



# The Absentee Shawnee News

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March 2024

## AST Cultural Preservation Hosts Ohio History Connection



The AST Cultural Preservation Department recently met with representatives from the Ohio History Connection. Bill Mahon, Director of Interpretation and Experience for the Ohio History Connection, and Kim Koloski, Senior Graphic Designer brought draft panel layouts for the Interpretative Center and the traveling photography exhibit.

The Cultural Preservation staff along with AST Representative DeWayne Wilson reviewed and gave comments on the content and displays to be in the Great Council State Park. Also joining the meeting via zoom were representatives from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and Ball State University.

The Cultural Preservation / Historic Preservation Staff reflected on the meeting “We were incredibly excited to host Bill and Kim today. In OHC’s wish to travel here to Oklahoma, the priority of genuine collaboration on the Great Council State Park remains absolutely commendable. Our virtual guests from Ball State University and ONDR too are wonderful for taking time to sit with us throughout the meeting. We’ve always felt that our Tribe’s voice in this project has and continues to be heard, and that is a precious feeling in our persistent aim to represent our Tribe well”.

The AST language program has been providing words and phrases that will be used on displays and panels throughout

the center. Ohio Department of Natural Resources broke ground on the facility in May of 2022 and construction is expected to be complete in spring of 2024.

ODNR has been working with the Ohio History Connection and the three Shawnee tribes: the Absentee Shawnee Tribe; Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma and the Shawnee Tribe to develop plans for the interpretive center. All displays will honor the Shawnee tribes of the past and allow present-day members to share their stories and legacy.

The three-story structure will have over 12,000 square-feet and is designed to pay tribute to the Shawnee longhouse. A living stream will be showcased on the main floor along with a theater. The

first floor will also feature two interactive exhibits for kids - cattail weaving and ribbonwork. The second floor will feature a historical timeline of the Shawnees in Ohio prior to European settlement and now in modern day. The lower level will feature temporary exhibits about culture, history, art and the modern-day Shawnee tribes. The building also includes a second story balcony overlooking a view from where the Shawnee village would have been located at the end of the 1700s, including the presumed location of the original council house on site.

The facility should be open in 2024.

## From The Election Commission

### Tribal Members:

The Primary Election will be held on Saturday, March 16, 2024. The voting polls will be located at the Little Axe Resource Center on Peebly Road, 1970 156th Ave NE, in Norman, Oklahoma and at the AST Health Multipurpose Building, 2029 James L Edwards Lane, on the Tribal Complex in Shawnee, Oklahoma. The polls will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at both locations.

### APPROPRIATE POLL BEHAVIOR

According to the Election Ordinance Article VIII Section 1 – The official polling sites and adjoining Tribal Grounds are neutral grounds, therefore, there shall be no campaigning or loitering on Election Day by any person. It shall be the duty of the Election Commission to request that Tribal police, be present at each polling place and be responsible for maintaining order, prevent campaigning, and loitering during the election process.

In order to comply we suggest that you do not campaign in any fashion. For Example:

- No “vote for. .” sticker on cars
- No campaign clothing
- No disbursement of campaign material
- No counseling as to who to vote for

- Do not loiter at poll site:
1. Arrive
  2. Register
  3. Vote
  4. Exit

Unless there is a line each voter should be at the poll, no more than 10 minutes, outside of voter booth. Each voter may take all the time they need to read the ballot to vote in the private booth but should not “visit” with Commissioners or other voters at the poll site.

Any visiting of voters must occur outside of the Poll Site and adjoining Tribal grounds.

Voting Polls close at 6:00 p.m. Voter has to be in line in order to vote.

### Policies and Procedures states:

There shall be no campaigning on property of polling site. This includes signs, person to person, clothing, etc. or within 200 ft. of the polling site. On Election Day all signs must be over 200 ft. away from the edge of tribal property that contain poll sites.

Tear Off

BALLOT

ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA

PRIMARY ELECTION

MARCH 16, 2024

VOTING INSTRUCTIONS: Cast your vote by placing an [X] or [✓] mark next to the candidate of your choice.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

LT. GOVERNOR (4 Year Term)

Yvonne Diane Ponkilla

Ezra DeLodge

Leland Blanchard, Sr.

Isaac Gibson, Jr.

TREASURER (4 Year Term)

Joseph Blanchard

REPRESENTATIVE (4 Year Term)

Anthony “Tadpole” Johnson

Eileen Pearce

DeWayne Wilson

ELECTION COMMISSION

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER (3 Year Term)

COMMISSIONER #1 (3 Year Term)

No One Filed

Brandi Routledge-Hunt

92nd Semi-Annual General Council Meeting  
Saturday, April 27, 2024 - 10:00 am  
AST Multi-Purpose Building - Shawnee, OK





GOVERNOR  
John Johnson



Lt. GOVERNOR  
Ezra DeLodge



SECRETARY  
Misty McGirt



TREASURER  
Joseph Blanchard



REPRESENTATIVE  
DeWayne Wilson

GOVERNOR’S REPORT

John Johnson, AST Governor

Hello Tribal Members,

I am glad we are finally seeing more sunshine and warmer temperatures. With a lot of predicted bad weather for February, I had to stay prepared. The Emergency Management team does really good at keeping me updated on all weather updates.

I attended a two day workshop sponsored by Thunderbird Sailing Club at Lake Thunderbird. I met with the design team, Larson Design Group. They had so many new plans and ideals for revamping and rebranding the lake. All these ideals were discussed amongst the 25 to 30 people in attendance. Just to name a few they talked about Floating Cabins, Canoeing on the north part of the lake, adding restaurants, adding more campsites with electricity and enlarging the walking and bike trails for campers. They also suggested an area for floating slides and large water inflatables for more families to enjoy. I’m very glad I attended this workshop it was very informative for the community. I hope they are successful with this master plan and the feasibility study gives them what they need to make Lake Thunderbird great again.

The AST Food pantry still has hams left for any AST Tribal elder that has not received one. You will need to call ahead of time to schedule a time for pick up. They recently made a trip to the Midwest Food bank in Dallas and received several new items to help restock the shelves. These items are on a first come first serve basis only. Once we build this relationship with this company we will be able to go to them once every three months to restock. The Food Pantry manager will update applicants when new items are available to you.

I want to personally congratulate the two individuals (right) who have successfully completed Pro Driving School. They have done an excellent job and successfully completed all required courses to obtain their CDL. I want to tell them both Congratulations and job well done.

Be looking for important dates and announcements on the website. It will also be in April’s newsletter. General Council will be announced along with other AST hosted events.

Please feel free to contact my office for any questions or concerns you may have.

Thank you ,  
John Johnson, Governor  
governor@atribe.com  
Alvina Barnes (ext. 3501) alvinab@astribe.com



Falon Powell  
AST Food Pantry Manager



Dakoda Cody  
AST Member

LT. GOVERNOR’S REPORT

Ezra DeLodge, AST Lt. Governor

Tribal Members,

Please see below for department updates. If you have any questions or concerns please contact me by email ezrad@atribe.com, call my office 405-275-4030 x 3503 or cell 405-432-0733.

