



THE ABSENTEE SHAWNEE NEWS

www.astribe.com

Volume 34, No. 05

May 2024

AST Public Safety Center Hosts Grand Opening



On April 24 the Absentee Shawnee Tribe held a ribbon cutting ceremony and open house for the new AST Public Safety Center. The new building is directly east of AllNations Bank on the tribal complex. Ground was broken March 2023 and was built with an Indian Community Development Block Grant the tribe received in 2018.

The facility has 5,940 square-feet and has a dedicated interview room, conference room, FEMA approved storm shelter, Emergency Management offices along with patrol and investigative offices, a fitness area and the EOC.

“With this upgrade, we have more room to spread out. We have more room to do what we need to do.” said Director of Public Safety/Chief of Police Brad Gaylord. “We finally have enough space. We are very excited that the building is completed.”

From The Election Commission

OFFICIAL ELECTION RESULTS
ABSENTEE SHAWNEE ELECTION COMMISSION
PRIMARY ELECTION – MARCH 16, 2024

This is to announce the **OFFICIAL ELECTION** results of the March 16, 2024 Primary for the Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma. This election was held on the above date pursuant to the Tribal Constitution and the Election Ordinance. All votes were counted at the Absentee Shawnee Tribal Complex.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

LT. GOVERNOR (4 Year Term)	
Yvonne Diane Ponkilla	163 Votes
Ezra DeLodge	88 Votes
Leland Blanchard, Sr.	19 Votes
Isaac Gibson, Jr.	90 Votes
TREASURER (4 Year Term)	
Joseph Blanchard	210 Votes
REPRESENTATIVE (4 Year Term)	
Anthony "Tadpole" Johnson	162 Votes
Eileen Pearce	79 Votes
DeWayne Wilson	119 Votes

ELECTION COMMISSION

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER (3 Year Term)	COMMISSION MEMBER #1 (3 Year Term)
No Filing	Brandi Routledge-Hunt 1 Votes

We, the Officials, are responsible for declaring the above election results do hereby claim the above statements are true and correct to the best of our knowledge.

James Spybuck, Jr., "Acting" Commissioner
 Shirley Adkins, "Acting" Deputy Commissioner
 Charlotte Ellis, "Acting" Secretary
 Brandi Routledge-Hunt, Commission Member #1
 Zackery Smith, "Acting" Commission Member #2
 James Palinkas, Judge

Date: 3/22/2024

PLEASE fill out EACH BLANK completely and return by the Deadline.

ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST

I, _____, hereby certify that I am or will be an Eligible
 (Print Name)
 Voter of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe on or before June 15, 2024. I cannot physically be present to cast my vote at the **June 15, 2024 Annual Election**; therefore, I am requesting an Absentee Ballot be mailed to me at the following address.

Name (please print): _____
 Address: _____ (first) _____ (middle) _____ (maiden) _____ (last)
 City: _____ St: _____ Zip: _____

CDIB#: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

All **REQUESTS** must be returned to the Election Commission by the deadline date of
May 26, 2024

Mail to:
 Absentee Shawnee Election Commission
 P.O. Box 741
 Tecumseh, OK 74873

Fax to:
Fax # (405) 273-1337 (Do not fax to any other fax #)
 Phone: (405) 275-4030 ext. 6271
 Toll free number 1-800-256-3341 ext. 6271

Email to:
 election.commission@astribe.com

Deliver in Person to:
 Election Commission Office
 located in the Tribal Court Building

All eligible voters are entitled to vote either at the Polls or by Absentee Ballot. This form may be duplicated for your convenience.

ELECTION COMMISSION USE ONLY

Received: _____ Approved: _____ Disapproved: _____

If Disapproved (reason): _____

Denial Letter Mailed: _____ Ballot Mailed: _____

Election Commission/Representative



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,

The 92nd Semi Annual General Council was held on April 27, 2024 I hope you was able to attend. If you have any questions please contact us, we will do our best on helping you with those concerns. Also the Clinic expansion ceremony was held on May 1, 2024. This expansion has been in the works for quite some time and I am very thankful to the AST Health

Board and all the AST Clinic employees for all your hard work and dedication for making this possible for our Tribal members. I look forward to what the future holds for our clinics.

For the first time, I attended the Southern Plains Indian Housing Association (SPIHA) meeting in Catoosa, Ok. This meeting was very interesting to me and I wish to attend these meetings in the future.

I want to take the time to personally "Congratulate all the 2024 graduating se-

niors". I am very proud of you and wish you the best of luck on your future.

Remember the AST podcast is up and running, be sure to listen for any new updates or upcoming news.

Should you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact my office at the information listed below.

governor@astrobe.com 405-275-4030 ext: 3500

alvinab@astrobe.com 405-275-4030 ext: 3501

Thank you

LT. GOVERNOR'S REPORT

Ezra DeLodge, AST Lt. Governor

Maintenance

The maintenance department helped the BIA group and finished clearing all the trees and debris from Tecumseh square. The haunted warehouse sign has been removed and a temporary Absentee Shawnee Tribe sign has been installed.

The runoff water issue at Brindle corner has down been corrected. Maintenance first removed over 10 loads of dirt and trees from the east side of the property changing the grade and runoff of water. Then we installed a French drain along the south and east side of the building that terminates out towards the Hwy 9.

While working on the drain problem we found the electric to the air conditioning systems had been compromised underground and was shorting out. We removed all the high voltage wiring to the units and installed new inside conduit

above grade.

We have now turned our focus on building three located on campus. We have started tracking down and repairing water leaks through the basement walls. While working on the first leak we found the main gas line to the building leaking underground. Our plan is to remove or abandon the old gas line and install a new line from the meter to the building. The total length of pipe will be over 300'.

The mowing season is now upon us and many days have now been spent mowing, spraying and weed eating the campus along with some offsite sites. Please contact Title six if you are in need of having your lawn mowed.

In the upcoming weeks you will find we have started installing new wood benches around the campus. These are being built in our shop by Joe Morton and look excellent. Good job Joe!

Like last month we have found the time to continue with taking care of most all

work orders which include repairing several floors for elders clean and continue working on the maintenance building (18) and part of maintenance building two (18B).

OEH:

In total for 2024 OEH has assisted Tribal members with 22 different septic renovations and installations, water well drilling and installations, well renovations, and community water connections.

For 2024, we have collected, processed, and recycled 14 bales of shredded office paper and cardboard equaling roughly 10.5 tons of recyclable waste that has been diverted from landfills.

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.

Respectfully,

Lt. Governor DeLodge

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Misty McGirt, AST Secretary

Hello Tribal Members,

I hope each and every one of you is doing well. As May is here please stay safe and be weather aware as we are in tornado season. It's been very busy for my office with wrapping up tax preparation, doing my regular secretary duties and attending our regular meetings. At the end of March I ended with a busy schedule. I attended the NASNTI (Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions) roundtable discussion. This was a great event the topic was about Native language in the workplace. The speakers shared great information and ways to bring our language

to light. To wrap the end of March up I attended along with Treasurer Blanchard and Lt. DeLodge the spears tribal summit held at the OSU campus in Stillwater Oklahoma. The first of April I attended along with Representative Wilson, Carol Butler, Clayton Martinez, and Devon Frazier-Smith the 23rd annual Bridging the Gap meeting held at F.A.M. This meeting was very informational for me learning to see what our staff does on a daily with their line of work. In April I attended Tribal Self-Governance held in Arizona along with Treasurer Blanchard and Representative Wilson. That is all I have to report at this time.

