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Monthly

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Brantley
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Scissortail Dermatology Marks Five Year Anniversary



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Scissortail Dermatology Celebrates 5 Years

This year marks the five-year anniversary of Scissortail Dermatology, a locally owned private dermatology practice that focuses on skin cancer prevention, detection, and treatment. What started off as a dream has bloomed into a thriving private clinic with long-term patients and staff. Dr. Elise Brantley started the practice in September 2021 with the hopes of building a practice where patients feel at home and can receive customized care, and where staff can establish lifelong careers. At this five-year mark, it's safe to say her dreams have been realized.

From the conception of opening her own clinic to seeing her first patient, a mere 3 months passed. The amount of brainstorming, planning and execution it took to make this dream a reality is truly mind blowing. "I look back on those first few months and realize I was in a focused haze. I can't believe how much happened in such a short amount of time," said Dr. Brantley. She was searching for a name to tie the entire idea together, that stood for small town, familiar and intimate care. Her brother inspired her to choose the name Scissortail when he noticed a flock of wooden scissortails in her kitchen. The name stuck, and the whole concept of the clinic fell into place.

Dr. Brantley decided to open her own practice when left with the choice of joining a corporate clinic. Having already been an academic dermatologist, a hospital dermatologist, and then an employee in private practice, she decided that private practice was the best fit. She quickly put together an outline for success. The most important piece of the puzzle? People.

"I knew without a doubt that I would need a team of motivated and genuine caregivers in order to make my vision become reality," said



Dr. Elise Brantley

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Dr. Brantley. Her hiring motto has always been to provide a place for people to build a career, not just a job. With that in mind, she built a team of dedicated staff members, many of whom have been with her since the inception.

As the years progressed, so did the clinic. Within the first month Dr. Brantley opened a satellite clinic in south Oklahoma City, allowing her to care for an even larger population of patients, many of whom have difficulty crossing the busy city traffic. Within the first 6 months, she had 5 employees and a full schedule, filled with both new and established patients. "We hit the ground running and never looked back," she explained.

Owning a small private practice allows doctors to have close relationships with their patients. Communication is often direct without large phone trees or virtual assistants. In addition, small practices allow continuity of care: seeing the same physician visit after visit. This helps the physician take into consideration a patient's overall health and wellbeing when customizing an individualized care plan.

"One of the biggest benefits of being in private practice is control over my schedule. I have been able to slow down and get to know my patients. In addition, they have taught me more than I would ever have hoped to gain."

Dr. Brantley says her patients have taught her the value of being grateful for today. "Don't wish for previous years, because someday you'll be looking back on today and wishing you were here again. Be thankful for your age, your health, and your situation today," wisdom which Dr. Brantley says has changed her life.

Things haven't always been as smooth as she had hoped. Working with insurance, she states, has been the most challenging hurdle. "I had no idea what I didn't know about insurance. Every

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Elise Brantley, M.D.

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CLINIC con't from page 2

year the rules change, the cuts keep coming, and the system gets more complex than before,” said Dr. Brantley. There are several members on her staff who help with insurance navigation, but she admits that even with a team of well-trained people, it still consumes most of her time outside of seeing patients.

“What has surprised me the most is how much a practice can change in such a short amount of time.” Dr. Brantley and her staff have a vision for the future that has already been set into motion. “I have always felt part of my community by connecting with my patients, but I want them to feel the same way.”

She has started giving community lectures on skin lesions and age-related skin positivity. She writes quarterly newsletters covering hot topics and even includes personal notes. She and her team pass out sun advice (and sunscreen!) at numerous health and city festivals such as the West Village Fourth Fridays.

Dr Brantley finds it difficult to summarize the last five years in a mere sentence, as the business is still evolving and improving in so many aspects. She goes on to say, “I expected the hardest challenge would be connecting with my patients again after starting so far into my career. Lucky for me, so many of them were able to find me again and we were able to quickly pick back up where we left off.”

When asked what advice she would give her younger self before opening her practice, she replied, “without a doubt it would be to believe in yourself. If you work hard, don’t cut corners, and consistently surround yourself with genuine people who believe in the same purpose as you do, then you will succeed. Just be your true self, put out a good product you believe in, and people will follow you.”



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Second Half Expo Returns to OKC

Free event brings together approximately 130 exhibitors, educational seminars, entertainment and resources for adults 50 and better

The 2026 Second Half Expo will be held Saturday, October 17, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. Admission is free.

Produced by Bob Loudermilk and Robin Gunn, the Second Half Expo is one of Oklahoma's premier events created especially for adults 50+, as well as their families and caregivers. The Expo is designed to help attendees discover valuable resources, make helpful connections and explore new possibilities for living a healthier, more active and fulfilling second half of life.

Approximately 130 exhibitors will showcase the latest products, services and information in areas such as health and wellness, retirement planning, housing, travel, technology, caregiving, financial services, community involvement and lifelong learning.

Throughout the morning, attendees can enjoy free giveaways, entertainment, educational seminars and opportunities to speak personally with trusted professionals and service providers—all in one convenient location.

"The Second Half Expo is about much more than growing older," said co-producer Bob Loudermilk. "It is about helping people make the most of the years ahead by connecting them with the information, resources and relationships they need to thrive."

Admission and parking are free. Attendees are encouraged to RSVP in advance at SecondHalfExpo.com for quick entry on the day of the Expo.

A limited number of exhibit tables are still available for companies and organizations that want to connect with Oklahoma's growing 50-plus population.

For event details, exhibitor information or to RSVP, visit SecondHalfExpo.com. Questions may be directed to Bob Loudermilk at 405-657-5131 or bob@SecondHalfExpo.com.

New Route 66 Documentary to be Shown at Tee-Pee Drive-In in Sapulpa

On Sunday, September 13, at 8 p.m., there will be a free screening of the new documentary "Crossroads of America: Oklahoma's Route 66" at the Tee Pee Drive-In in Sapulpa on historic Route 66. A trailer for the documentary is now available on the Oklahoma Historical Society's YouTube channel.

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.

A Q&A with Trait Thompson and Bryan Beasley will follow the screening. No admission is required to attend the screening, but attendees must RSVP online to ensure there is enough room.

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Giving Straight Answers to Common Estate Planning Questions

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

Q: How much should I tell
my children and other family

A: This is a question we hear
all the time, and there isn't one
answer that's right for every
family.

At Cain, Cain & Janik, we can
explain the law, help our clients
understand their options, and counsel them about different
planning strategies. But our clients bring something to the
planning process that we can't: they are the experts on their
own families.

They've raised their children, watched them grow, and know
their personalities, strengths, weaknesses, and relationships.
When clients share that knowledge with us, we can help them
think through where each person might best fit into the estate
plan. Who would make a good trustee? Who is best suited to
handle financial matters? Who could thoughtfully make difficult
health care decisions?

I believe the best estate planning happens when we put those
two kinds of knowledge together. We bring our knowledge
of the law and years of experience helping families through
disability, death, trust administration, and estate settlement.
Our clients bring a lifetime of knowledge about the people they
love. Together, we can create a quality plan neither of us could
create separately.