**Maintenance:**

The Facilities Maintenance Department continues to dedicate themselves to the highest standard while demonstrating initiative, professionalism and innovation to support Tribal Departments. We are in the process of restructuring/reorganizing of the department, which is currently staffed by five full-time maintenance workers and 2 full-time housekeepers. The guys have been super busy with maintaining all incoming work orders which consist of minor repairs, moving/ rearranging offices and assembling/installing new furniture. Housekeeping has been working effortlessly with maintaining the upkeep of the buildings on the complex. I would like to thank the Maintenance staff for all the hard work they do for the department and Tribe.

**OEH:**

In total for 2024 OEH has assisted Tribal members with 12 different septic renovations and installations, water well drilling and installations, well renovations, and community water connections.

For 2024, we have collected, processed, and recycled 4 bales of shredded office paper and cardboard equaling roughly 3 tons of recyclable waste that has been diverted from landfills.

The Police Safety Center has been completed and is currently in the process of becoming operational.

We would like to remind Tribal Members that if they see any activities related to illegal dumping of trash or other discarded items on Tribal lands to please contact OEH at the email or phone number listed below.

Jarrod Lloyd, OEH&E Director  
jlloyd@atribe.com - (405) 214-4235

**Self-Governance**

As I have mentioned previously I have been working with the City of Norman on several safety projects. We are now including a bridge to the project list. I plan on submitting a bridge application for Porter Avenue Little River Bridge once a resolution is passed.

I have also discovered that we have sev-

eral bridges in our jurisdictional area that are not listed in our inventory. I will be trying to get those added to our National Tribal Transportation Facility Inventory.

Any questions or concerns please email me at TwylaB@atribe.com or call (405)275-4030.

Wood delivers will be ending soon as we begin to have nice Spring time weather. Land Management with be helping Ag with plowing gardens. They will also continue to help Realty with fences.

**Weatherization**

The weatherization program is still working in the Shawnee Tecumseh area and are still accepting applications. This program is designed to stop air infiltration from windows and doors to help cut energy cost. We have 10 elders remaining on the list. Once the elders are taking care of we will start on the remaining tribal members. This has been a timely process and we appreciate every ones patience. If you have any questions you can reach me by e-mail at dmarshall@atribe.com or by cell phone 405-827-4311. Thank you and have a blessed day.

Respectfully,  
Lt. Governor DeLodge

TREASURER’S REPORT

Joseph Blanchard, AST Treasurer

Hello fellow Tribal Members, Family, and Friends:

The last few months have been difficult for many of us. Each is trying to move on, in their own way, after dealing with the loss of loved ones. For me, I take solace in knowing they are no longer suffering and are in a much better place. They have been reunited with our ancestors. It is my hope the Creator helps to fill the void and provides the comfort one requires in their time of need. Prayers and blessings to those affected.

Spring is right around the corner and the changing of the seasons is near. The plants will be blooming and the trees budding. Before long, many will be spending their evenings at the ball field, cheering on their favorite players. I hope for a successful, prosperous season without any major injuries. I do my best to provide support for our young up and coming athletes when families invite me. If you would like me to attend, forward a schedule on to my office.

In other news, as a part of the Tribal Economic Tax Reform Advocacy Alliance

(TETRAA), I was able to attend the Quarterly Treasury Tribal Advisory Council (TTAC) meeting, held during February in Washington, D.C. While there, along with other Tribal leaders, we were able to schedule meetings with U.S. Senate and House members to discuss pressing issues in Indian Country, and educate these individuals about the responsibilities and obligations of the U.S. Government to our Tribes. Additionally, I was able to get comments put on the record about suggestions to the TTAC Council in their advisory role to the U.S. Treasurer, Chief Lynn Malerba.

This past month, I attended a Consultation Meeting in Tulsa with a group of Archaeologists based out of Kentucky and Ohio. I have shared the information with Governor Johnson and provided a suggestion and recommendation for our involvement or approval for the group to proceed with their study. We will wait for the announcement of the results to be published. So far, the researchers are only waiting for the Eastern Shawnee to give their blessing to move forward.

As of today, it was reported to me that our Ag Department is in the middle of Calving Season and so far, we have 11

heifer and 7 bull calves on the ground. There is one loss due to a stillborn birth. The guys have been working with Tribal members to get them scheduled for tilling or plowing of individual gardens. My only request is folks make a determination of how much area they can manage prior to staff coming to do the work. Be on the lookout next month for the Spring Plant Distribution, as well as, the Pig Roast. Once dates are confirmed, we’ll send out the flyer.

In conclusion, I want to say “Neyiwa!” to those who continue to provide advice, encouragement, and support. Despite the negativity, I continue to fulfill my responsibilities and provide opinions to keep our Tribe progressing in the right direction. I want to say “Good Luck” to the candidates running for their respective positions and look forward to working with whoever the Members deem worthy to complete these tasks.

As always, should you have questions or would like to schedule an appointment, please do not hesitate to contact my office at: (405) 275-4030 Ext. 3510; or send an email to: jblanchard@atribe.com .

Respectfully,  
Joseph H. Blanchard

REPRESENTATIVE’S REPORT

DeWayne Wilson, AST Representative

Hello to all Tribal members and I hope everyone is in good health. Spring is right around the corner. I hope everyone has a HAPPY EASTER with family and

friends. I encourage everyone to get out and VOTE. My door is always open and as always Take Care of one another.

**477 Program:** Currently the 477 Program has 328 participants, one of which has transitioned to full-time regular employment. We continue to process 477 applications and assign them to case

management and/ or 477 Program Administration. The 477 Program Case Management Software was installed and is working to upload case information to ease reporting requirements. We will be submitting our first 477 Program Report for our first year of the AST 477 Plan.

(Continued on Page 3A)





**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
**Call: (405) 273-1050**



# Tribal Member Strikes Gold at Winter Games; Heading to State Games



Tribal member Gregory James recently received a gold medal in bowling at the area Winter Games. He is a member of the Norman Marvels Special Olympics team. He bowled a 124 securing his right to compete in the State Games in Stillwater coming up in May.

He typically practices about once a week and has only been back in the sport since September 2023. He normally bowls around 80 so this high score was even a shock to his mom Billie James .

She was so caught up in the moment that she didn’t even take any pictures. “I was on the edge of my seat. I was so surprised. I just couldn’t believe it.” She said.

John Seals, Vice President of Sports and Training for the Special Olympics said that bowling is the only sport that you have to win the Winter Games in order to compete at the State games. Any of the other sporting events you only have to compete to go to state.

But James isn’t in this just for the hardware. He really likes the camaraderie. His mom said if he doesn’t make strikes he doesn’t get mad. James said the best part of bowling is being with his friends.

And once you meet him, you have made a true friend. His big personality and positive demeanor shines through.

His coach Eva Smith couldn’t agree more. “Gregory has been a joy to have on the Norman Marvels team. He has the spirit of a true Olympian with his determination to better his scores every week as well as by the kindness he shows to all of his teammates. He always shows up with an amazing positive attitude and enthusiasm to cheer on the team.”

This year 382 Special Olympians qualified for the bowling State Games and at least 250-300 will go on to compete. The State Games are expecting close to 5,000 athletes this year.

No matter the outcome, Gregory James will always be a winner and true champion.

## News Release

**To:** The Absentee Shawnee News  
**From:** AllNations Bank  
**Date:** 2-15-2024  
**Subject:** AllNations Bank Joins National Bankers Association

AllNations Bank, the Tribe’s wholly owned bank, has recently joined the National Bankers Association (NBA). The NBA is the national trade association for Minority-owned Depository Institutions (MDIs). The NBA advocates for MDIs with regulatory agencies and Congress on matters of particular interest to minority institutions. NBA also provides various services to MDIs including providing access to products and services that assist the banks in meeting the banking needs of their customers including minorities, low-income individuals and small businesses.