Ne yi wa!

Secretary McGirt



REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

DeWayne Wilson, AST Representative

Hello, Tribal members, I hope everyone is in good health. Spring is here. I hope everyone got out and Voted during our Primary Election. I hope to see everyone at General Council in April. My door is always open and as always Take Care of one another.

477 Program: Currently, we have 14 new adult cases for the month of April for a total of 57 and 1 new youth case for a total of 6 for the 2024 year. The total of 477 Participants is 354. At the end of March 2024, the 477 Director and Youth Case Manager attended the 2024 JOM Conference in Tulsa. The 477 Program will be enrolling youth participants for Summer Youth Employment this month. In April 2024, THE 477 Child Care Coordinator and the 477 Director attended the Office of Child Care (OCC) National Conference. The 477 staff needed to get up-dates and changes to CCDF Final Rule and other practices. On April 13, Tribal Child Abuse Awareness training was held with AST Tribal Child Care providers in collaboration with AST ICW and DV Departments.

Education: In March 2024, Education Director was involved in the Native Education Roundtable: Bridging Voices for Empowerment with Jackie White, from the Office of American Indian Education. This platform aims to bring together educators, Superintendents, and Tribal members from across Oklahoma to foster collaboration, share insights, and work collectively towards providing services for our Native American students in our schools. Also in March 2024, Education Director and a staff attended the Oklahoma Johnson O'Malley Conference @ Riverspirit Casino in Tulsa, Ok. They attended sessions like Title VI - Indian Education application process, the Kio-

wa Education Agency's development, and Cherokee Culture in the Classroom. In April, 2024, Education staff attended OK STEP Grant (bi-weekly meeting) and a Tribal Youth Resource Center Technical Assistance Status update with Deborah Tobacco. This is an update with our TA provider for our OJJDP TYP grant from CTAS FY19. The Education staff was also involved of meeting by zoom relating to the Tribal Youth Program with the Dream Navigator curriculum developer for our College and Career readiness project.

Workforce Program: Nothing new to report, The H/VAC mechanic and the H/VAC interns continue to be busy completing work orders on the Tribal Complex and to Tribal member homes. In the near future, the H/VAC Department will be transitioning from heating to air-conditioning service. Let us know if we can be of service.

Cultural Preservation: During March, 2024, Ms. Carol Butler and Mrs. Devon Frazier-Smith traveled to the State of Ohio. During this trip, they met with four different groups: Dawes Arboretum, Newark Earthworks, SunWatch Indian Village/Archaeological Park, and Great Council State Park. This trip was important in fostering new relationships and partnerships for future consultations and collaborations. In April 2024, Ms. Carol Butler, Mrs. Devon Frazier-Smith, and Mr. Clayton Martinez attended the 2024 "Bridging the Gap" Meeting at the First American Museum in Oklahoma City. The theme for this year's meeting was Building Relationships through Collaboration. The largest topic on the agenda was NAGPRA with Region 9 and 8 of the Forest Service working on the establishments of Tribal Working Groups. Also in April 2024, Scott Miller and Paula Jackson traveled to Mt. Vernon, Ohio to attend the SPI Eclipse Program and Watch Party. Ms. Stephanie Geiger, Director of the STEM Program, contacted Cultural

Preservation requesting representatives to assist in a condensed telling of 1806 Tecumseh's eclipse. Ms. Jackson assisted STEM students in creating stick puppets of Tecumseh, Tenskwatawa, and William Henry Harrison and read the narration of the puppet show. Mr. Miller provided a Shawnee interpretation of a portion of a speech from Tenskwatawa. The program was well received by those attending with the audience asking many questions.

Gaming Commission: Since the ASTGC has brought the Internal Audit process in-house, it has been going very well in developing, implementing and strengthening our policies & procedures. The Internal Auditor has completed the first Internal Audit of the year with Surveillance and is currently working on IT (Information Technology) Audit. Last month, the Executive Director has also completed the Level I: Commissioners Certification Training with Indian Gaming Association and plans to move forward with Level II that is scheduled for June. ASTGC plans to have all Compliance Officers certified when the next opening of certification comes available. We look forward to gain developmental growth for the Gaming Commission

Youth Camp: Presently, we have started construction on installing a water harvest project around the dining hall. The water harvest project will allow the water to be used to irrigate the softball field. Finally, the lighting construction has been approved for parking lot, playground area, tennis court, basketball court, and softball field areas.

In closing, it is my pleasure to serve our Tribe as the Tribal Representative. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these programs or need my assistance, feel free to contact me at (405) 275- 4030 at Ext. 3512.

Ne Yi Wa

DeWayne Wilson

TREASURER’S REPORT

Joseph Blanchard, AST Treasurer

Hello fellow AST Members, Friends, and Family:

I begin this month’s edition for the newsletter by saying “Happy Mother’s Day!” to all the special women in our lives. Without them (mom, stepmom, aunt, Grandma, sister), we would not be who we are today. They each serve a specific function, role, and responsibility for the advancement of us all. Additionally, I want to say “Congratulations!” to all our young people graduating. We wish you well and hope for continued success as you begin this next step in life. As they say, “Go out and prosper”.

This time of year brings along many opportunities for individuals to participate in several Rites of Passage. Besides Graduation, many are looking forward to Summer Break and vacations. Before we get there though, we always have Spring Bread Dance. This is an important time as it symbolizes the change of seasons and beginning of our New Year. I hope you took the chance to participate at one of our 3 tribal grounds and got your fill of good Indian food, plus received the associated blessings.

Earlier this month, I attended the National Realty Conference with a few of our staff. Many of the topics that were presented described best BIA practice and how to get the best use out of your Tribal lands. We were able to expand our network with a few other Tribes that also own livestock, and/or use their lands for Agriculture. The most important session provided information for the “Updated” CFR Regulations. Many of us have been waiting to hear how these may affect our process, or if it truly gives Tribes an easier road to operate.

I just returned from the National Self-Governance Conference, hosted at the Gila River Resorts and Casino in Chandler, Arizona. While there, I attended several sessions over Finance, Funding, and a Consultation with Indian Health Service. Secretary Roselyn Tso presented updates on several specific issues and answered questions regarding new information. For me, the best part of my interaction was expanding our network with GSA and the new Strategic Program Advisor for Tribal & Small Independent Agencies, Jessie Jagne. This will help the Tribe continue to purchase product and expand inventory at the best prices possible.