Once the plan is created, the question becomes how much of
it to share.

That's a personal decision. But after 35 years of practicing
law, I've seen that people who are prepared for their roles
generally serve in them more confidently and effectively. They
don't need to know everything you own or how much it's worth.
But it helps to know they've been chosen, what's expected of
them, how the plan is intended to work, and where to turn for
guidance.

That's why we offer Family Orientation Meetings to our Estate
Planners for Life™ clients. If our client selects this option, we
meet with our client and their family to explain the plan, who's
been selected for various roles, and what those responsibilities
involve. We don't disclose assets or financial information unless
the client chooses to do so. The purpose is preparation, not
financial disclosure.

And perhaps it's because it's September in Oklahoma, but
there's a pretty good football analogy here.

Every player who takes the field has an assignment. The
quarterback knows his job. Receivers know their routes. The
offensive line knows whom to block. Those assignments aren't
handed out at kickoff. Players learn their roles beforehand and
understand how they fit into the team's game plan.

Families deserve the same preparation. When the
unexpected happens, no one wants to be reading the playbook
for the first time.

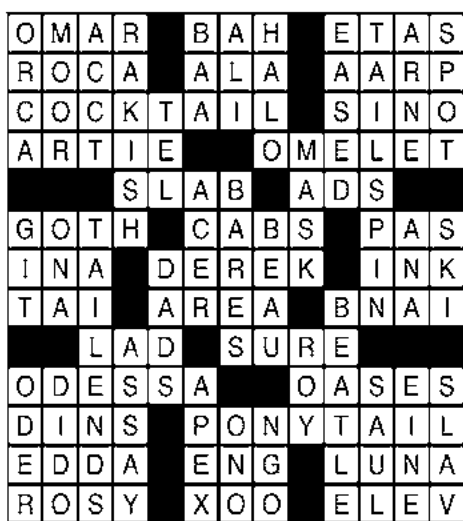
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And even the best players need a coach. Your children may be smart and capable, but most people will administer a trust or settle an estate only once or twice in their lives. We help families through these situations every day. Having experienced guidance when questions arise can make an enormous difference.

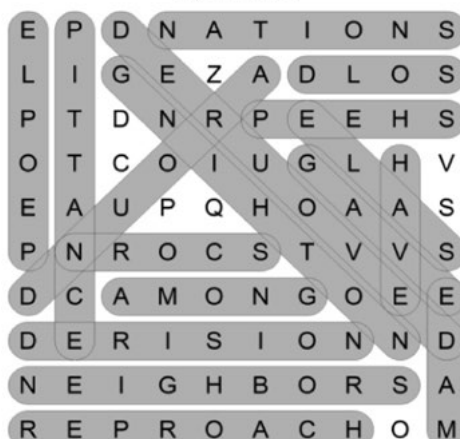
Good estate planning isn't just about preparing documents. It's about preparing people and making sure they'll have guidance when they need it most.

For more information about estate planning call Cain, Cain and Janik at 405-364-2246 or visit www.EstatePlannersforLife.com.



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Grace Care Expands Footprint With Edmond Location

Grace Care has served the Enid community and surrounding areas since 2009, partnering with families to create personalized care plans for seniors.

The company is now expanding its footprint with a new branch at 15816 North Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 3, in Edmond, which opened Aug. 1.

"We opened in 2009 with the goal in mind to help seniors stay at home as long as possible," said Latisha King, President and Administrator. "We assist with the activities of daily living and IADLs - bathing, dressing, medication reminders, companionship, errands, grocery shopping, meal prep. We operate from four-hour visits to 24/7 care."

The Edmond location's business hours are 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

King's journey with Grace Care began in May 2014, when she joined as a Certified Nursing Assistant with six years of prior experience. She moved into an office role as a scheduler in 2016, became Assistant Administrator in 2019, and was appointed Administrator in December 2023. In 2024, she became President of Grace Care, carrying forward the legacy of founders Bob and Tina Osborn.

She also serves on the board of Enid RSVP, is an Ambassador for the Enid Chamber of Commerce, and serves as President of the Oklahoma Professionals for Home Care (OPHC).

"I've been with Grace Care for 12 years, and in 2024, I purchased it," King said. "I always felt like Edmond was the location I wanted to expand to. I kept going back to the same area, and I just felt this pull, like that's where I needed to be. A lot of things fell into place, and I know God had a hand in it all."

Grace Care has built a strong reputation, helping families care for their loved ones.

The company was voted Enid's Best in 2018, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 by readers of the Enid News, and received the Employer of Choice Award from Home Care Pulse in 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025.

Grace Care's dedication to providing great service hasn't gone unnoticed.

The company's Facebook page features several client testimonials



Grace Care is expanding its footprint with a new branch at 15816 North Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 3, in Edmond, which opened Aug. 1.

including a recent one from EB, who writes, "Grace Care has given our family true peace of mind. I received daily updates on my dad, whether I asked for them or not. They genuinely take the time to know him and care about him. His caregiver has built such natural chemistry with him that he's completely comfortable with her around. Because of that, I'm able to run our family businesses without worry. The office staff communicate every single day and it's clear that they put real thought into matching caregivers with the right clients. I can't recommend them enough."

Grace Care is also a VA Community Care Network provider - the preferred national network the VA uses to connect eligible veterans with care in their community. Veterans may receive free in-home care services through the Homemaker/Home Health Aide Program.

"What we're doing is providing quality care, and it's noticed. We're about quality over quantity," King said. "We're attentive to us, we're always checking in on our clients and our caregivers, making sure everyone's doing what they're supposed to be doing, because we're going into someone's home. We want to make sure we're sending quality people to provide these services and always doing the right thing. It gives families respite, knowing someone is there to care for their loved one."

King said the Edmond branch is currently hiring and accepting new clients. "We're in the hiring process - we've brought on a nurse and a full-time CNA, and I'd like to add a couple more," she said. "Right now, we're focused on hiring CNAs and getting established with new clients."

For more information about the Edmond branch, call (405) 378-5467, email info@gracecareokc.com, or visit www.gracecareokc.com. ● Story and photos by Van Mitchell, staff writer




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Technology That Makes Life Better: Positive Aging Event Explores What's Possible

Technology is no longer simply about smartphones, computers and the latest gadgets. Increasingly, it is becoming a tool for living more independently, staying active, connecting with others and finding new ways to overcome challenges.

That broader role of technology will be the focus of a special VillagesOKC Positive Aging: "Day Long Technology Focus" on Sept. 10 at the Conference Center at Metro Technology Centers, 1900 Springlake Drive, in Oklahoma City.

The event runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., with registration and a vendor fair beginning at 9 a.m. A box lunch and additional vendor opportunities will be offered from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Organizers say the program is designed for people who may be curious about technology but aren't necessarily interested in becoming technology experts.

"Technology can sometimes feel like it is moving faster than we can keep up with," said Julie Davis, event organizer. "Our goal is to replace some of that uncertainty with curiosity and help people discover technology that can make their lives a little easier, healthier, safer or more connected."