An immediate benefit from joining the NBA happened shortly after the bank joined the association. AllNations Bank was selected to be one of 15 banks designated to participate in a program to assist the bank in assessing and implementing improvements in the bank’s use of technology. This program is funded by a \$10 million grant from the Citi Fund, a foundation supported by Citibank.

AllNations Bank continues to remind customers of the importance of fraud prevention on social media posts and the bank website. One recent enhancement to the bank’s efforts to protect customer information and banking activity is “Debit Card Transaction Activity Alerts”. If you sign up, when your debit card is used, an email alert is sent to you when your card is used. If you didn’t use it, you can turn the debit card off in the Manage Cards portion of the mobile app then notify the bank. You can sign up for the alerts in the Manage Cards area on the mobile app or online banking.

Additional information on cyber security and avoiding online banking fraud and other scams is available on the bank’s website at [www.anbok.com](http://www.anbok.com) on the “Resources” page then “Online Security”. If you have questions, please consult with a Calumet or Shawnee banker.

### AllNations Bank is showing up in denim, and many other fabrics.

We know that you work hard and live a busy lifestyle. Since it’s not always convenient for you to go to the bank, AllNations Bank is coming to you.

Download our mobile banking app today and get access to your account 24 hours a day, rain or shine.

## AllNations Bank

EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

2023 Gordon Cooper Dr. • Shawnee, OK 74801 • (405) 273-0202  
[www.anbok.com](http://www.anbok.com)

Member  
**FDIC**

# NOTICE

## IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE OR STORY

Please give us a call at (405) 598-1279 or send an email to [media@atribe.com](mailto:media@atribe.com)

All articles for the next month’s issue are **DUE** by the **15th of the current month.**

Unfortunately we can only accept **ONE PICTURE PER BIRTHDAY PERSON**, not per birthday wish.



CULTURAL PRESERVATION DEPARTMENT

The first two months of the year have been full of planning and exciting transformation for Cultural Preservation. Following is a breakdown of each departmental program’s most recent activities.

Cultural Preservation

We are excited to be partnering with CCDF/After School Program for a collaboration labeled “We Are Shawnee”! We have had a first sit down planning meeting with the staff of CCDF in which we were introduced to the goals of this collaboration. Once or twice a week or as time permits, Cultural Preservation staff will be sharing the language, culture, and history of the Shawnee people with the children enrolled in the program. We plan to do this through hands on activities such as games, crafts, and presentations. The overarching goal of this collaboration is to give the children participants a sense of identity and introduce them to the Shawnee culture.

Gift Shop

The Gift Shop is currently open, and we are having an inventory clearance sale! Almost everything in the Gift Shop is on sale. However, please be aware, soon we will be closing our doors for a period of time to prepare for a transformation. The gift shop is a program of Cultural Preservation, and as so, the staff of Cultural Preservation will be rebranding the shop. We will be no longer be carrying some of the items that we currently have in stock, and instead, we will be purchasing items that are more culturally inclusive and reflects the department’s mission and goals of preserving the history of the Shawnee culture. When you enter the gift shop, we want you to see items you wouldn’t see anywhere else. We want our shoppers to be able to purchase items that are Shawnee and Shawnee made. Some of the items we as a department have already discussed to carry are books about Shawnees, more supplies, tribal member’s hand-made items, and of course more emblem bearing items. Also, we will be distributing a survey so that we can hear your opinions of what you would like to see us carry. Please look for that soon.

The gift shop is located in building 6 just east of the new police station. Our current hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to us at Cultural.Preservation@atribe.com.

Library

The Library is open! Hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Last month, activity in the library included 3 library visitors with a total of 10 books checked out. Also, 20 virtual books were checked out. Ms. Paula Jackson, Librarian, added 1 new patron to the system. Please note the library application has been converted to a digital format that can be emailed. If you would like the application please contact Ms. Jackson at (405) 275-4030 ext. 3530 or at PJackson@atribe.com.

If you would like to view what books we have in the library currently, please visit <https://www.librarycat.org/lib/ASTribe> to view the catalog. Also, if you have a library card, please check out the virtual library (<https://okvirtuallibrary.overdrive.com/>) which currently has approximately 74,600 books available.

Like with the Gift Shop, we will be rebranding the library. We want to carry more Native American and more specifically Shawnee books and resources. Please let us know your opinions of what you would like to see in the library.

THPO (Tribal Historic Preservation Office)

Our Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) Program continues to make great strides and advancements. The THPO staff has steadily been receiving Section 106 projects from various Federal and State Agencies. Over the past month; the THPO Officer, Mrs. Devon Frazier-Smith, and TCNS Coordinator/THPO Specialist, Mr. Clayton Martinez, have together received 575 new Section 106 projects for review and consultation. The program staff has successfully consulted on 420 of these received projects, of which occur in 12 of our 25 areas of interest/states. The THPO Staff, including myself as Director, have also taken part in 10 teleconference calls regarding Section 106 projects or NAGPRA cases.

NAGPRA

In addition to Cultural Preservation Director, I currently hold the position of interim NAGPRA Coordinator. The last few months have been very busy for me. More and more agencies/museums/colleges both in the states and overseas have been reaching out. Currently, we are in consultation with 12 different facilities concerning the ancestors and funerary objects they have in their possession.

Great Council State Park

We continue to collaborate with the Ohio History Connection and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources on content for the Great Council State Park Interpretive Center located in Ohio. As mentioned last month, the language program has been providing words and phrases that will be used on displays and panels throughout the Center. In addition, our Tribal Historic Preservation Office has been working with Ohio, for an extended time, on the content of the panels, and on February 22nd, Mr. Bill Mahon, Director of Interpretation and Experience for the Ohio History Connection, and Ms. Kim Koloski, Senior Graphic Designer also with the Ohio History Connection, came to the complex for an in person meeting. At this meeting, draft panel layouts for the Interpretative Center and the traveling photography exhibit were reviewed and comments given by the staff of Cultural Preservation. At the time of writing this article, no grand opening date has been set.

Language

We are estimating to begin open language classes by mid-April. It is likely we will provide online classes along with in-person classes as we understand we have tribal members who live at great distances or may not have the means to make an in-person class.

Moving forward, all material, whether it is lessons or coloring books or flash cards, will have a QR code to scan. This allows young and old to hear how the words or phrases are said, especially if there is no one close that can speak Shawnee.

Further, we are collaborating with the Afterschool Program and SPR-PFS Grant to provide language material to local students who are part of their programs. Through this collaboration we will reach more tribal children to provide them with the opportunity to learn Shawnee and teach them about the Shawnee culture.

For general language questions and information, please contact the department by phone or email at [ASTLanguage@atribe.com](mailto:ASTLanguage@atribe.com).

Your concerns are important to us. Ne yi wa for the continued support of our department as we continue to make changes to our programs to better serve the Tribal community. Please feel free to contact me, Carol Butler, at 405-275-4030 ext. 3525 or [cbutler@atribe.com](mailto:cbutler@atribe.com) if you have any questions or concerns.

