, as acknowledged on the exhibition's "Wall of Hope." Local support was provided by the Asian District Cultural Association (utilizing Oklahoma County ARPA funds), Inasmuch Foundation, The Greater Oklahoma City Asian Chamber of Commerce and Quill Hawk Publishing Company.



Legal Essentials for Every Stage of Life: Planning Now Can Spare Families Later

What would happen if you suddenly could not make your own medical or financial decisions? Would your family know what you wanted? Would they know where to find your important documents or how to handle your assets?

Those are among the questions Jennifer L. Wright will explore during the October Positive Aging presentation, "Legal Essentials for Every Stage of Life," from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Oct. 8 in the Conference Center of Metro Technology Centers, 1900 Springlake Dr. The seminar is sponsored by Villages OKC.

Wright, managing attorney at Wright Law Firm, will discuss common mistakes involving elder law, wills, trusts, powers of attorney and advance directives. The presentation will use real-life stories, cautionary tales and interactive questions to help participants understand decisions they can make now to reduce confusion, conflict and heartache for their families later.

"The Conversation We Need to Have" will focus on estate planning and end-of-life decisions—subjects that many families postpone because they can be difficult to discuss.

The goal, Wright said, is not simply to prepare legal documents, but to help individuals think through what they want and communicate those wishes to the people who may one day need to act on their behalf.

Wright is an estate-planning attorney with nearly two decades of experience helping individuals and families prepare for the future. A cum laude graduate of Oklahoma City University School of Law in 2005, she began her career as a prosecutor and litigator before

focusing on estate planning in 2009.

Her practice encompasses wills and trusts, special-needs planning, charitable giving strategies and legacy planning. She also represents clients in probate, adult guardianship and trust administration matters.

In addition to her legal practice, Wright is a frequent speaker on estate planning, probate and guardianship and remains active in the community. She currently serves on the board of The Arc of Oklahoma.

October's Positive Aging program offers an opportunity for individuals and families to begin—or revisit—the conversations and planning that can make difficult circumstances easier to navigate.

The program is free and open to the public. Registration is available online at www.villagesokc.org/positiveaging or by calling (405) 212-9120.



Jennifer Wright

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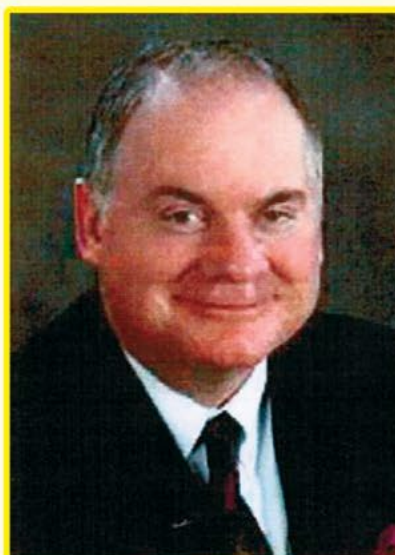
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WE'RE BOUND TO SEE AN ALIEN. HECK, WE COULD BE THE FIRST TO WELCOME HIM TO EARTH.



UH... IF WE DO, WHAT WOULD WE DO WITH HIM?



by Dave T. Phipps

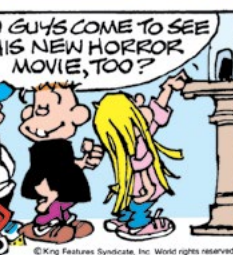
I'M SORRY, WHOEVER THIS IS CAN'T SPEND THE NIGHT UNLESS I CAN SPEAK WITH HIS MOTHER.



TIGER



by BUD BLAKE



BIBLE WORD SEARCH

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Psalm 44:14-16

You have **made** us a **byword** among the **nations**; the **peoples** **shake** their **heads** at us. I **live** in **disgrace** all **day** **long**, and my **face** is **covered** with **shame** at the **taunts** of those **who** reproach and **revile** me, because of the **enemy**, who is **bent** on **revenge**.

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D	V	E	C	A	R	G	S	I	D
S	S	H	A	K	E	T	N	E	B
D	A	Y	C	O	V	E	R	E	D

Find the **bolded/underlined** words in the diagram. They run in all directions — forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Answers on pg 12



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ACROSS

- 1 Grass clump
- 5 Pampering, for short
- 8 Bay Area force, briefly
- 12 Beige
- 13 Taunting laugh
- 14 — Minor
- 15 Airline to Tel Aviv
- 16 Greek vowel
- 17 Endure
- 18 Lustrous fabrics
- 20 Ascribe
- 22 Soda
- 23 Abysmal
- 24 Fairy tale figures
- 27 Surname of Judas
- 32 Terre Haute sch.
- 33 From — Z
- 34 Ruckus
- 35 Element No. 78
- 38 Recognized
- 39 Train lines (Abbr.)