The morning session, "Technology in Our Everyday Lives," will focus on technology people can use today. Presenters will demonstrate how apps communicate and work together, smart-home technology, fitness technology and other practical tools that can support independence and simplify everyday tasks. A variety of presenters will demonstrate what is available, how it works and where technology may fit into people's lives.

The afternoon session, "Technology Transforming Lives & Industries," will take a wider look at how innovation is changing health care, rehabilitation, senior living and the lives of people with disabilities. Presenters will share innovations that are helping frontline caregivers spend more time providing hands-on care, creating new possibilities for people with vision impairment, advancing independence for individuals with spinal cord injuries and neurological conditions, and giving people who are nonverbal new ways to communicate.

The lineup brings together presenters with very different perspectives and areas of expertise.



Ronita Smalley, director of programs and services at NewView Oklahoma, brings expertise in serving people with vision impairment. Her perspective will help illustrate how technology can improve accessibility and open new possibilities for people who are losing or living without sight.



Becky Redman, founder of Simply TechWise, specializes in helping people use technology more safely and confidently. Her federally certified Woman-Owned Small Business provides technology consulting and digital literacy education throughout the Edmond and Oklahoma City communities. Redman works with older adults, families and organizations to make technology less intimidating and more useful.

See **TECHNOLOGY** on page 13




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OPINION



A Caregiver's Guide to Medicare

Dear Savvy Senior

I'm taking care of my elderly father who recently had a stroke and have a lot of questions about how Medicare works and what it covers. He's enrolled in original Medicare. Can you help me?

--Caregiving Connie

Dear Connie,

Taking care of a parent after a stroke is hard enough without having to figure out Medicare too. The good news is that understanding the program can make life a lot easier. Knowing what's covered – and what isn't – can help you plan ahead, avoid costly surprises and make sure your father gets the care he needs. Here's a practical guide to get you started.

Medicare basics

One of the best places to start is the official "Medicare & You" handbook. It explains benefits and services in plain language. Medicare mails an updated copy every fall, but you can also view it online at medicare.gov.

gov/medicare-and-you.

For questions, call Medicare at 800-633-4227 to speak with a representative. They can clarify coverage for doctor visits, hospital stays, home health care, and more.

Your state's State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) is another great resource. SHIP counselors provide free, one-on-one counseling to help you understand your coverage, identify cost-saving programs, and answer questions about Medicare. Find a counselor near you at shiphelp.org or 877-839-2675.

Caregivers should also create a secure Medicare account at medicare.gov/account/login. Once your father's account is set up, you can review his coverage, track claims, check the status of medical services and prescriptions, and see which preventive benefits he's eligible for. It's an easy way to stay organized and keep all of your father's Medicare information in one place.

Choosing providers

Medicare also lets you compare providers online at medicare.gov/care-compare. You can search for doctors, hospitals, rehab centers, nursing homes, hospice providers, and medical equipment suppliers in your area. This is especially useful after a stroke, when your father may need rehabilitation or specialized care at home.

Covered services

Original Medicare covers many services your father may need, including hospital care, doctor visits, lab tests, and outpatient treatments.

It also covers home health care if your father is homebound, under a doctor's care, and needs part-time skilled nursing or rehabilitation therapy, such as physical, occupational or speech therapy.

Medicare also covers medically necessary durable medical equipment and supplies prescribed by a doctor, including oxygen, wheelchairs, walkers and catheters. Short-term skilled nursing care in a facility may also be covered for up to 100 days after a qualifying hospital stay.

Prescription medications are generally covered through a separate Medicare Part D plan, which helps pay for many outpatient drugs your father may need.

Hospice care is covered for patients with a terminal illness and a life expectancy of six months or less, as certified by a doctor. It includes nursing care, medications for comfort and short-term respite care to give caregivers a break.

However, Medicare generally doesn't pay for long-term custodial care at home, in an assisted living facility or in a nursing home. That means it generally won't cover ongoing help with daily activities like bathing, dressing, eating, using the bathroom or supervision for someone with dementia. Routine dental care, dentures, eye exams for glasses and hearing aids are also not covered.

Cost help

If your father has limited income and resources, check programs that help reduce Medicare costs. Extra Help assists with prescription drug expenses, and Medicare Savings Programs can help pay premiums, deductibles, and coinsurance.

Visit medicare.gov/basics/costs/help or call 800-633-4227 to learn more or check eligibility.

Taking time to understand Medicare can make caregiving a little less stressful. It helps you stay on top of appointments, treatments and equipment needs, while giving you greater confidence that your father is receiving the care and benefits he's entitled to.



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

Remembering “Mr. Sam” Gillaspy

It is with great sadness that we share the passing of Samuel D. “Mr. Sam” Gillaspy, March 24, 1927–August 19, 2026. In many ways, Mr. Sam was the face of the historic Arcadia Round Barn. For more than twenty years he brought the barn’s history to life with his big smile, boundless energy, cowboy hat and boots, and his gift for making every visitor feel welcome. Every Monday morning was Mr. Sam’s volunteer day, and as a dedicated docent and President Emeritus of the Arcadia Historical & Preservation Society, he shared the stories of the barn, the community, and Route 66 with visitors from around the world.

A natural storyteller and passionate volunteer, Mr. Sam became one of the Round Barn’s most beloved ambassadors. He gave interviews to television stations and newspapers, danced the Texas Two-Step and waltz with visitors upstairs on the famous wooden dance floor, and always had another story—or colorful yarn—to share. His love of bringing people together also extended to his Rock of Ages Farm near Luther, three miles east of Arcadia, where for nearly forty years he welcomed thousands of visitors for tours, fellowship, hayrides, and unforgettable adventures.

Mr. Sam was also a member of the Greatest Generation, having enlisted in the United States Marine Corps at the age of seventeen and serving during World War II. After the war, he worked for the Dolese Company for forty years, raised two daughters, Rita and Cynthia, farmed, volunteered, and devoted much of his remarkable life to serving others.

Mr. Sam married Betty Covington in 1948. They were together until her passing in 1969 at age forty-three. He later married Miss Martha Futrell, who remained his life partner until her passing in 2015. In the past few years, Jeannie Vollmer was Mr. Sam’s steady companion and dance partner.

Even into his nineties, Mr. Sam continued to visit the Round Barn, tell stories, greet old friends and new visitors, and occasionally take a dance upstairs. He leaves behind an extraordinary legacy of service, hospitality, history, storytelling, and joy. Mr. Sam will be deeply missed, but his stories, his laughter, and his spirit will live on at the Arcadia Round Barn and all along Route 66.

— from the Volunteers / Members of Arcadia Historical & Preservation Society



TECHNOLOGY cont from page 11



Tim Haws, chief operations officer for The 34 Project, offers a perspective from adaptive fitness and strength training. The nonprofit organization creates opportunities for people with physical challenges to improve strength, mobility and independence, making Haws a natural voice for discussing the intersection of technology, fitness and rehabilitation.