AMONG  
THE  
SHAWNEE  
PODCAST  
NOW ONLINE





WWW.ASTRIBE.COM/PODCASTS



AST TRIBAL MEMBERS  
VOTE MARCH 16, 2024

POLLING PLACES

Little Axe Resource Center  
1970 156th Avenue NE, Norman, OK

AST Multi-Purpose Building  
2029 James L Edwards LN, Shawnee, OK

OFFICES ON THE BALLOT

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

LT. GOVERNOR (4 YR TERM)  
YVONNE DIANE POKILLA  
EZRA DELODGE  
LELAND BLANCHARD SR.  
ISAAC GIBSON JR.

TREASURER (4 YR TERM)  
JOSEPH BLANCHARD

REPRESENTATIVE (4 YR TERM)  
ANTHONY “TADPOLE” JOHNSON  
EILEEN PEARCE  
DEWAYNE WILSON

ELECTION COMMISSION

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER (3 YR TERM)  
NO ONE FILED

COMMISSIONER #1 (3 YR TERM)  
BRANDI ROUTLEDGE-HUNT

The polls will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at both locations.





Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma  
**Building Blocks C.D.C.**  
2025 S. Gordon Cooper Dr.  
Shawnee, Ok. 74801  
(405)878-0633 FAX(405)878-0156



**BUILDING BLOCKS**  
CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER  
AN ABSENTEE SHAWNEE ENTERPRISE

February was a busy month at Building Blocks. March will also be busy and exciting for the children with lots of activities and learning as the children play.

**Dr. Seuss' Birthday & Read Across America Week is March 4<sup>th</sup>-March 8<sup>th</sup>. We will be doing dress up week and inviting volunteers to read Dr. Seuss books to the children.**



**Remember to Spring Forward and set your clocks ahead on Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup>.**

**St. Patrick's Day is Sunday, March 17<sup>th</sup>: remember to wear GREEN.**

**Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup> is the First Day of Spring.**



**Easter Egg Hunts for Building Blocks children will be at 3:00p.m. on Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup> with Easter Parties to follow.**

**Building Blocks is closed for Good Friday on March 29<sup>th</sup>. Easter is Sunday, March 31<sup>st</sup>. We wish Everyone a Happy Easter.**



We did lots of fun activities for February. AST Librarian and Pioneer Library System visited and read books to the children and done activities with them. Also, we celebrated Valentine's Day on the 14<sup>th</sup> with classroom parties. We share these pictures with you:



We are currently hiring staff, if you are interested in applying visit <https://www.astribes.com/employment> for applications and to see what positions are available.

Building Blocks is accepting waiting list applications for all of our ages; 6 weeks through Pre-K/4 Year Olds. If you are interested in getting your child on our waiting list please call and we can email you a waiting list application or you may stop by to fill one out.

Have a Sunshiny March!!

**Building Blocks III C.D.C**  
16051 Little Axe Dr., Norman, OK 73026  
Phone: (405)360-2710; fax: (405)360-2726

# March Newsletter

**In the Classroom**

March is the beginning of spring. One theme of Ms. Shelly's this month is "up in the clouds", teaching the little about the fundamentals of the sky. Ms. Rachel and Ms. Sara are teaching the children about the changes of nature that come along with spring, reading Dr. Seuss and learning some fun facts about St. Patrick's Day. Ms. Cheri's class is focusing on nature, helping them to compare the different colors, sizes, textures and weights.



**In the Center:**

"Children want the same things we want. To laugh, to be challenged, to be entertained, and delighted."  
Dr. Seuss

Remember to grab your child's daily sheet at the end of each day. This has their daily curriculum along with any important information from their teacher.

**Reminders:**

March 29 – Closed for Good Friday

March 4<sup>th</sup> -8 - Dr. Seuss spirt week


March 28<sup>th</sup> – Easter Parties and Egg hunt.

## Happy St Patrick's Day




# S'ke pi k'yi (s'kee pah k'yah) Green





# Let us help...



**With one of your Cooling/  
Heating/Water bill**

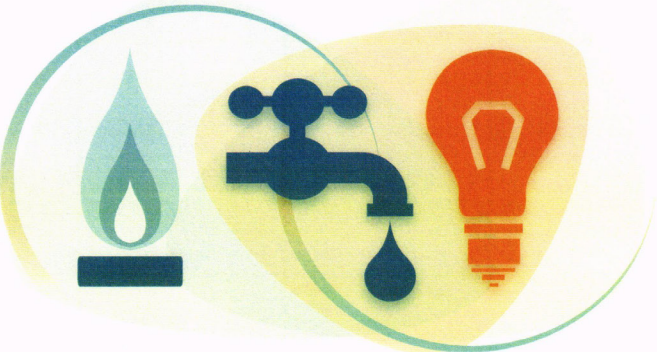
**Through the LIHEAP or LIHWAP Assistance Programs**

**If you live in Pottawatomie or Cleveland counties**

**And enrolled with any federally recognized tribe.**

**LIHEAP - Heating / Electric**

**LIHWAP - Water**



Applications can be picked up at the Social Service Department or printed off the website of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe. For any questions please call:

**Social Service Department**  
(405) 878-4723  
Fax: (405) 273-7938  
Email: [awilson@astribes.com](mailto:awilson@astribes.com) / [NEdwards@astribes.com](mailto:NEdwards@astribes.com)

## Absentee Shawnee Tribe's Domestic Violence Department



**Our mission is to:**

Eliminate violence in Native Country and to strengthen Native families to end the cycle of violence.

**We help with:**

Domestic Violence  
Sexual Assault  
Dating Violence  
Stalking  
Sex Trafficking

**Our services are confidential and include:**

Safety Planning  
Emergency Assistance  
Court Advocacy  
Shelter Placement Assistance  
Referrals

Must be intimate partner related violence and the victim must be fleeing the home/situation

**Who we serve:**

Natives and non-Natives  
LGBTQ2S+  
Any Religion  
Any income level  
EVERYONE

**Where we serve:**

Because we are federally funded we get to serve all populations within our \*service area, which includes Cleveland, Oklahoma and Pottawatomie counties.

\*If you are AST and outside the service area, please call our office and we will see what we can do to help you.

**Contact Us:**

**Office Line** 405.273.2888  
**Fax** 405.273.1192

**Webpage** <https://www.astribes.com/domestic-violence>  
**Link to intake** <https://www.astribes.com/forms/victim-intake>

 @ASTRisingWarrior

**For emergencies call 911 or AST PD @ 405.275.3200**

This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-TW-AV-0016 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.



Wanted to wish Taylor Carter  
a Happy Birthday!

Love ya,  
Mom



A BIG, BIG THANK YOU

We would like to express our sincere thanks to all our family, friends and loved ones that visited Marvin while he was in the hospital. Your presence brought him happiness and hope and for a time let his mind be free of everything that was going on with his failing body. He felt all the love and support and was very humbled by all the people that cared for him.

The Creator’s plan was not what we expected, and Marvin left us to be in a much better place. He is now healthy again, and we are sure making everyone laugh with all his craziness.

We would like to thank the Absentee Shawnee Tribe’s Departments that assisted Marvin over these last few years. Also, thanks to the AST Clinic and the Wellness Program. The Little Axe AST Physical Therapy went above and beyond to help Marvin stay mobile and to stay in his home. This was an absolute blessing. Another big thank you to the AST Transportation Department who religiously transported him to dialysis three times a week and to the numerous doctor and specialist appointments.