Please be on the lookout for future dates to sign up for “Voter Registration”. In coordination with a couple of our other EC and their staff, we want to encourage your participation to help change the course of our State and National leadership. As I mentioned previously, this will give us people to work with who are sympathetic to Native People, our needs, and our concerns.

Finally, I want to say “Thank you!” for those who chose to attend the Spring General Council meeting. It is my hope the information distributed was able to answer any questions you may have about the Tribe’s regular course of business. Should you still have concerns, you may contact me at: (405) 275-4030 Ext. 3510; on my work cell at: (405) 695-1487; or by sending me an email at: jblanchard@astribe.com.

Sincerely,
Joseph H. Blanchard



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 Staff attended Child Abuse Training on April 13th. Also, those staff needing recertification in First Aid/CPR attended training on April 27th. We strive to keep our staff certified and trained in Child Development related topics and ready to teach those precious children.

We are currently hiring staff, if you are interested in applying visit <https://www.astribe.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.

We will be celebrating our Teaching Staff during the week of May 6th-10th with a Pot Luck Lunch on Friday, May 10th. We appreciate our awesome teachers and staff!

Happy Mother’s Day on Sunday, May 12th! Building Blocks will be celebrating our children’s Mothers on Friday, May 10th at 3:00p.m. with ‘Muffins with Mom’s.’ Have a Magnificent May!



AST Lt. Governor Ezra DeLodge, AST Secretary Misty McGirt and AST Treasurer Joseph Blanchard attended the OSU Spears School of Business Tribal Summit. More than 70 tribal leaders were in attendance.



On April 13th 2024, AST 477 Child Care collaborated with Domestic Violence & ICW and hosted Child Abuse Awareness training for Building Blocks II & III, After School Program & a few Child Care providers at Gordon Cooper Technology Center.

Congratulations

CLASS OF 2024



Carlie Noelle Brady
North Rock Creek High School



Julian Elliot Simpson
West Valley High School



Tegan Blackbear
EPIC Charter Schools



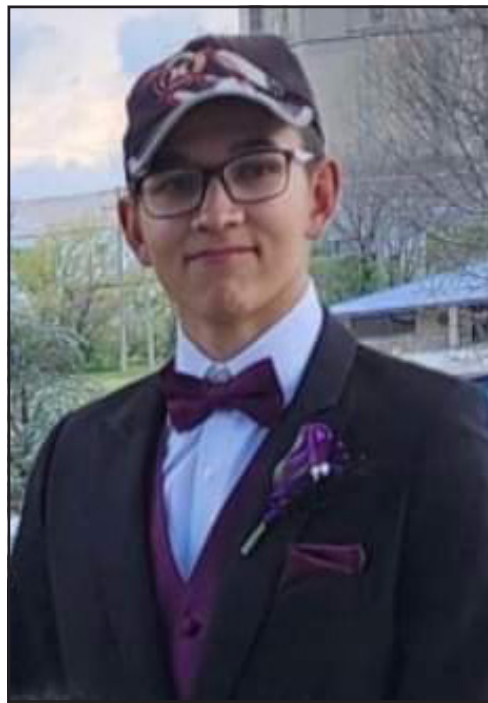
Kensington Deer
Tecumseh High School



Ryan James Smith
Konawa High School



William S. Little Charley
EPIC Charter Schools



Takota Sun Larney
Byng High School



Noah Hunter Thornhill
Talihina High School



Royce Jaxxon Bullock
Shawnee High School



Kimberly Jolene Little Axe
Southwestern Oklahoma State University
Bachelor of Science
Health Information Management



Stefany Foreman
New Mexico Highlands University
Master Degree in Social Work
with a Clinical Concentration, MSW

Congratulations 2024 AST Graduates

Ke ho wa se li we
(kee hoh weh see lah wee)





AllNations Bank

AST High School Seniors
College Scholarship Entry Form

AllNations Bank is providing one (1) \$500 scholarship to an AST high school senior. The bank's president, Steve Smith, is providing one (1) \$500 scholarship to an AST high school senior. These scholarships are to assist in furthering their education after high school. The information you provide below will be used to contact you regarding your entry. You will be notified if your name has been selected and we will schedule a time for you to take a photo to be placed in the AST Newsletter and on the Tribe's media outlets. The scholarship check will be issued directly to the school the student attends.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

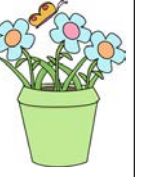
Required documents:

- Tribal Enrollment Card
 - Copy (must be the updated card)

Submit forms via fax, email, mail, or at the Education drop box on the AST Shawnee Complex.

DEADLINE: RECEIVED BY MAY 15, 2024 AT 5:00 PM CDT

Education Department
2025 S. Gordon Cooper Drive
Shawnee, OK 74801
405.275.4030 Ext. 3533
405.273.7938 (fax)
tresham@astribe.com



Absentee Shawnee Tribe's Youth Garden – Tribal Youth Programs-Education Dept.

The youth planted their plants on April 11th. They planted a variety of things like tomatoes, peppers, squash, zucchini, and egg plants. They are super excited to watch them grow and learn to take care of them.



AST LITTLE AXE YOUTH SOCCER PROGRAM



The Little Axe Youth Soccer Program season started April 6th, and will run through early June. We had about 70 kids sign up to participate this year. They play each Saturday between 9am and 12pm. Everyone is welcome to come and watch, and hang out. We look forward to a fun and great season.

Sponsored and Funded by Tribal Youth Programs-Education Dept.



ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE



YOUTH PUBLIC SAFETY CLUB



Ages 10-18

- Leadership Development
- Educate youth about Law Enforcement & Emergency Management & Public Safety
- Build a positive relationship between youth and cops



Contact information:

-Tribal Youth Programs-

Shayanne Fixico -
sfixico@astribe.com

Blake Goodman -
bgoodman@astribe.com

TYP Cell- 405-617-6231

Where:
-Brendle Corner-
19200 E Robinson St,
Norman, OK
(Located off of Highway 9,
just East of 192nd)

Date:
• May 16th @ 6:30 pm



Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women/Girls

May 5th - National Day of Awareness For MMIWG

- Murder is the 3rd leading cause of death for Native American women.
- Murder rate for Native American women is more than 10 times the national average.
- More than 4 out of 5 (84.3%) Native American women have experienced violence in their lifetime.
- June 2023, NamUs database of missing persons included 820 cases of missing Native American individuals: 256 were Native American women/girls. 60 out of the 256 were 18 or younger.



- 66.4% of Native American women have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner.
- 55.5% have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner.
- 56.1% have experienced sexual violence.
- 48.8% have experienced stalking.
- 97% of Native American women have experienced violence by a non-Native perpetrator.
- 35% have experienced violence by a Native perpetrator.



- Oklahoma is in the top 10 in the U.S. for the number of cases of MMIWG.
- In 2020, there were 18 missing and murdered Indigenous women cases in Oklahoma. Oklahoma city had 2 missing cases, 7 murdered cases, and 1 unknown. Tulsa had 4 missing cases, 1 murdered case, and 3 unknown cases.