Sara Robinson-Holmes, the Associate Vice President of Membership and Healthy Living for the YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City, oversees membership engagement, retention, and wellness initiatives that help individuals and families connect, grow, and achieve healthier lifestyles.



Danny Eischen, CEO of Concordia Life Plan Community, brings more than 30 years of leadership experience in senior living. His perspective connects technology with the changing environment of aging — including how innovation can support residents, caregivers and senior living professionals.

Throughout the event, attendees can meet vendors, explore products and resources, ask questions and see technology in action.

Some of the innovations may sound futuristic. Others are already becoming part of daily life. The goal, organizers say, isn’t to persuade everyone to adopt every new technology. It is to encourage people to remain curious about what is possible.

The Positive Aging Day Long Technology Focus is open to anyone interested in learning more. Registration is available at www.villagesokc.org/positiveaging or by calling (405) 990-6637.

VillagesOKC Positive Aging: “Day Long Technology Focus”

Thursday, September 10
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Conference Center at Metro Technology Centers
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2026 Red Earth Honored One Enjoys Return to Downtown

Story and photo by Darl DeVault, contributing editor

In keeping with her revered status as the Honored One at the two-day 2026 40th Annual Red Earth Festival, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma artist Jane Semple Umsted is, in several other dimensions, Oklahoma art royalty.

"All of my life I have been so proud of my Choctaw Heritage," Umsted said in an interview. "It is so much of who I am and what I speak to in the creation of my art."

Umsted, 79, is a premier cultural bearer, master artist, and historic icon within the Choctaw Nation. Her deep-seated connection to the tribe spans more than 50 years of artistic practice across painting, sculpture, and intricate batik.

"Actually, there has never been a time that art has not been a part of me," Umsted said. "My mother was an accomplished artist, and all of my siblings have the gift. Because I have had so many years of creating, it seems natural for me to work in a variety of media." "Being at Red Earth in those early years reminded me of the Indian Expositions at Anadarko that my family attended when I was very young. That was so magical for me, and those experiences became my lifetime inspiration."

Back downtown after moving to several venues the last few years, the Festival staged the dance contests in the same hall as the booths. "I absolutely loved having the dance competition as an integral part of Red Earth once again. Hearing the drummers and

See **ARTIST** pg 16



Jane Semple Umsted poses with the center panel of her three-panel, first-place-winning "Triptych" art piece as the "Honored One" at the 2026 Red Earth Festival Art Competition.

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ARTIST cont.

seeing the dancers filled my soul with joy.”

Her prominent Choctaw heritage stems from her direct descent from the highly influential Choctaw leader Peter Pitchlynn, her great-great-great-grandfather. He served as the Principal Chief of the Choctaw Nation from 1864 to 1866 and spent 30 years as a congressional delegate, fiercely protecting Choctaw land claims. Her uncle, William F. Semple, served as Chief of the Choctaws during the 1920s. “My grandfather was an original enrollee, signing when he was 16 years old. Uncle Will was his brother and was the only Choctaw Chief who was an attorney. He received his Law degree from Washington and Lee.”

Her steadfast celebration of Choctaw culture earned her the “Honored One” booth at this year’s show on August 1 in downtown Oklahoma City. A focal point of the Festival, it was located at the very front of the exhibition hall.

In addition to the Festival’s highest honor, she earned two awards in the juried art competition. She won First Place in the Drawing, Printmaking and 2D Mixed Media category and Third Place in Sculpture. “It was such a humbling experience to have received these awards, Umsted said. “Competition is once again at a very high level at Red Earth. Having the Festival at the OKC Convention Center was a wonderful experience. It is such an ideal location, and it is so beautiful!”

Her meticulously researched artwork is widely respected within the Indigenous community for its historical accuracy. It captures the spiritual and physical histories of the Choctaw people—ranging from ancient Mississippian designs to the tribe’s modern journey. That level of detail and devotion to her Choctaw heritage also earned her an appointment in 2023 by the President of the United States to the Board of Trustees of the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA), recognizing her national standing in the arts community.



The 6-foot-8-inch-tall, 8-foot-wide bronze sculpture of three WWI “Warriors of the Choctaw Language” (Code Talkers) is the sixth sculpture Jane Semple Umsted has created for her tribe.

“The institute was founded in 1962 in Santa Fe and has been the leading force to guide and inspire young Native Art students all these years, Umsted said. “Today it has expanded its offerings to a wide range of degree programs to serve students all over the United States and beyond.”

When she was one of five appointed to the IAIA board, Gary Batton, Chief of the Choctaw Nation, said, “Jane Semple Umsted is a brilliant artist as well as a loving and humble person. She represents the Choctaw people so well in her artwork and in her daily life. She is a shining star for the Choctaw Nation and is very deserving of this appointment.”

In 2024, she was inducted into the Oklahoma Women’s Hall of Fame, in recognition of her enduring contributions to the state’s culture.

See **ARTIST** pg 17

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ARTIST cont.

Since graduating from the University of Oklahoma with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 1969, Umsted has built a multifaceted career. She has blended professional art with education and public service. She earned a Master of Education from Southeastern Oklahoma State University in 1989 and spent years as an art educator, retiring from Durant Middle School in 2007. “I love my years in the classrooms; teaching gave me such a sense of satisfaction and joy, sharing my knowledge with my students,” Umsted said.

Now living in Durant, she helps preserve and promote Indigenous art as the curator of the Semple Family Museum of Native American Art at Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

The Choctaw Nation has consistently commissioned Umsted to anchor its most sacred public and institutional spaces through her larger-than-life visual storytelling. The tribe’s premier cultural preservation facility, the Choctaw Cultural Center in Calera, Oklahoma, prominently showcases her work.

“I feel so blessed to have been able to continue my art profession after I left the classroom,” Umsted said. “The Choctaw Nation has

provided me with so many opportunities to express my God-given abilities. This has enabled me to share my art with a wide range of First Americans.”

This includes her three specialized 24-inch-tall bronzes titled Emergence, Migration, and Archeological, on display at the Cultural Center. In May 2025, she unveiled a life-size, three-figure bronze monument titled Chahta Anumpa i Tvshka Hoke (Warriors of the Choctaw Language). This life-size bronze stands outside the Cultural Center as the definitive tribute to the WWI Choctaw Code Talkers.

The Choctaw Nation is the third-largest Indian Nation in the United States, comprising 230,000 tribal members and 3,000 associates. The tribe’s oral tradition dates back more than 13,000 years, and it was the first to traverse the Trail of Tears.

Its reservation spans 10,923 square miles in southeast Oklahoma. The Choctaw Nation’s vision, “Living out the Chahta Spirit of faith, family and culture,” is evident in its ongoing commitment to creating opportunities for growth and prosperity.

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Story and photos by Darl DeVault, contributing editor

Golden Agers 55 and over can celebrate “US Route 66” with free admission to the fairgrounds on their special day, with events from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sept. 23.

The festivities are in the Special Events Area at the south end of the air-conditioned Modern Living Building at the Oklahoma State Fair. This area becomes a dedicated senior center featuring entertainment, audience participation in contests and singing, resource booths, and door prizes.