Our thanks to all the family, friends and loved ones that attended his tribal rights, despite the cold and rainy weather. There was a very large turnout and that gave us great comfort to know he was that loved and respected. We appreciate so much all the prayers, support, phone calls, texts and love shown to our family. In addition, thank you for all the food, drinks, desserts, ice, and paper goods given for all the meals and feast. Also, a big thank you to the wonderful ladies that cooked and cleaned for each meal. A special thank you to Glenn Mann for handling tribal rights in such a good way. We also want to thank Jason Bender and the AST Honor guard for providing the flag and a veteran’s farewell. A special thanks to all the men that dug the grave and carried him to his final resting space.

If we inadvertently left anyone out, please forgive our oversight.

Everyone made our family feel proud and honored, and we are sure Marvin would feel the same.

May you be blessed for all the kindness you have shown all of us, during our loss.

Sincerely and Respectfully,  
The family of Marvin Lee Smith

To Whom It May Concern

Dec 20th 2023 L-AS-2023-33 resolution was passed for the Tribal Energy Assistance program. My application for assistance was submitted 1/2/24. And, as of today there are no new guidelines on our tribal website. On changing the verbiage from “net” to “gross”. For the TEA that has been \$150.00 since 2008 or maybe longer. I have been told several times by the other members of the EC that the verbiage on the resolution was in error and that it would be corrected. As of 2/6/24 today it still has not been addressed or have there been any updates on our website.

This \$150.00 is for all tribal members, and I was told by the Director, that this only affected “my application”. Since the website is incorrect and that it still shows net. My application needs to be honored. Until it is updated. This is how we need to conduct our business.

How are to operate as a “Tribal Entity” when our actions should be accountable as such. When we can’t even address such a minor glitch? Sure, It’s not a sufficient amount of money but as a tribal member, let alone a tribal elder. I am entitled by application on what is in black and white. And not to what you can just change but not fully change everything that it pertains too.

Thank you  
Janene F. Alford

WE ARE  
HIRING  
Join Our Team

BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH US

- MEDICAL, DENTAL, VISION
- BASIC & VOLUNTARY LIFE
- SHORT-TERM DISABILITY
- 401K RETIREMENT W/5% MATCH
- VACATION & SICK LEAVE
- 13 PAID HOLIDAYS PLUS BIRTHDAY

VACANCIES FOR  
ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE  
AND ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBAL HEALTH SYSTEM  
Apply at [www.astribе.com/employment](http://www.astribе.com/employment)



ELECT  
★ WILSON ★  
ABSENTEE SHAWNEE  
REPRESENTATIVE  
A VOTE FOR THE FUTURE

I AM RUNNING FOR  
TRIBAL REPRESENTATIVE  
AND ASKING FOR YOUR  
SUPPORT.

PLEASE VOTE FOR  
POSITIVE GROWTH &  
PROSPERITY ON  
MARCH 16, 2024



DEWAYNE WILSON  
AST REPRESENTATIVE  
2021–CURRENT

MY PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| • HARD WORKING | • EXPERIENCED |
| • DETERMINED   | • DEPENDABLE  |
| • AGGRESSIVE   | • STABILITY   |
| • DEDICATED    | • LEADERSHIP  |

ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2021–CURRENT

- REVITALIZED YOUTH CAMP DEVELOPMENT
- INCREASED FUNDING FOR EDUCATION PROGRAMS
- CREATED WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR TRIBAL MEMBERS
- RE–ESTABLISHED LANGUAGE PROGRAM
- HELPED RESEARCH/DEVELOP PUBLIC LAW 102–477

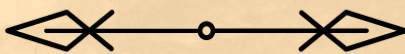
I APPRECIATE YOU TAKING THE TIME TO READ THIS.  
NE YI WA

Ne mi ta Si wi nwi to wa  
(I want to speak Shawnee)

Pre-recorded online lessons are now available to help tribal members learn to speak Shawnee.

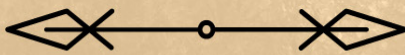
Each 15-20 minute lesson is broken into vocabulary, phrases, and brief conversations for each subject.

The lessons can be viewed multiple times and are available in printable form.



Lessons can be accessed under the LANGUAGE tab on the tribal member only page

<https://www.astribе.com/tmo-login>



For questions regarding online lessons, please email  
[ASTLanguage@astribе.com](mailto:ASTLanguage@astribе.com).







ABSSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE

OF INDIANS OF OKLAHOMA

PHONE DIRECTORY - DIRECT NUMBERS

AST Complex – (405) 275-4030	Toll Free - 800-256-3341
All Nations Bank.....(405) 273-0202	
Brendle Corner.....(405) 447-3372	
Building Blocks.....(405) 878-0633	
Building Blocks III LA.....(405) 360-2710	
Court.....(405) 481-8575	
Domestic Violence.....(405) 273-2888	
Enrollment.....(405) 481-8650	
Food Pantry.....(405) 481-8640	
Gaming Commission.....(405) 360-9270 x1110	
Housing Authority.....(405) 275-1050	
Human Resources.....(405) 275-1468	
ICW.....(405) 395-4490	
Media.....(405) 598-1279	
OEH/OEP.....(405) 214-4235	
Police.....(405) 275-3200/275-3432	
Social Services.....(405) 878-4723	
Tax Commission.....(405) 481-8600	
Thunderbird Casino Norman.....(405) 360-9270	
Thunderbird Casino Shawnee.....(405) 273-2679	
Tribal Store Little Axe.....(405) 364-0668	

The Absentee Shawnee Tribe will be closed

Friday, March 29 - Good Friday

Tribal Member Corner:

March Article:

Questions for Executive Committee, Health, Language, Realty:

I submitted last month for Agenda, the sample resolution, for 2-year term for Executive Committee, to send to referendum vote.

For tribal members, 50 years of age with no heart issues, we need to pay for heart scans that insurances do not pay. This is a preventative measure for health and future cost. It can be paid from our health general funds. Norman Regional has them for \$35.00? Can this be implemented?

I asked last year, regarding CPR classes for tribal members. It is important to know CPR for our families at home. When can one be scheduled?

I contacted health two years ago, for an updated copy of our health guidelines, I have not received. Tribal Members need a copy.

We have an AST flag policy that was written in 2000. We gave flags to mourning families or can be purchased. Has this been adhered too?

There may be other old passed resolutions, that need to be observed and have been forgotten. I would like to utllize an AST language pocket booklet to carry, maybe others would like one.

We need to work on realty trust lands, reduce number of heirs. Sell to heirs and paid by remaining heirs at appraised price?

Maybe we need to hear from members regarding, a meeting?

Tax information: To claim a qualified relative, the relative can’t make more than 4700 year. Earned Income credit, maximum amount credit for 3 or more children, is \$7430.

Eileen Pearce  
Contact: lapearce@att.net  
Tribal member

Follow Us on

Social Media



Absentee Shawnee Tribe





## ASTHS March 2024 Monthly Update

### National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

National Colorectal cancer is the second deadliest cancer in the United States. Yet it's one of the few cancers that is preventable thanks to screening. Here are two reasons why getting checked matters:

- Screening can find the warning signs of colon and rectal cancer, letting doctors take action to prevent the disease.
- Screening can also find colorectal cancer early, when treatment is most effective

#### Native American People are More Likely to get Certain Cancers Compared to Non-Hispanic White People

American Indian and Alaska Native (Native American) people have much higher rates of getting several cancers, including lung, colorectal, liver, stomach, and kidney cancers, compared to non-Hispanic White people in the United States. There are also important differences in the rate of getting cancer between the six regions where most Native American people live.