<https://www.niwrc.org/resources/toolkit/mmiw-toolkit-families-and-communities>

AST Education Department is an Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention – Tribal Youth Program Grantee. We promote public safety and seek to prevent risk factors impacting our youth. TYP Staff: Coordinator – Blake Goodman, Tribal Youth Resource Specialist– Shayanne Fixico
Contact Information: sfixico@astribe.com
bgoodman@astribe.com



AST 477 Summer Youth Employment Program

8-week program starting June 3rd, 2024
Monday-Friday 8am-5pm

- On the job training
- Resume help
- Job application help
- Interview skills
- Customer service



*For ages 14-24 only
*Must have a current Tribal Enrollment Card
*Must be a 477 participant

Applications will be accepted until
May 10th, 2024

Limited spots available

<https://www.astribe.com/forms/pl-102-477-program-application-assistance>

Contact Us

Please call the 477 office at
405-275-4030
ext. 3640 or ext. 3650



CULTURAL PRESERVATION DEPARTMENT

Cultural Preservation has been very busy the last couple of months with rebranding some of the programs. Following is a breakdown of each departmental program's most recent activities.

Eclipse Program

On April 8th, Mr. Scott Miller and Ms. Paula Jackson traveled to Mt. Vernon, Ohio to attend the Science Play-Space Initiative (SPI) Eclipse Program and Watch Party where they collaborated with SPI to host eclipse activities. Ms. Stephanie Geiger, Director of the STEM Program, contacted Cultural Preservation in January requesting representatives to assist in a condensed telling of 1806 Tecumseh's eclipse. Ms. Jackson assisted STEM students in creating stick puppets of Tecumseh, Tenskwatawa, and William Henry Harrison and read the narration of the puppet show. Mr. Miller provided a Shawnee interpretation of a portion of a speech from Tenskwatawa. The program was well received by those attending with the audience asking many questions



Picture 1. Mr. Miller providing interpretation.

Gift Shop

The Gift Shop is currently open! We are located in building 6 just east of the new police station. Our current hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Our Gift Shop Sale continues as we work on making space for fresh stock. Come check out our selection of logo t-shirts at \$13.99 each and take advantage of the additional 30% off that price! We are in the process of ordering new inventory which includes new logo items! Eight vibrant shades of t-shirts have been ordered. We also will have more supplies to choose from for our folks that bead and make jewelry. We will be putting a suggestion box out front for any suggestions or ideas that tribal members or employees would like to see us carry in the gift shop.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to Mrs. Sheila Burnside, the Gift Shop Manager, by phone or email at SBurnside@astribe.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 4 books checked out. Also, 5 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@astribe.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 are still in the process of 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.

March 2nd was National Read Across America Day! To help celebrate this day and the upcoming Easter holiday, Ms. Jackson read the book "The Golden Egg" and did an arts and crafts project at both building block locations.

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 821 new Section 106 projects for review and consultation. The program staff has successfully consulted on 652 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 12 teleconference calls regarding Section 106 projects or NAGPRA cases.

NAGPRA

In addition to Cultural Preservation Director, I currently hold the position of NAGPRA Coordinator. With the new NAGPRA regulations and requirements has come an increase in consultations. More and more agencies/museums/colleges both in the states and overseas have been reaching out. Currently, we are in consultation with 10 different facilities concerning the ancestors and funerary objects they have in their possession.



Picture 2. Guided-tour at Newark Earthworks.

Ohio

From March 17th – March 20th, Mrs. Devon Frazier-Smith and I traveled to Ohio. During this trip, we met with four different groups: Dawes Arboretum and Newark Earthworks in Newark, OH; SunWatch Indian Village and Archaeological Park in Dayton, OH; and Great Council State Park in Xenia, OH.

At Dawes, we engaged in a mini-conference with their education and outreach committee. Part of our agenda allowed us to visit the Newark Earthworks with a guided-tour by Ohio History Connection staff. This gathering was important in fostering new relationships and partnerships for future consultation and collaboration between Tribes and the Arboretum.

At SunWatch, we visited with the President/CEO and Curator for the site. SunWatch is a reconstruction of Fort Ancient period structures in their original 13th Century locations, with an interpretative center with artifact exhibits. We were able to give insight on their NAGPRA grant application, and advices on proper consultation with federally-recognized Tribes.

At Great Council State Park, we were able to visit the construction site with several folks including Bill Mahon (Director of Interpretation and Experiences) with Ohio History Connection and staff with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources like Mary Mertz (Director), Melissa Clark (Sites Manager), Brant Fulks (Capital Program Administrator for Parks), and Jeremy Wenner (Chief of Division of Engineering). It was good to touch base on the state park's development and collaborate on panel information that our office has been consulting on for past few years. Anticipated opening date for Great Council State Park is Friday, June 7th of this year.



Picture 3. Future Site of the Interpretative Center.

Language

Our beta classes continue at the L.A. Health Center and Shawnee Multipurpose Building. We have a consistent number of employees at both locations and have received valuable feedback about the lessons. We are on track to provide classes to the public very soon.

At the time of writing this article, the program and the Grants Department were busy working on the application for the new upcoming ANA Grant. The previous three year grant ends this year. With this new grant, the program will be advancing beyond the establishment of the program, which was what was written in the first grant, and looking to provide classes and more resources (two examples of activities).

For general language questions and information, please contact the department by phone or email at ASTLanguage@astribe.com.



Picture 4. From Left to right: Director Mary Mertz, Cultural Preservation Director Carol Butler, and THPO Devon Frazier-Smith on the third floor of the Interpretative Center.

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@astribe.com if you have any questions or concerns.

JOB FAIR

Meet with HR Representatives from Thunderbird Casino, the Absentee Shawnee Tribe and AST Health Systems.

NORMAN
SHAWNEE

100% Employer-Paid Benefits

- Medical
- Vision
- Dental
- Life

Additional Benefits

- Weekly Pay
- Base Supplement Incentive
- Attendance Incentive
- 401k with Employer Match

Saturday, May 11th, 10am - 2pm
 Event Center | Thunderbird Casino

DRESS TO IMPRESS · INTERVIEWS ON THE SPOT



“Jopula” Happy 16th birthday to my sweet guy. Hope it’s everything & more! Momma loves you very much! Love, Mom

Joplin- Happy birthday little brother! We love you very much! Love, Jiliyan & Justin

Joplin – Happy birthday to my amazing nephew! Keep doing what you love! You’re going to go far! Auntie loves you!



**HAPPY 12TH BIRTHDAY
JACOB FOREMAN!
We Love you!!!**



Congratulations

Jiliyan – Congratulations on graduating from 3 years of Business School at Vo-Tech. We are so very proud of you! You’re going to do what you do best – being successful in business & future bakery owner. Momma loves you so very much! Congratulations again!

Jil – I’m so very proud of you! Do what you love and you’ll have nothing but SUCCESS! Love Auntie!

Jil-Bil – We are so very proud of you! Finishing your business course! You’re going to make it successful in whatever you do! Love, Joplin & Justin

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@astribe.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.