Senior Day attendees receive free admission at the outside gate by showing a valid ID verifying their age. Seniors can enjoy discounted rides on the massive 230-foot-tall observation wheel. This year, it's featured as the America 250 Wheel (celebrating the upcoming semiquincentennial), with tickets discounted to just \$5 for seniors. As always, the stage has a day full of contests and age-appropriate headline entertainment. As the early crowd enters, they will be offered free coffee and snacks by the Oklahoma City Rehabilitation Hospital. “Since January, the volunteer Senior Day committee has been working hard to plan an excellent event for Oklahoma Seniors 55 and over,” said Morgan Chappell, Fair manager of Creative Programs. “We look forward to a successful Senior Day and Fair.”

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“Our 49th annual Senior Day at the Fair fits the 55+ fairgoer in many ways,” said Cindy Dimit, longest-serving committee member. “First, you have access to the total experience of the fairgrounds, while others come to the Modern Living Building to enjoy the Senior Day, never leaving the building because of our many exhibitors, contests, and entertainment.”

Day at the Fair



The senior health and recreation exhibitors include The Alzheimer's Association, ArchWell Health, Areawide Aging Agency, Caregiver Magazine, Community Action Center, Daily Living Centers, OKDHS Community Living, Ennoble Care, Hefner Road Animal Hospital, Legend Senior Living, Metropolitan Library System, Ms. Oklahoma Senior America, Nana's Closet, OG&E, Oklahoma ABLE TECH, Oklahoma City Rehabilitation Hospital, Oklahoma Department of Securities, Oklahoma Foundation for Limb Preservation, Oklahoma Insurance Commission, Oklahoma Veteran News Magazine, Oklahoma Woodturners Association, Parkinson Foundation of Oklahoma, Pioneer Library System, PLC-OK Assets, LLC, Poison Control, Psych Plus+, Senior News and Living, Seniors Helping Seniors, TRIAD, Trinity Hospice, Universal Home Health, and Valir PACE.

The most consistent performers over the years, the Okie Stompers, kick off at 2:30 with their combination of tap and line dancing, as their 10 performers dazzle with their ultimate toe-tapping clogging and bright-outfit show.

Area independent, assisted living and long-term care communities have created a one-minute video of their residents, "In Motion." The entries were judged, and the top 10 will be shown all day for the public to select the winner.

Along with the many senior-oriented booths offering their services, Senior News and Living and Oklahoma Veteran News Magazine will give away their September issues at their booth all day. The publications will also supply a raffle door prize from the stage.

The audience can participate in many U.S. Route 66-themed activities on the decorated stage. Registering from noon to 1 p.m., audience singers take the stage to perform in the "Karaoke Contest" at 3 p.m. ArchWell Health sponsors the five singers chosen to sing a song of their choice for prizes voted on by the audience.

Crowd favorites from years past, The Vocal Sounds of Oklahoma, an award-winning men's a cappella chorus, sing four-part close-knit harmony at 4:30 p.m.

This year again features back-to-back Elvis tribute artists in the late afternoon and evening. Back from his popular performances for the last few years, Mike Black sings Elvis' songs at 5:35 p.m. The Choctaw resident has opened concerts for major acts, including Three Dog Night and Blood, Sweat and Tears.

Jimmy Holmes kicks off the most significant tribute to Elvis outside at 7:30 on the Chickasaw Country Entertainment Stage.

Activities planned for the day that saw 4,000 seniors last year include

See **FAIR** on page 25



How To Drink More Water

1. Set **reminders** throughout the day.
2. Use a **straw** to take bigger sips.
3. Take a **water bottle** wherever you go.
4. Drink a **whole glass** with meals and medications.

Remember: You need to drink water even when you're not thirsty.

Find more hydration tips at

 **ShapeYourFutureOK.com**

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49TH ANNUAL SENIOR DAY

Energized by
OG+E

Wednesday, September 23, 2026
10 a.m - 6 p.m.



The Oklahoma State Fair thanks you for attending Senior Day and hopes you enjoy all of today's fabulous activities.

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Exhibitors, Photo Booth & Free Health Screenings.....	10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Registration & DOOR PRIZES	
Session 1.....	10 a.m. - Noon
Session 2.....	Noon - 2 p.m.
Session 3.....	2 - 4 p.m.
Session 4.....	4 - 6 p.m.
Seniors in Motion Viewing & Voting.....	10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Out & About: Road Trip.....	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Ms. Oklahoma Senior America.....	10:05 a.m.
Sweet Dreams: The Music of Patsy Cline starring Charli Zee.....	10:25 a.m.
Pit Stop #1 - Fill'er Up!.....	11 a.m.
Exhibitor Decor Winner Announced.....	11:15 a.m.
Irving Senior Center BAM.....	11:25 a.m.
Pit Stop #2 - Diner Tray Derby.....	12:05 p.m.
CommUNITY TEAM.....	12:30 p.m.
Route 66 Couples Challenge.....	1:20 p.m.
The Okie Stompers.....	2:30 p.m.
Karaoke Contest.....	3 p.m.
ROUTE 66 ROAD RALLY SHOWDOWN.....	3:50 p.m.
Vocal Sounds of Oklahoma.....	4:30 p.m.
THE FINAL DETOUR: Detour Dash.....	5:10 p.m.
Elvis.....	5:35 p.m.
Jimmy Holmes - Tribute to Elvis.....	7:30 p.m.

(Chickasaw Country Entertainment Stage)



FAIR cont from pg 23

a robust lineup of free health-related booths sharing information seniors need.

Door Prizes are offered throughout the day (Registration: Session 1: 10 a.m. – Noon; Session 2: Noon – 2 p.m.; Session 3: 2 – 4 p.m.; Session 4: 5:30 p.m.). Pick up your ticket at the prize table for a chance to win one of many donated gifts. There will be multiple drawings in the morning, early afternoon, and late afternoon. Tickets for each session will be discarded, so register again for the following door prize sessions. A full listing of what goes on is available online at 2026 SD - Event Details

Adjacent to the Oklahoma Senior Games demonstration area in the same building, table tennis will be available throughout the Fair, and special strength testing will be offered at the Oklahoma Senior Games booth. The largest interactive demonstration court is for Pickleball, the fastest-growing recreational sport, embraced by seniors for its excellent health outcomes.

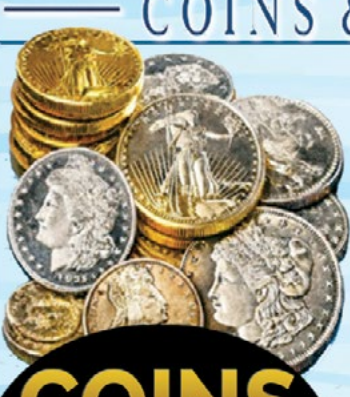
A complimentary State Fair Senior Accessibility Shuttle runs from the Hurricane Harbor parking lot directly to the fair gate from 9 a.m. to 9:45 p.m. (parking spaces for this service are limited). Free internal trams also begin operating at 10 a.m.