Scientists used United States Cancer Statistics data to see how many Native Americans got cancer from 2012 to 2016. They compared rates of getting cancer in six regions: the Northern Plains, Alaska, Southern Plains, Pacific Coast, East, and Southwest.

- American Indian and Alaska Native people were more likely to get liver, stomach, kidney, lung, colorectal, and female breast cancers than White people in most regions.
- Compared to White men, Native American men had higher rates of getting liver, stomach, kidney, colorectal, and lung cancer and myeloma.
- Compared to White women, Native American women had higher rates of getting liver, stomach, kidney, colorectal, and cervical cancer.
- Native American men were more likely to get cancer than Native American women. The difference ranged from 23% more likely for lung cancer to 129% more likely for liver cancer.
- The biggest differences in cancer rates between Native American men and White men were found in Alaska, followed by the Southern Plains, Southwest, and Northern Plains.
- The biggest differences in cancer rates between Native American women and White women were found in the Southern Plains, followed by the Northern Plains, Alaska, and Pacific Coast.

#### Build Awareness of Colorectal Cancer

##### 1. Early Detection and Screening is Key

Cancer is deadly, but the good news is thousands of cancer cases, and deaths can be prevented through early detection and screening.

##### 2. Cancer is a Leading Cause of Death

In 2019, cancer was said to be the world's second leading cause of death, with breast (2.26 million cases) and lung (2.21 million cases) being the most common types of cancer, according to the WHO.

##### 3. Cancer Research has Decreased Death Rates

More effective cancer treatment has decreased the death rate according to the American Cancer Society and, more specifically, lung cancer.

##### 4. Smoking Increases Your Risk of Lung Cancer

The most effective preventative measure against the disease is to stop smoking. The more cigarettes you smoke, the higher your risk.

##### 5. February 4 Marks "World Cancer Day"

Founded in 2000 and led by the Union for International Cancer Control (U.I.C.C.), the day aims to increase global awareness about cancer and save many from suffering and death.

#### Why National Cancer Prevention Month Is Important

One in 24 people will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer in their lifetime, but you can make a difference today. Colorectal cancer (CRC) is a leading cancer worldwide; incidence varies greatly by country and racial group. We compared 2018 American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) CRC incidence rates in Alaska to other Tribal, racial, and international population rates. AI/AN persons in Alaska had the highest CRC incidence rate among US Tribal and racial groups. AI/AN persons in Alaska also had higher rates than those reported for any other country in the world in 2018 except for Hungary, where males had a higher CRC incidence rate than AI/AN males in Alaska. This review of CRC incidence rates from populations in the United States and worldwide showed that AI/AN persons in Alaska had the highest documented incidence rate of CRC in the world in 2018. It is important to inform health systems serving AI/AN persons in Alaska about policies and interventions that can support CRC screening to reduce the burden of this disease. This does not mean that CRC cannot affect other AI/AN in other parts of the US, including here in Oklahoma.

#### US Trends

Colorectal cancer (CRC) is the third most frequently diagnosed cancer and the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the general US population. Cancer screening programs are partly responsible for declining CRC incidence and mortality in the United States. Unfortunately, American Indians (AIs) have experienced either no change or an increase in CRC incidence and mortality, disproportionate diagnosis of late-stage disease, and poorer survival.

#### Low Screening Rates

Despite the effectiveness of CRC screening tests for average-risk adults, these tests are significantly under-utilized by AIs, especially compared to urban Hispanic Whites, adjusting for socio-economic status and other factors. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of US adults are current with CRC screening per US Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) guidelines. However, based on the Indian Health Service (IHS) Government Performance and Results Act data, screening rates ranged from a low of 28.1% in the Phoenix Area to a high of 50.5% in the Oklahoma Area, and 35% in Tucson and 41.9% in the Albuquerque Area. Most tribes possess remarkably few healthcare resources to address CRC screening disparities and face many issues that underscore the need to implement effective CRC screening interventions targeting AIs, while engaging them with culturally appropriate interventions.

#### How Can Cancer Rates Be Lowered Among Native American People?

American Indian and Alaska Native people have some of the highest rates of getting certain cancers in the United States. To help lower the number of future cancers, experts suggest:

- Making sure American Indian and Alaska Native people get cancer screening tests. Screening tests can prevent some common cancers or find them early, when they are easier to treat.
- Making sure preventive health care services and programs are available to help people quit smoking.
- Developing programs that promote healthy eating and keeping a healthy weight.

#### What Can You Do?

- Make an appointment for your yearly examination with your provider to be checked for colorectal cancer, especially if there is a family history.
- Watch your diet for foods that may contribute to an unhealthy lifestyle.
- Stop smoking and using tobaccos that are not healthy for you.
- Begin an exercise program that fits into your schedule and stick with it to maintain a healthy weight.

As always, speak to your healthcare provider if you have any questions about any concerns you have about your health.

**References:** 1. Colorectal Cancer Alliance. (2024). National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. <https://colorectalcaner.org/get-involved/advocate/colorectal-cancer-awareness-month> 2. Haverkamp D, Redwood D, Roik E, Vindigni S, Thomas T. Elevated colorectal cancer incidence among American Indian/Alaska Native persons in Alaska compared to other populations worldwide. *Int J Circumpolar Health*. 2023 Dec;82(1):2184749. doi: 10.1080/22423982.2023.2184749. PMID: 36867106; PMCID: PMC9987760. 3. Kennedy A, and Srinivasan S. Dissemination of a Colorectal Cancer Screening Program Across American Indian Communities in the Southern Plains and Southwest United States. *National Cancer Institute, Division of Cancer Control & Population Sciences*, 2023. <https://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/hdhe/native-american-health/colorectal-cancer-screening-american-indian> 4. Melkonian SC, Weir HK, Jim MA, Preikschat B, Haverkamp D, White MC. Incidence and trends of the leading cancers with elevated incidence among American Indian and Alaska Native populations, 2012–2016. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 2020.

#### CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

##### Little Axe Health Clinic

- Primary Care – The front entrance to Primary Care is awaiting final inspection scheduled to be completed/ opened by the time of this publication.
- Pharmacy Expansion – There was a delay in the arrival of the pneumatic tubes that pushed back the opening. The Pharmacy will be closed on Feb. 23-24 for relocation and will be open in their new location on Monday, Feb. 25th.
- Remodel of Current Primary Care for New PlusCare and Specialty Clinic – Specialty will be open in their new location on March 4th and PlusCare will be in their new location on March 7th.
- Substantial completion/occupancy of the Little Axe Expansion is expected for April 2024! Grand opening of the renovated Health Center is scheduled for May 1st!

##### Shawnee Health Clinic

**NEW SHAWNEE HEALTH CLINIC!** (Coming Soon!) - **39665 Benson Park Road, Shawnee, OK 74801 (adjacent to Tecumseh Lake)**

The feasibility study has been completed and an architect has been selected. Design phase has been initiated and a Request for Proposal (RFP) for Construction Manager will begin shortly. Planning for Groundbreaking Ceremony will begin soon!