AST 102-477 PROGRAMS
LI-SI-WI-NWI
ABSENTEE SHAWNEE
Si wi n'wi ke Ni ti mo wi ke

ABSENTEE SHAWNEE 477 & EDUCATION CLASS OF 2024

Graduation Banquet

JOIN US FOR AN AFTERNOON OF CELEBRATION
AT OUR GRADUATION BANQUET

SATURDAY JUNE 1, 2024
1:00PM TO 4:00PM
AST MULTI-PURPOSE BUILDING
2029 JAMES L EDWARDS LANE
SHAWNEE, OK 74801

Banquet is ONLY for AST & Active 477 Participants that Graduated from High School, College or Vocational School.

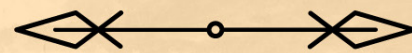
Graduate will be allowed to bring ONLY two guests.
(Please RSVP, must have tickets to attend)
Please dress in business or traditional attire.

Please RSVP before May 20, 2024
405.275.4030 Ext. 3639 or Ext. 3536

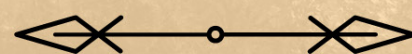
Submit a photo of your graduate to 477program@astribe.com to include in slideshow!

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.astribe.com/tmo-login>



For questions regarding online lessons, please email ASTLanguage@astribe.com.




ELECT DEWAYNE WILSON AST TRIBAL REPRESENTATIVE

A PROVEN & DEDICATED LEADER

**FOR YOUR VOTE,
HERE'S WHAT YOU GET:**

A DEPENDABLE,
HARDWORKING AND
EXPERIENCED LEADER
WITH THE
DETERMINATION TO
ACCOMPLISH PROGRESS
AND GROWTH FOR OUR
TRIBE.



**AST REPRESENTATIVE
2021-CURRENT**

I AM ASKING FOR YOUR SUPPORT ON JUNE 15, 2024 NE YI WA



Front row (L-R): Donna Woodfork, Jan Ranft. Back row (L-R): Tina Ontiveros, Gregory Reading, Stacie Lewelling

The Volunteer Tax Season has ended as of Saturday, April 13, 2024. We served 195 clients, consisting of 97 Tribal Members and the community. We saved the taxpayers a total of \$23,718 dollars to file their taxes for free. Thank You Volunteers for doing a Great Job! And a big Thank You to Tribal Secretary McGirt for helping us at every tax session.

Tribal Member Corner:

Solar panels vs taxes

Solar panels for your home, may be good. I know of one citizen, his monthly electric bill is \$8.00.

Paying for solar panel in cash, is best. If you finance, it will cost a monthly payment with interest-finance charges.

Maybe more, than your prior monthly electric bill.

Sometimes, property taxes will increase.

Remember, there may be cost, if you have to replace your roof, to restore the panels. Solar panels in yard, may be best.

You must have a tax liability, to receive up to 30% in energy credits, on your taxes yearly.

Eileen Pearce
Tribal Member

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The Absentee Shawnee Tribe
will be closed
Monday, May 27 - Memorial Day

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE TRIAL COURT OF
THE ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA
SHAWNEE, OKLAHOMA 74801

Diane Little Axe)
VS) Case No. PG-2012-07
Roshawn Grigsby)

AFFIDAVIT TO OBTAIN SERVICE BY PUBLICATION FOR TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS

THE ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE OF INDIANS)
SHAWNEE, OKLAHOMA) §.

Diane Little Axe being duly sworn upon oath states:

That she is the mother, Diane Little Axe above-named, and that on the 10 day of April, 2024, said Plaintiff filed in this Court a Petition against Defendant, Roshawn Grigsby; and this is one of the class of cases prescribed by the Statutes of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma, and is absent therefrom, and that with and after the exercise of due diligence, said Plaintiff is unable to make personal service upon said Defendant, Roshawn Grigsby, within the jurisdiction of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe, and that Plaintiff wishes to obtain service upon the said Defendant by publication as provided by law. (AST CODE OF LAWS, Section 205, Section 206 and Section 209)

Diane Little Axe
PLAINTIFF

Subscribed and sworn to before me 10 day of April, 2024.

Ashley Stanley
NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission Expires: June 23, 2024

SEAL OF ASHLEY STANLEY
Notary Public - State of Oklahoma
Commission Number 20007499
Commission Expires Jun 23, 2024

Member FDIC LENDER

AllNations Bank

2023 Gordon Cooper Dr. • Shawnee, OK 74801 • (405) 273-0202
www.anbok.com



ASTHS May 2024 Monthly Update



Children's Mental Health Awareness Day is May 7th

Each year, National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day (May 7th) seeks to raise awareness about the importance of children's mental health and show that positive mental health is essential to a child's healthy development.

Created in 2005 by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the day's purpose is to increase public awareness about the needs of children with serious mental illness (SMI) and severe emotional disturbance (SED) and their families, provide information about evidence-based practices, and encourage those who need help to seek treatment.

Youth with mental health disorders are more likely to be unhappy at school, absent, suspended, or expelled. Their learning is negatively impacted because of poor concentration, distractibility, aggressive behavior, or an inability to retain information or develop peer relationships. Also, far too many children are exposed to traumatic experiences that profoundly impact their development.

Trauma can negatively shape family development. Poverty, abuse and neglect, fractured families and children living separately from families, these are some of the problems we see too often in Oklahoma. Addressing the mental health needs of children is the responsibility of all community members.

Our country has a long history of violence and oppression of Indigenous peoples, the effects of which are still apparent today. This systemic inequity continues with the United States currently not upholding many of its treaty obligations to Native nations. The country is also not fully implementing policies intended to support their well-being.

It is critical that we work to remove the structural barriers that remain for Indigenous populations. Despite past and present injustices, Native nations have shown leadership and strength in their contributions to society. Supporting all aspects of their well-being is a key part of working toward equity and justice.

AI/AN families' resilience is evident in their cultural values which include a deep respect for family and elders, a strong sense of community, and a shared responsibility to care for children and the environment. According to the KIDS COUNT Data Center, AI/AN families are exceeding the national average on a significant measure of health: Babies born to AI/AN mothers are more likely to have a healthy birth weight, which reduces the risk of long-term health and developmental problems. Additionally, several trends noted below are moving in a positive direction for AI/AN families, such as rising median family incomes, improving health insurance coverage for kids and declining rates of youth in juvenile detention.

At the same time, historical trauma and generations of discriminatory policies have led to AI/AN children, youth, and families having disproportionately poor experiences across many measures of health and well-being compared to the general population. Studies have documented the adverse effects of trauma on the physical and mental health of AI/AN populations — effects that endure for generations. Some of the wounds inflicted by U.S. policies are relatively recent. For instance, the government's sanctioned removal of AI/AN children from their homes due to forced assimilation policies continued in different forms until 1978, when the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) was passed. Other historic and ongoing U.S. policies and practices have led to isolation, economic deprivation, food scarcity, and chronically under-resourced health care and education systems for AI/AN communities.