Seniors can enter gates 1, 2, or 10 to catch one of the free trams that begin running at 10 a.m. Ask trams to stop at Gate 3 or by the fountain on General Pershing Blvd to drop you off, as they are the closest drop-off points to the building. Electric and manual wheelchairs are available for rent inside Gates 2 and 9 while supplies last.

Whether you are coming for the health info and checks, the Elvis tunes, or to walk the grounds and soak in the atmosphere, Senior Day remains one of the best values in town—a “thank you” note from the State Fair to the generation that built it.

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Kristi, United Way Partner Agency client

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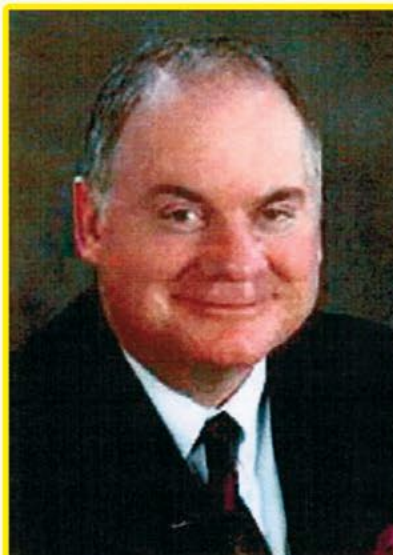
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Ryoki Yamaguchi to Perform on Kilgen Theatre Organ

On Monday, September 21, from 7 to 8:30 p.m., a Kilgen Theatre Organ performance will be held in the Devon Great Hall at the Oklahoma History Center featuring guest organist Ryoki Yamaguchi. His performance encompasses several American standards, aligning with his theme of "Welcome Traveler."

Yamaguchi was born and raised in Japan. He said his mother's piano led to his lifelong love of music. When he was 22, Yamaguchi was hired to be a featured organ artist for the Roland Corporation.



He performs professionally worldwide and is trained on a classical pipe organ.

Tickets are \$10 for Oklahoma Historical Society members and \$20 for the general public. They can be purchased online or by calling 405-522-0765.

The Oklahoma History Center is located at 800 Nazih Zuhdi Dr. in Oklahoma City.

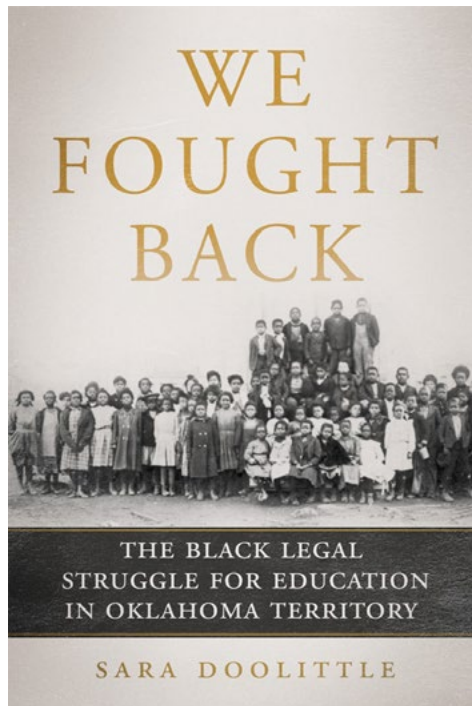
Dr. Sara Doolittle to Discuss New Book

Dr. Sara Doolittle to Discuss New Book During Talk at Oklahoma Territorial Museum in Guthrie

Dr. Sara Doolittle will present an author talk and book signing at the Oklahoma Territorial Museum and Carnegie Library on Wednesday, September 2, starting at 6 p.m. Doolittle's new book, "We Fought Back: The Black Legal Struggle for Education in Oklahoma Territory," was released in August. Books will be available for purchase during the event.

Most people are familiar with the landmark 1954 U.S. Supreme

Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education*, which held that state laws mandating racial segregation in public schools were unconstitutional. But what about the court cases that far preceded, and informed, this national ruling? They took place in smaller courts, in unsung parts of the United States, including in Oklahoma Territory. Decades before *Brown v. Board*, Black citizens in Oklahoma Territory worked to challenge legislation and local school board restrictions that segregated their schools. In "We Fought Back," Doolittle analyzes a rich array of previously unexplored court



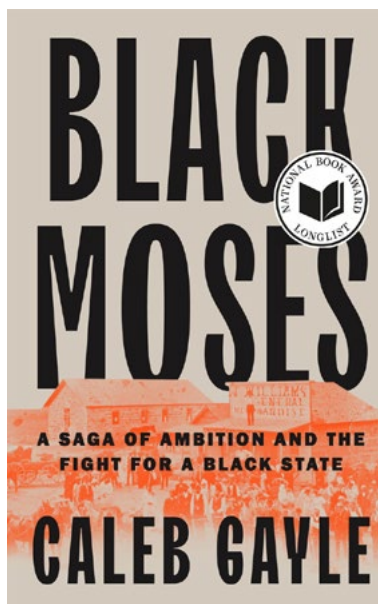
challenges during Oklahoma's territorial period (1889–1907), revealing how Black residents' cases reshaped understandings of race, citizenship, and the federal role in American schooling.

Doolittle is an assistant professor in the Department of Educational Sciences, Foundations, and Research at the University of Central Oklahoma. Her scholarship explores the intersection of law, race and schooling, with a particular focus on 19th-century school segregation law. Doolittle brings more than two decades of experience as a high school

English teacher to her work. A proud product of public schools, she earned her B.A. from the University of Kansas, her M.A. from the University of Colorado, and her Ph.D. from the University of Oklahoma.

The event is free and open to the public. The Oklahoma Territorial Museum is located at 406 E. Oklahoma Ave. in Guthrie. For more information, please call 405-282-1889.

Caleb Gayle, Author of “Black Moses, Guest Lecture



The Oklahoma Historical Society will host Caleb Gayle for a guest lecture at the Oklahoma History Center in Oklahoma City on Thursday, September 24. The event will be held from 7 to 9 p.m., and doors will open at 6:30 p.m.

Caleb Gayle is an award-winning journalist and the author of “Black Moses: A Saga of Ambition and the Fight for a Black State” and “We Refuse to Forget: A True Story of Black Creeks, American Identity, and Power.” A professor at Northeastern University in Boston, he is a contributing writer at The New York Times Magazine.

“Black Moses” charts the rise of Edward McCabe and his efforts to create a Black state in Oklahoma Territory during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Longlisted for the National Book Award for Nonfiction, the book has received numerous accolades, including the Stubbendieck Great Plains Distinguished Book Prize and the Oklahoma Book Award for Nonfiction. The Oklahoma Historical Society recognized “Black Moses” with the E. E. Dale Award for Outstanding Book on Oklahoma History.

After the lecture, there will be a question-and-answer session, followed by a book signing and reception. Copies of “Black Moses” will be available to purchase during the event.

The event is free and open to the public. Registration is requested at okhistory.org/signing. the Oklahoma Civil Rights Trail Grant Program, which supported projects across the state to preserve and share Oklahoma's civil rights history.