#### February 2024 Health Employee Awards of the Month

**Employee of the Month:** Connie Bottaro, Patient Benefits Manager

**Team of the Month:** Maintenance

**Special Leadership Award:** Molli D. Coon, Lead Patient Registration

Chris A. Larkin, MBA, FACHE, CHC  
Executive Director





ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBAL  
**HEALTH SYSTEM**  
Prevention. Progress. Pride.

## Monthly Closures

**All AST Health facilities will observe the following hours on:**

**Wednesday, March 6th:**  
**CLOSED** from **12PM- 5PM**  
for in-service trainings and meetings  
*Only LA/Shawnee Pharmacies will reopen after 5PM*

**Friday, March 29th:**  
**CLOSED** for Good Friday

Visit [asthealth.org](http://asthealth.org) or our Facebook page for updates!





Absentee Shawnee Tribal Health System  
**SEEKING HOPE**  
Dementia Caregiver Support & Services


## Tune In to Our New Video!

Alzheimer’s Disease Program Initiative (ADPI) Program is proud to share our new Music & Memory Testimonial video with you!


Scan the QR Code below to check it out!



405.827.8216  
[adpi@astribe.com](mailto:adpi@astribe.com)  
[asthealth.org/seeking-hope](http://asthealth.org/seeking-hope)  
Funded by @ACLGov



### Diabetes & Wellness Department



March is National Nutrition Month!

National Nutrition month has become an annual observance since 1980 after an influx of interest in nutrition. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics strives to promote the importance of making better food choices, mindful eating, and increasing physical activity.

This year’s theme for National Nutrition Month is, “Beyond The Table.” We encourage you to think beyond the table by:

#### Reading Food Labels


- Choose lower fat foods
- Add more fiber like whole grains, fruits, and vegetables
- Decrease salt intake

#### Moving More


- Sit less and add more movement throughout the day
- Work up to at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity
- Include resistance or weight training activity at least twice a month
- Join our 100 Miles into Spring Challenge by scanning the QR code below

#### Being Well

- Set a consistent sleeping schedule
- Stress management



**BEYOND THE TABLE**  
2024 NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH  
A CAMPAIGN BY  
THE ACADEMY OF NUTRITION AND DIETETICS





### COME PARTICIPATE TO ACQUIRE BASIC FINGERWEAVING SKILLS AND GAIN SOME VALUABLE INFORMATION TO SHARE WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

## Fingerweaving 101

**Shawnee**  
AST Tribal Health Multipurpose Bldg  
2029 James L Edwards Ln, Shawnee, OK 74801

**Little Axe**  
AST Community Bldg, 50 feet west of TBird Express  
TBird Express, 15700 OK-9, Norman, OK 73026

<b>March 9th</b> Date	<b>11a-5p</b> Time	<b>Multi-Purpose Bldg</b> Place	<b>March 16th</b> Date	<b>11a-5p</b> Time	<b>Community Bldg</b> Place
--------------------------	-----------------------	------------------------------------	---------------------------	-----------------------	--------------------------------



TO REGISTER, CONTACT THE TRIBAL OPIOID RESPONSE (TOR) OFFICE

 **Phone**  
(405) 561-7836

 **Email**  
[TOR@ASTRIBE.COM](mailto:TOR@ASTRIBE.COM)







LIMITED TO 10 PEOPLE PER CLASS



### U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS WILL BE HOSTING A:

**PACT ACT : BRINGING VA BENEFITS HOME EVENT IN YOUR HOMETOWN**




**During the event,**


- Speak with representatives
- Get answers to VA Benefits and Claims questions
- File your claim
- Get same day decisions when you share complete information
- Receive VHA Toxic Health Screens
- Widows unsure if you qualify for benefits, please come in and let us research it for you
- Were you exposed to burn pits, herbicides, or other toxins while in the military?
- If you have ever served in the military and have questions because you are not sure if you qualify, please come in and ask

**THURSDAY, MAY 30, 2024**  
**10:00 am—3:00 pm**  
**Absentee Shawnee Tribe Multipurpose Building**  
**2029 James L. Edwards Lane**  
**Shawnee, OK 74801**

For more information contact:  
**Mary Culley, 405-626-3426**  
[mary.culley@va.gov](mailto:mary.culley@va.gov)  
**Connie Bottaro, 405-701-7629**  
[cbottaro@astribe.com](mailto:cbottaro@astribe.com)



Office of Tribal Government Relations



ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBAL  
**HEALTH SYSTEM**  
Prevention. Progress. Pride.



### COMPLETECARE

HOME HEALTH  
HEALTH. HEALING. HOME.

## Heal With CompleteCare

Home Health offers skilled care and support so you can live safely and independently in your home.

How?

Our nurses come to your home to check your vitals, discuss your medications, and help you better manage chronic diseases, such as heart diseases, diabetes, and more. Therapist can help reduce your risk of falls and help you safely recover from surgery. Aides help with personal care and hygiene.

Best of all?

It’s done under the guidance of your doctor!

If you would like more information, please reach out to one of our staff members at 405.701.7085!



\*MENU SUBJECT TO CHANGE\*

LUNCH SERVED MONDAY – THURSDAY 11 AM TO 1 PM SHAWNEE SITE  
LUNCH SERVED MONDAY – THURSDAY 12 PM TO 12:30 PM AT BRENDLE CORNER

BREAKFAST SERVED FRIDAYS 9 AM TO 11 AM SHAWNEE SITE  
BREAKFAST SERVED FRIDAYS 10 AM TO 10:30 AT BRENDLE CORNER

# MARCH 2024

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
				1 GRITS SAUSAGE PATTIES FRUIT
4 SMOKED SAUSAGE CABBAGE CORNBREAD/FRUIT	5 CHEF SALAD W TURKEY EGGS,CHEZ,ONIONS CRACKERS/PEACHES	6 CHICKEN RICE & BROCCOLI CASSEROLE COOKIE	7 ROAST CARROTS RED POT/ROLL PUDDING	8 BOILED EGG BACON TOAST
11 COLD CUT SANDWICH LTOP CHIPS/YOGURT	12 BAKED CHICKEN WILD RICE BRUSSEL SPROUTS APPLESAUCE	13 BEANS STEAKFRIES ONIONS SPINACH	14 BEEF TIPS & NOODLES TOSSED SALAD* CRISP	15 SCRAMBLED EGGS SAUSAGE GRAVY BISCUIT
18 CHICKEN STRIPS MASHED POT/GRAVY VEGGIES	19 PORK & POTATOES GREENBEANS MANDARIN ORANGES	20 KRAUT & WEINERS BROCCOLI BREAD/FRUIT	21 SOFT TACO LTOC REFRIED BEANS SALSA/FRUIT	22 CEREAL SAUSAGE PATTIES TOAST
25 TURKEY SANDWICH BAQKED CHIPS PEACHES	26 SALMON PATTY MAC N CHEZ COLESLAW COOKIE	27 MEATLOAF MASHED POT/GRAVY VEGGIES CAKE	28 SCRAMBLED EGGS GRAVY BISCUIT FRUIT	29 GOOD FRIDAY