The following selection of data not only highlight the disparate conditions experienced by AI/AN children and families, but also demonstrate the need to prioritize equity at all levels of government and expand the opportunities and support available to AI/AN communities.

ECONOMIC INEQUITIES

- In 2022, nearly one-third (29%) of AI/AN children were living in poverty, almost double the national rate of 16%. The AI/AN child poverty rate has remained well above the national level for decades.
- AI/AN kids are nearly three times as likely to live in high-poverty neighborhoods compared to their counterparts: 22% vs. 8%, according to 2017–2021 data.
- Just under half (43%) of AI/AN children live in families where parents do not have secure, full-time employment, compared to 29% on average in 2021.

EDUCATION INEQUITIES

- In 2022, about half (49%) of AI/AN fourth-grade students were considered chronically absent from school in the previous month, an alarming jump from 31% in 2019, and well above the national average of 36% in 2022.
- In 2022, more than 8 in 10 (82%) AI/AN fourth-grade students scored below proficient in reading, an increase from previous years and a higher share than the national average (68%).
- Similarly, close to 9 in 10 (89%) AI/AN eighth-grade students scored below proficient in math in 2022, 10 percentage points higher than a decade earlier and 15 percentage points above the national average of 74%.

HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH INEQUITIES

- According to the CDC's 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, AI/AN high school students are more likely to seriously consider attempting suicide than other students: 27% vs. 22%. Tragically, they are also more likely to attempt suicide, with 16% of AI/AN students reporting at least one suicide attempt in the previous year, compared to 10% of all high school students. AI/AN students were the most likely of any racial and ethnic group to report seriously considering or attempting suicide in 2021.
- A 2023 National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine report found that AI/AN populations experience sadness, anxiety, anger and shame related to the traumas they have faced — including forced migration, broken treaties and loss of land, family ties, language, and culture. The report also called for more data on AI/AN well-being and recommended making this a federal priority.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INEQUITIES

- Over one-third (37%) of AI/AN children have had at least two adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) — more than double the national average (17%), according to 2020–2021 data. ACEs are potentially traumatic events such as: exposure to family or neighborhood violence, parental death or incarceration, frequent economic hardship, or living with someone who has mental illness or substance abuse problems.
- AI/AN children continue to be overrepresented in the foster care system. In 2021 and previous years, AI/AN kids made up 2% of those in foster care — double the share of the general child population (1%). Even after the Indian Child Welfare Act was passed to provide minimum federal protections and end the forcible removal of children from their homes, the law has not been implemented consistently, and the child welfare system continues to demonstrate systemic bias. AI/AN children remain more likely than their white peers to experience maltreatment investigations and be placed in foster care.
- Among AI/AN youth transitioning out of foster care — who also participated in a follow-up survey — 43% reported experiencing homelessness between ages 19 and 21, significantly higher than the national rate of 29%.
- AI/AN youth are also disproportionately detained and incarcerated by the justice system. The latest National Center for Juvenile Justice Data show that 181 AI/AN youth per 100,000 ages 10 to 21 were residing in juvenile detention in 2021, a substantial decline from previous years but well above the national rate of 74 per 100,000.

LOOKING FORWARD

Achieving equity for AI/AN communities is certainly possible, if prioritized, but it will take public policy and systems change, increased resources, improved collaboration and long-term commitments, particularly from non-Native allies. We must promote awareness among non-Native allies about the structural inequities that continues to drive disparities in AI/AN children's health and well-being. We also must prioritize and incorporate AI/AN views and knowledge as we identify culturally responsive solutions.

Along with building on the wisdom and expertise of the AI/AN communities, it is critically important to honor U.S. treaty obligations and support the sovereignty and self-determination of Native nations in any efforts to improve the health and well-being of these children. The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) provides one opportunity to respect this sovereignty and address systemic racism. For instance, the ICWA aims to keep AI/AN kids connected with their families, culture, and communities by requiring active efforts to prevent children's removal from their homes. If removal is necessary, however, it requires placement with AI/AN families before non-AI/AN families. The ICWA also mandates active efforts to support family reunification when possible. Ensuring that states and agencies fully comply with the ICWA is an essential strategy to correct structural biases and protect AI/AN families.

Additional opportunities to strengthen the well-being of AI/AN children, youth, and families include but are not limited to:

- Prioritize equity throughout state and federal policies, including ending the chronic underfunding of health care and education infrastructures in Indigenous communities.
- Recognize and support Indigenous cultures as a protective factor in any program and policy solutions.
- Fully implement existing policies intended to advance equity, such as the ICWA described above.
- Promote ongoing efforts to eliminate discrimination in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and prevent young people from entering these systems in the first place. Maximizing juvenile justice diversion responses and supporting Indigenous-led restorative justice models that focus on treatment, accountability, healing, and repairing harm to the community are just two ways to help rather than punish.

By prioritizing actions like these, we can move toward a future in which AI/AN children, youth, and families have equitable opportunities to thrive in safe, healthy, and sustainable communities. Equally important is ensuring that today's AI/AN children have the opportunity to grow up in communities where their sovereignty and self-determination are supported, and they are fully connected to their cultural identity, practices, language, and land. Indeed, Indigenous communities have maintained these vital cultural assets despite generations of destructive U.S. policies, and efforts to fully restore and uplift Native cultures will continue while we work toward a shared, positive future for all.

If you or your child needs to talk to someone immediately, **please call or text the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Number 988. This is a free call. If you would like to talk to a counselor or make an appointment at the clinic, call to set up an appointment at either the Little Axe or Shawnee clinics. Counselors are available for you and your child. Don't wait until it's too late, make that call NOW!**

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Little Axe Health Clinic

- Primary Care/ Behavioral Health Expansion – Completed
- Pharmacy Expansion – Completed
- PlusCare and Specialty Clinic Relocation/Remodel – Completed
- Public Health Expansion – ECD: Apr 26th

Grand Opening of the Renovated Health Center is scheduled for May 1st from 2-4 pm!

April 2024 Health Employee Awards of the Month

Employee of the Month: Peyton Watson-Cloud, Physical Therapy Aide

Team of the Month: Specialty Clinic

Special Leadership Award: TDeana Aissaoui, RN Nurse Manager

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

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Monthly Closures

All AST Health facilities will observe the following hours on:

Wednesday, May 1st:
CLOSED from 12PM- 5PM
for in-service trainings and meetings
Only PlusCare and LA/Shawnee Pharmacies will reopen after 5PM

Monday, May 27th:
CLOSED for Memorial Day

Visit asthealth.org or our Facebook page for updates!

IT'S A JUNGLE OUT THERE, DON'T MONKEY AROUND WITH YOUR HEALTH!

Absentee Shawnee Tribal Health System 2024 Health Fair

July 12, 2024 12PM-4PM

**Little Axe Health Center
15951 Little Axe Drive, Norman, OK**

**Contact: Beverly Felton
(405).447.0300 or
bfelton@astribe.com**

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Purchase Referred Care (PRC) Policy Reminder

Purchased Referred Care (*formally referred to as Contract Health*) would like to remind all tribal members to report all outside office visits to the PRC department at least 48 hours prior to your appointment so that we can process a Coordination of Benefits (COB) to cover your visit.