“Crossroads of America: Oklahoma’s Route 66” to Make TV Debut on OETA



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 the era of nostalgic 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. The film will be shown publicly for the first time on Saturday, August 29, at 4 p.m. on OETA.

Oklahoma contains the longest stretch of drivable Route 66 in the United States. As the highway extends from Chicago to Santa Monica, its route through the Oklahoma Plains reveals narratives of community and connection. The documentary documents this history statewide, featuring interviews with business owners, entrepreneurs, historians, and other prominent Oklahomans. Originally envisioned by early planners, the road required 11 years to complete. Roadside attractions, cinematic influences, and increased travel after World War II contributed to its popularity. For many travelers, Route 66 represented freedom and a distinctive way to experience the country. Today, travelers continue to value Route 66 by engaging with historic sites and developing new perspectives on its significance.

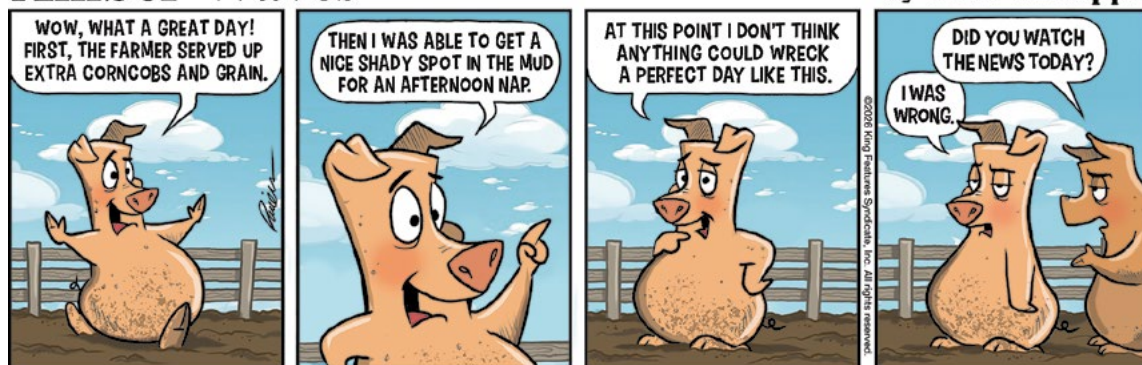
Supported by the Cherokee Film Commission, key scenes were filmed at Cherokee Film Studios utilizing the LED XR wall and volumetric production technology to recreate pivotal moments with enhanced depth and detail. The 80-foot curved LED XR wall serves as an alternative to traditional green screens, allowing directors to position real-time 3D environments behind actors and props and to capture visual effects within the studio. In “Crossroads of America,” these technologies produced vivid night skies, landscapes, and scenes that evoke the experience of traveling along the historic highway.

Director Bryan Beasley maintains a longstanding collaboration with the Oklahoma Historical Society. His career began with the acclaimed documentary “Unconquered: Allan Houser and the Legacy of One Apache Family,” narrated by Val Kilmer, and the historical narrative “The Battle of Honey Springs.” Beasley and OHS Executive Director Trait Thompson further collaborated on the 2023 documentary “The People’s House: The Story of the Oklahoma State Capitol.”

The documentary is scheduled to air on OETA on Saturday, August 29, at 4 p.m. Additional screenings are being planned across the state.

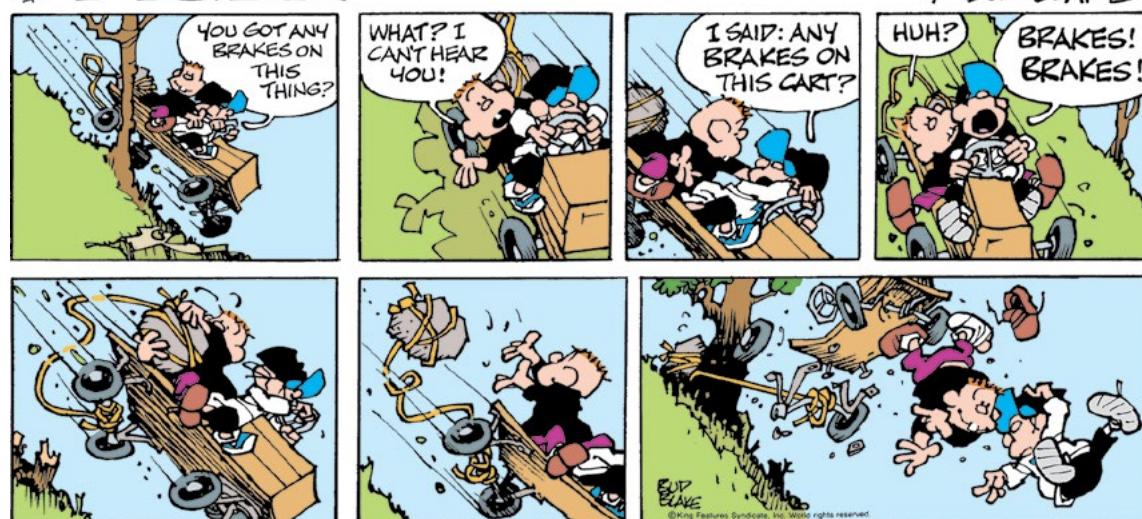
Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



BIBLE WORD SEARCH

by Elie's Spiritual Treasures

Psalm 44:11-13

You gave us up to be devoured like sheep and have scattered us among the nations. You sold your people for a pittance, gaining nothing from their sale. You have made us a reproach to our neighbors, the scorn and derision of those around us.