40 CBS logo

- 42 More like Unger
- 45 Signed over
- 49 China setting
- 50 Here (Fr.)
- 52 Mani counterpart
- 53 Not naked
- 54 Darjeeling, e.g.
- 55 "— to differ!"
- 56 Earth tones
- 57 Buddhist sect
- 58 Metal boxes

DOWN

- 1 Golf props
- 2 Golden State sch.
- 3 Dorm alternative
- 4 Dutch exports
- 5 Actor
- 6 Long. crosser
- 7 Spiced drink
- 8 Inferior
- 9 Follower of Sigmund's methods
- 10 Jr.-year exam

- 11 Challenge
- 19 Rejection
- 21 CEO's degree, maybe
- 24 Trendy
- 25 Visual communication syst.
- 26 Protector
- 28 "Rugrats" dad
- 29 Late-night host, usually
- 30 Poetic tribute
- 31 AAA job
- 36 Three-note chords
- 37 British verb ending
- 38 "Consider this a gift"
- 41 Old pronoun
- 42 Diplomacy
- 43 "La — Bonita"
- 44 Cracker name
- 46 Mazar of "Younger"
- 47 Idyllic place
- 48 Uses a shovel
- 51 Bee follower

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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		
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Answers on pg 12

GRIN and BEAR IT[®] Wagner



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"It doesn't get any better than this ... unfortunately"

BLONDIE

BY DEAN KURTZ & JOHN MARSHALL

DAD, CHECK OUT ALL THESE DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF YOU WE CREATED WITH A.I.

HONEY, HAVE YOU SEEN THE A.I. VERSION OF YOU THAT THE KIDS MADE?

YES, AND I JUST MADE IT MY NEW PROFILE PICTURE ON FACEBOOK

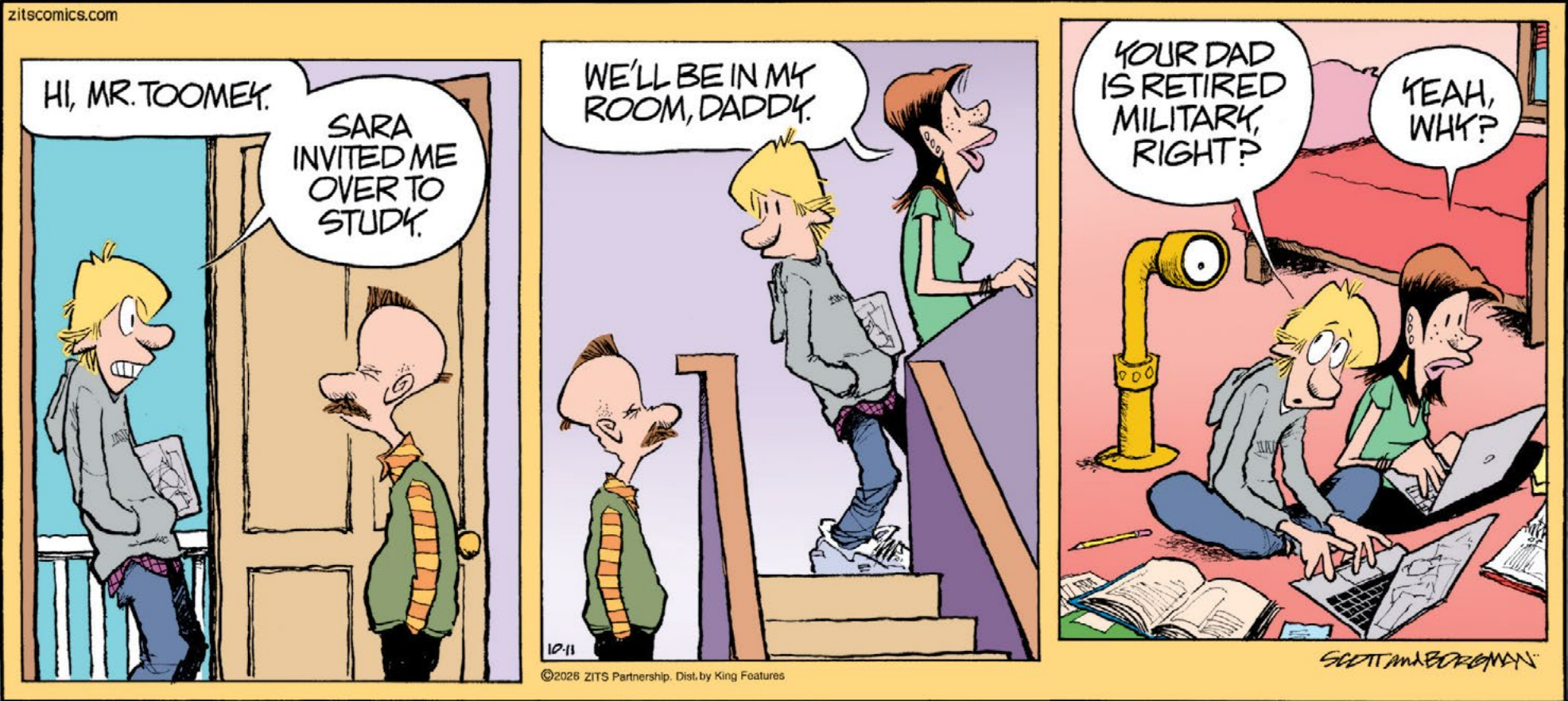
BUT THESE MAKE ME LOOK WAY MORE HANDSOME THAN I COULD EVER POSSIBLY LOOK IN REAL LIFE!

I KNOW!

ZITS

Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

zitscomics.com



HI, MR. TOOMEY.

SARA INVITED ME OVER TO STUDY.

WE'LL BE IN MY ROOM, DADDY.

YOUR DAD IS RETIRED MILITARY, RIGHT?

YEAH, WHY?

SCOTT AND BORGMAN

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