## SINGO

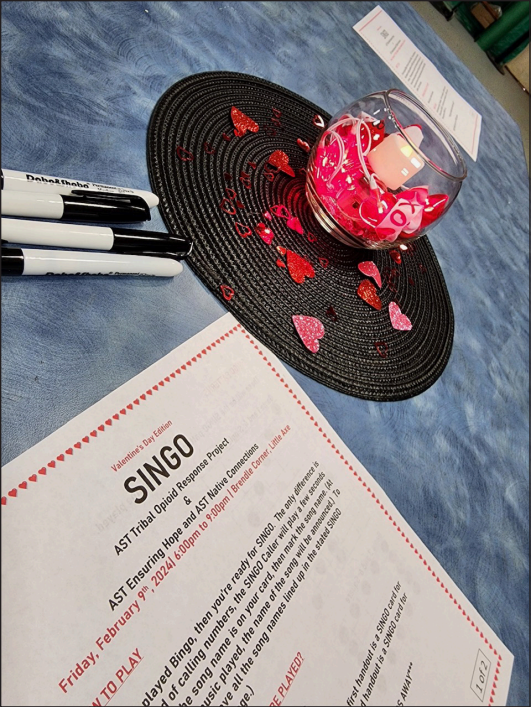
On Friday, February 9th, the Absentee Shawnee Tribe’s (AST) Tribal Opioid Response (TOR) project organized their first 2024 outreach event in partnership with Ensuring Hope and Native Connections. This event was held at Brendle Corner in Little Axe. Participants were treated to SINGO, snacks, prizes and most importantly information about how AST grant funded projects like TOR, Ensuring Hope and Native Connections benefit and strengthen the native community. TOR provides prevention, treatment and recovery resources for citizens of federally recognized tribes in Cleveland, Lincoln, Logan, Oklahoma and Pottawatomie counties. The applicant age for TOR resources ranges from adolescent to adult. As part of our prevention outreach, TOR is hosting a Ribbon Skirt Class in Little Axe in late February. This class was full within an hour. Only 10 people per class are allowed. We’ll be offering other classes in the months ahead so keep your eyes and ears open.

For more information about TOR and the other grant programs contact:

- Tribal Opioid Response project | 405.561.7836 | tor@astribe.com
- Ensuring Hope Project | 405.878.4716 | efoster@astribe.com or rmeely@astribe.com
- Native Connections | 405.275.4030 | nativeconnections@astribe.com



Tiffany Rodriguez, Grant Coordinator, Native Connections (Left) and Elizabeth Foster, Director, Ensuring Hope (Right)



SINGO Table Display



Participants playing Singo (3)



Vicky Stewart, Director, TOR. NI YA WEH to Treasurer Joseph Blanchard, Ensuring Hope, Native Connections, AST Cultural Preservation Gift Shop, AST Elder Marjorie Kaniatobe, Harp’s, Sonic and others that donated gifts and their time to make the SINGO event successful.





# HEALTH BUZZ!!



Hello, spring! Spring is all about new things, and AST Health System has something new in the works.

The population of older Native Americans is growing quickly, leading to an increased risk for Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias. By 2060, the number of Native Americans aged 65 and older living with dementia is projected to increase five-fold.

Expanding the capability for dementia care within ASTHS got a boost late last year with the award of a grant **“Addressing Dementia in Indian Country: Models of Care”**.

What is a model of care?

A model of care is a multifaceted approach to how health care services are delivered. It outlines best practice care and services for a person, their caregiver, or population group as they progress through the stages of a condition, injury, or event.

By developing models of care, we can support the expansion of all-inclusive and sustainable dementia care and services in AST Health System that are responsive to the needs of persons living with dementia and their caregivers.

Care for persons living with dementia includes care for their caregiver. Also, families and other caregivers need help in navigating services, help in understanding what to expect, how to respond to the challenges of living with dementia, and support for self-care. Interventions like Savvy Caregiver in Indian Country and Music & Memory will continue to be provided through grant funding so there is no cost to participants.

Be sure to check out our Music & Memory video testimonial on ASTHS’s Facebook page with Absentee Shawnee Tribal Member, Raymond Tiger! We also have a Savvy Caregiver in Indian Country video testimonial coming soon. We thank our two very gracious participants for sharing a bit about their stories, why they chose to participate, and about their positive experiences. These individuals mean a lot to us and we thank them for allowing us take a peek into their lives.

If you or someone you know would benefit from the *Savvy Caregiver in Indian Country* or *Music & Memory*, please email me, Gayla Temple, at [gtemple@astribc.com](mailto:gtemple@astribc.com) or [adpi@astribc.com](mailto:adpi@astribc.com), or call **405.827.8216** or **405.561.7870**. You can also visit the **Seeking Hope** webpage. Go to the **AST Health System’s** website, [asthealth.org](http://asthealth.org), click on **“Programs and Prevention”**, and click on **“Seeking Hope”**.

Warmest regards,  
Gayla Temple  
Dementia Care Specialist



### MEDICARE PART B SPONSORSHIP/REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

Dear Absentee Shawnee Tribal Member,  
All Absentee Shawnee Tribal members 65 and older that live in the following counties: Cleveland, Lincoln, Logan, Oklahoma and Pottawatomie, may qualify for the Medicare Part B premium Reimbursement Program.

**To qualify for Medicare Part B Tribal Sponsorship Program, you must be an active patient with the ASTHS Primary Care. As your primary care healthcare provider and/or your PRC - Contract Health Services coordinator, ASTHS agrees to reimburse you for your Medicare Part B premiums paid through Social Security Administration’s Medicare Benefit program.**

If you would like to take advantage of this sponsorship program, please contact Melinda Ferrell at 405.701.7175 or email [mferrell@astribc.com](mailto:mferrell@astribc.com).

*Melinda Ferrell*  
PRC Patient Resource Specialist

*We Can Help You!*

**Per PRC Guidelines: You must apply for other resources, and a denial letter must be attached to the application documenting that tribal member did seek other resources.**

For more information:  
Melinda Ferrell, PRC Patient Resources Specialist  
405.701.7175 or [mferrell@astribc.com](mailto:mferrell@astribc.com)

## Know Your Native Options

**Oklahoma’s State SoonerCare Medicaid program is moving to a new health plan program with managed care network plans called SoonerSelect starting February 2024. Know your options.**

➤ **Opt Out:** Native Americans will automatically be opted out and remain in the traditional SoonerCare medical and dental programs. Native American SoonerCare members have the choice to opt in to a SoonerSelect network plan, however it would then be necessary to verify the new medical and dental plans work for you and your tribal health program. If you stay opted out, your SoonerCare benefits will remain unchanged and no action is required.

➤ **Opt In:** SoonerSelect network plans may offer some extra benefits not offered with traditional SoonerCare to help improve your health, however Native Americans will need to opt in, shop the medical and dental plans, and enroll.

*Note: Non-Native SoonerCare family members must select a medical and dental plan before open enrollment closes or the member will be auto-enrolled.*

**Dental Plan Open Enrollment: December 1, 2023 - January 10, 2024**

**Medical Plan Open Enrollment: February 1, 2024 - March 10, 2024**

**Two Ways to Enroll:**

1) Contact an **OHCA Choice Counselor** via the SoonerCare Helpline At **1.800.987.7767**

2) Visit **mysoonerhealth.org** to view, compare, and pick a plan that’s right for you.

*Please be advised, Patient Benefit Advocates cannot enroll members in SoonerSelect Plans but can help navigate the process.*

Contact a Patient Benefit Advocate  
Little Axe Health Center    405.447.0300  
Shawnee Clinic                405.878.5850  
[www.asthealth.org](http://www.asthealth.org)