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Answers on pg 9



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King Crossword

ACROSS

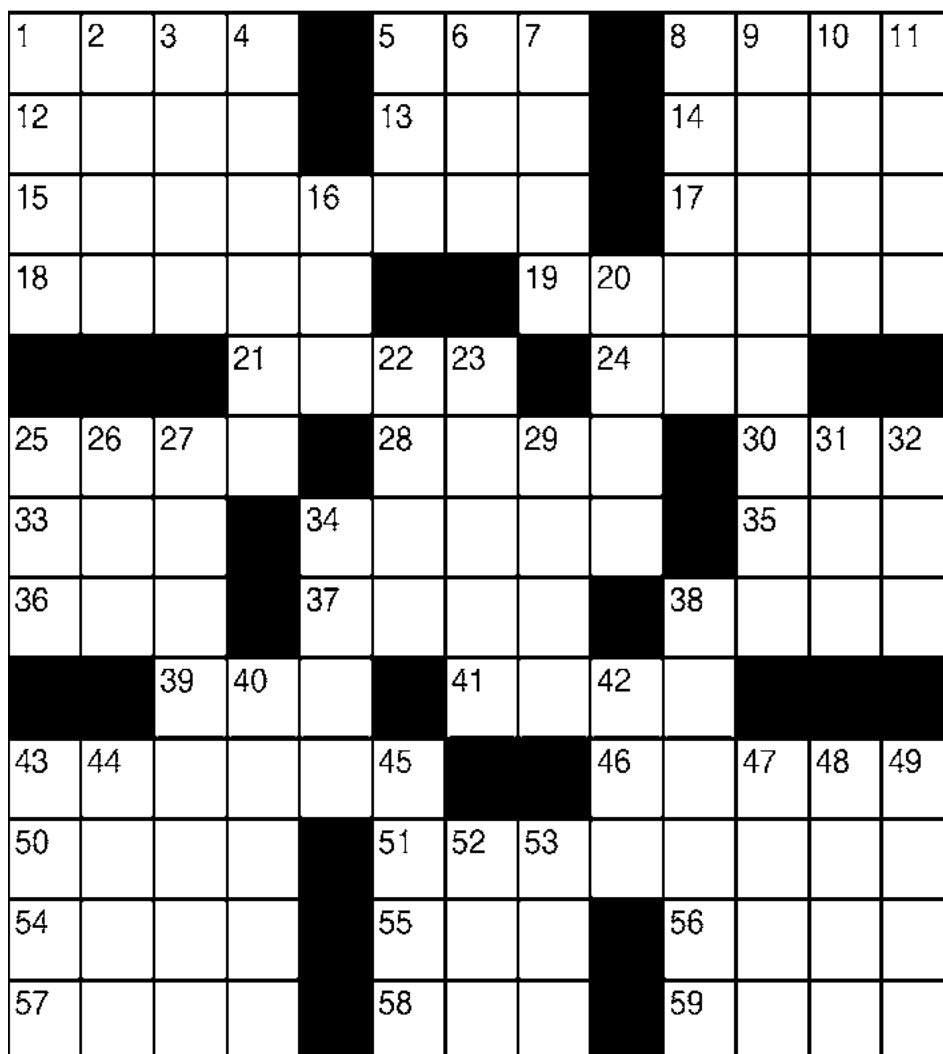
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| 12 Cape —, Portugal | 50 Big rackets | 22 Computer brand |
| 13 In the style of | 51 Pulled-back hairdo | 23 Expos |
| 14 Seniors' gp. | 54 Icelandic epic | 25 "Shoo!" |
| 15 Manhattan, for one | 55 Chang's broth-er | 26 — tear (raging) |
| 17 China (Pref.) | 56 "Andor" actor Diego — | 27 Hindmost parts |
| 18 "The Sopranos" restaurateur | 57 Optimistic | 29 Boyfriend |
| 19 Brunch fare | 58 Tic-tac-toe loser | 31 Comic Gasteyer |
| 21 Thick chunk | 59 Mountain ht. | 32 Enjoy Aspen |
| 24 TV spots | | 34 June honorees |
| 25 Ancient invader | | 38 Ringo, for one |
| 28 Uber competi-tors | | 40 Analyze |
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| 33 Chef Garten | | 43 Baltic feeder |
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| | | 53 Private aid gp. |

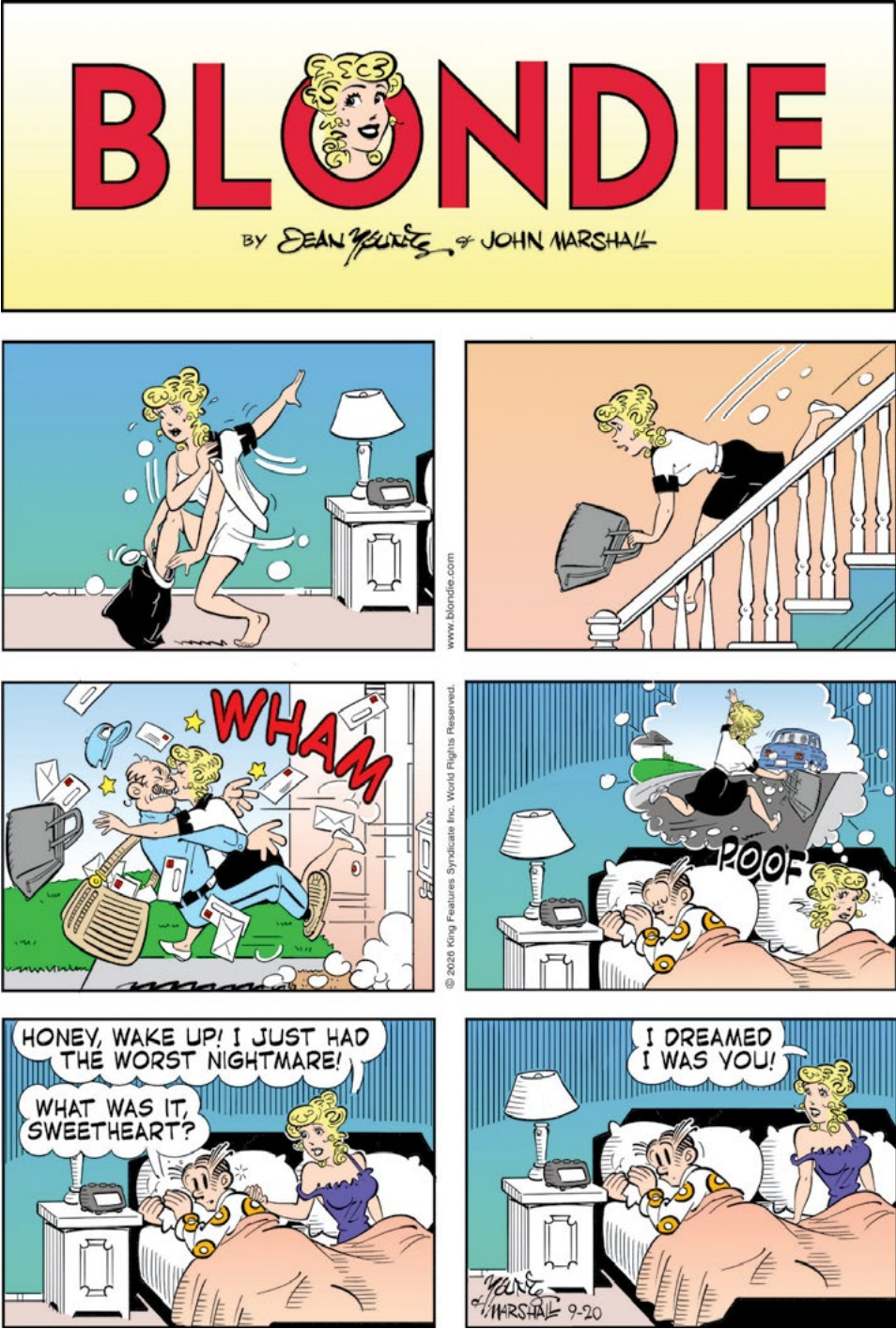
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| 3 Ad agcy. client | 20 Mardi Gras wear |
| 4 Debonair | 22 Computer brand |
| 5 Sheep call | 23 Expos |
| 6 Boxer Laila | 25 "Shoo!" |
| 7 Angelic light | 26 — tear (raging) |
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| 9 Severe decline | 29 Boyfriend |
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| | 49 Serb or Croat |
| | 52 Musician Yoko |
| | 53 Private aid gp. |

Answers on pg 8

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Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



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