ER visits must be reported to PRC within 72 hours of the visit to be considered for payment.

To be eligible for payment of outside services, tribal members must be in compliance with PRC guidelines, which include providing the following to the PRC department:

- An Up-To-Date CDIB card,
- Proof of Residence within the AST Catchment Area,
- Copies of All Commercial Insurance Cards, and
- A SoonerCare Application.

Thank you for allowing us to serve you in your healthcare needs!

Phone: (405) 701-7951 **Email:** PRC@astribe.com

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NOTICE:

Effective May 13th, 2024,
Dr. Obhrai will move to the Shawnee Clinic

Dr. Obhrai will transition to a full-time Pediatric provider at our Shawnee Clinic location, effective May 13, 2024. If you wish to continue seeing Dr. Obhrai as your pediatrician at the Shawnee Clinic, please call **(405) 878-5850** to schedule an appointment.

If you do not wish to continue pediatric services with Dr. Obhrai after her relocation to the Shawnee Clinic, please call **(405) 447-0300** to schedule a **Transfer of Care appointment** with one of our other Little Axe Health Center Pediatricians.

LAHC 405.447.0300 / Shawnee Clinic 405.878.5850 / PlusCare 405.447.0477
Little Axe Pharmacy 405.292.9530 / Shawnee Pharmacy 405.878.5859

NATIONAL FENTANYL AWARENESS DAY

DATE: TUESDAY, MAY 7TH, 2024
TIME: 5:00PM TO 7:30PM
PLACE: AST HEALTH MULTIPURPOSE BLDG
2029 JAMES EDWARDS LN
SHAWNEE, OK 74801

Everyone is Welcome!

- ◆ TRIBAL & COMMUNITY RESOURCE TABLES
- ◆ LOTS OF DOOR PRIZES
- ◆ FOOD & DRINKS

LIKE FRYBREAD?
Help us make sure we have enough by telling us how many we need for you/yours.
405.701.7109 or
TOR@astribe.com

PANEL DISCUSSION: 6:00PM - 7:00 PM

FENTANYL: FACT VS FICTION

DISCOVER THE TRUTH ABOUT FENTANYL MISUSE

ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBAL HEALTH SYSTEM
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NOTICE

COVID guidelines have changed as we continue our fight against COVID. Please review the following:

- COVID patients no longer need to be separated in waiting areas.
- Patients do not need to wait inside their vehicle at any of our locations.
- Symptomatic patients do not need to use separate entrances/exits.

You must wear a mask in waiting areas if you have COVID symptoms!

Little Axe Health Center 405.447.0300 Shawnee Clinic 405.878.5850
PlusCare Clinic 405.447.0477



		2024		
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
		1 BEEF TIPS AND NOODLES SALAD BAR* CAKE	2 HAM BLACKED EYE PEAS CORNBREAD PEACHES	3 OATMEAL SAUSAGE PATTIES RAISINS
6 SALISBURY STEAK MASHED POT/GRAVY VEGGIES MANDRAIN ORANGES	7 CHICKEN SALAD SANDWICH LTOP CHIPS/COOKIE	8 BAKED ZITA GREEN BEANS BREAD STICK CRISP	9 BAKED CHICKEN PEAS & CARROTS BREAD MIXED FRUIT	10 SCRAMBLED EGGS BACON TOAST
13 COLD CUT SANDWICH LTOP CHIPS YOGURT	14 OVEN FRIED CHICKEN MASHED POT/GRAVY BROCCOLI APRICOTS	15 CABBAGE STEW CRACKERS PUDDING	16 BURRITO REFRIED BEANS SPAINSH RICE APPLESAUCE	17 BOILED EGG HAM APPLES SLICES
20 SMOKED SAUSAGE MAC & CHEZ VEGGIES PEARS	21 MANWICH PICKLES TATOR TOTS JELL-O	22 CHEF SALAD w/HAM, CHEZ COTTAGE CHEZ PEACHES	23 BEANS CORNBREAD CUCUMBER,TOM ONION SALAD OKRA	24 SCRAMBLED EGGS SAUSAGE GRAVY BISCUIT
27 MEMORIAL DAY	28 BRISKET VEGGIES ROLL ORANGE	29 HAM YAM PATTY GREEN BEANS ROLL	30 BBQ PULLED PORK SANDWICH POT. SALAD PINEAPPLES	31 WAFFLES SAUSAGE PATTIES FRUIT

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



May 6th to May 12th marks National Nurses Week, a time to honor and celebrate the invaluable contributions that nurses make to the healthcare industry and the lives of individuals they care for. Nurses play a crucial role in delivering high-quality, compassionate care to patients in a variety of settings, including hospitals, clinics, and home health agencies like CompleteCare Home Health.

Nurses are the backbone of the healthcare system, providing essential services such as administering medications, monitoring patients' vital signs, and coordinating care plans. They are often the ones who spend the most time with patients, offering comfort, support, and guidance during times of illness or recovery. Nurses possess a unique blend of clinical expertise, empathy, and compassion that allows them to connect with patients on a personal level and provide holistic care that addresses both their physical and emotional needs.

In the home health setting, nurses play a vital role in helping individuals recover from illness or injury and manage chronic conditions in the comfort of their own homes. Home health nurses provide skilled nursing care, medication management, wound care, and education to patients and their families, allowing them to maintain their independence and quality of life while receiving the care they need.

The benefits of home health nursing are numerous and can have a significant impact on a patient's overall health and well-being. By receiving care at home, patients can avoid unnecessary hospitalizations and reduce their risk of infection. Home health nurses also help patients and their families navigate complex healthcare systems, coordinate care with other healthcare providers, and develop personalized care plans that meet their unique needs and goals.

At CompleteCare Home Health, we recognize the important role that nurses play in delivering high-quality, patient-centered care to individuals in the comfort of their own homes. This National Nurses Week, we want to express our gratitude to all the dedicated and compassionate nurses who work tirelessly to improve the lives of their patients. If you or a loved one could benefit from home health nursing services, consider reaching out to CompleteCare Home Health at 405.701.7085 to learn more about how our team of skilled nurses can help you achieve your health and wellness goals.



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. Therapists 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!

AST Tribal Opioid Response Project

Addiction is a disease that affects the entire family. When a person is misusing substances like opioids or methamphetamine and addiction has taken root, everyone in that person's circle is impacted, including children. According to a 2022 data report by the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, there were 3,868 (27.20%) substantiated cases of child abuse or neglect related to substance abuse. The effects of addiction are widespread and devastating to the entire family unit – children, family, friends, even the family pet.

A person who misuses substances CAN HEAL with treatment and families CAN RECONNECT. One way to help a struggling loved one is to tell them there are resources like the AST Tribal Opioid Response project available to assist them with finding treatment (residential and outpatient). Staff can walk them through the process of selecting a treatment option and, if needed, can transport them to a treatment facility. When a person leaves residential treatment, it may be helpful for them to ease their way back into the world by spending time in a transition or sober living home. TOR can assist persons with this too. Give us a call to learn more about what TOR offers!

Tuesday, May 7th is the National Fentanyl Day of Awareness, on this date; AST TOR is organizing a panel discussion and a resource fair which is open to the general public! This will be held at the AST Health Multi-Purpose Building at the AST complex from 5pm to 7:30pm. The panel discussion is called Fentanyl: Fact vs Fiction. The panel's purpose is to unravel misconceptions surrounding fentanyl.

Check out some of the baskets made at the basket weaving classes led by Kathy Haney on April 6th and 13th. As you can see no two baskets were the same! Every participant left with a basket and information about TOR to share with others.



A letter to the Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma

It is with much regret that I must inform you of my retirement as a physician at the Absentee Shawnee Tribal Health System. This is not meant to be a notice that you might get from a disgruntled employee or an "I quit" letter to one's boss. In fact, this is a letter of love to my wonderful patients in the tribe and to any other Tribal members with whom I have come into contact over my 9 years at the tribal health system.

In 1996, while on a military deployment in Honduras I chanced to meet up with a young girl who had a facial disfigurement that turned my whole life upside down. I don't need to get into the details here but I will tell you that I had a true epiphany when I saw this girl in her utter poverty and disfigurement. An inner voice told me that my future was not going to be in retiring from my vocation as an engineer for AT&T and then sitting around gathering dust. I was 43 years old at the time and even I knew that my life was far from over.



Months passed before, while talking to my sister-in-law, a soul mate at the time, I had my midlife reawakening. It hit me like a flash and like someone shook me by the shoulders to wake me up. My desire to become a physician finally took hold of me with a desire like I have never experienced in my life. The problem was that at the age of 43 no one starts to think about going to medical school. In truth, it would take another 5 years before my first goal, getting admitted, would be fulfilled. You have to know this about me. I am not any smarter than anyone else walking down the street. I was driven by a force. That was the only way I can explain it. That force saw me through several bouts of depression when it looked like I would not get admitted, and when I had to put my residency on hold due to health issues with my mother.

Four years of medical school and 3 years of residency took me to the age of 56 and point that I could ask the question, "Now what do I do?" In truth I floundered around for a number of years through self-employed practice, hospital practice, the VA and the department of defense. While at Tinker, and still being somewhat discontent with my lack of self-fulfillment I happened to call my great colleague Marty Lofgren, MD asking him if there would be room for me at the clinic in Little Axe. He informed me that there was no position available but that somehow one would be made. Now, I did not know or understand the structure or the organization of the health care system at the time but I see in retrospect that this effort was due to someone's intervention. Don't ask me who but provide your own answer for that. This turned out to be my true calling as it were. So, here I am, 9 years later baring my soul to you, my extended family because I have been in your homes and sat with your dying family members. I have been to your ceremonies and been honored to learn some language.

In essence I have been working since I was 9 years old throwing newspapers around my working class neighborhood in Kansas City. This is not glorify myself at all but to tell you that because I have always worked so to speak it is all the more difficult to leave you, my patients and friends. The hard fact is that at the age of 76 it is time to give way to a younger person whom, I hope will care for you as much as I. One might ask, why retire when you still have all your marbles left. True, but remember what the Greeks said some 3,000 years ago – "To thine own self be true." I am experiencing little health changes taking place that might, if I were to satisfy my ego cause a patient to come to harm. I will not allow that to happen. It's just time folks, what else can I say?

It is not a cliché when I say it has been my greatest honor to be a part of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe Health System. And, in truth, being able to serve the tribe and other members of my patient family has helped me obtain the greatest height of personal satisfaction. I really don't know that more one could hope for in life.





All the best and with much love,
Bruce Stafford

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

Connie Bottaro, 405-701-7629
cbottaro@atribe.com

Brain Training

Exercise is the Key!

There is increasing evidence showing exercise improves the brain. Exercise can improve learning, memory, neuroplasticity (*the brain's ability to rewire itself*), potentially delaying memory loss due to age and decreasing risk of dementia and Alzheimer's disease. **So, if you want to keep your brain sharp, and prevent cognitive decline while getting older, physical activity is an essential part in making that happen!**

Nutrition is Another Important Strategy!

Participants in the "Enlighten Trial," a study from 2011-2018, showed those who followed the DASH diet had better "executive function," which is a term covering many mental skills such as: remembering and processing things in the short term (*working memory*), controlling automatic urges (*inhibitory control*), and changing how you think when you encounter something new (*cognitive flexibility*). Other studies have shown eating fruits and vegetables decreased risk of Alzheimer, dementia, and cognitive decline. **So, eating healthy can affect your brain tremendously!**

What Should I Do?

Run, bike, swim, walk, dance, walk the dog, vacuum, push mow the lawn, do chair exercises, follow along with workout videos, or take short activity breaks. Just get moving! In general, try to work up to getting 30 minutes a day either at one time or 10 minutes 3 different times.

As always, stop by the AST Diabetes and Wellness department and meet our wonderful registered dietitians and certified personal trainers to help you personalize and apply this to your life!

<https://agsjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jgs.16252>

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1365-2796.2010.02281.x>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29188891/>

HEALTH BUZZ!!

PLANNING AHEAD AS A CAREGIVER

Caring for a loved one with a memory or movement disorder can be overwhelming. The demands you experience as a care partner will change over time as the disease progresses. Knowing when and how to ask for help from family and friends can impact the quality of life of both you and your person.

When your loved one is in the early stages of disease, you may find yourself taking over more of the instrumental activities of daily living such as driving, shopping, cooking, housekeeping, managing finances and medications. As the disease progresses, you're now helping with the activities of daily living like bathing, dressing, grooming, feeding, using the bathroom, and moving around.

There are a lot of other things you do as a care partner too, such as managing medical appointments, engaging community resources and additional care, addressing family communication, and providing a sense of security for your person, just to name a few. No wonder you're tired!

So where do you start? Start early in the disease process, plan ahead and acknowledge that the task of caring for your loved one is a BIG job and one best shared. Many of us were raised to be independent and self-sufficient. You may have been told that it was a sign of weakness or selfishness to ask for help. In reality, we all need each other and learning to be interdependent is a healthier viewpoint to adopt.

Many of us also learn that we need to be in control and strive for perfection. These qualities will not serve you well as a care partner. Dr. Pauline Boss, a family therapist and researcher speaks to this in her book, "Loving Someone with Dementia". Dr. Boss encourages us to "soften your standards of perfection, so that you can gradually see that a "good-enough" relationship also has its place.

Make a list of all the tasks you do each day to care for yourself and your person. Next make a list of friends and family, both local and long distance, who you can reach out to for support and help. Involve your larger network that may include neighbors, faith-based groups, and professional and community services like adult day programs, memory cafes, in home care and caregiver support groups.

When you ask for help, make a specific request. Instead of asking "Can you help me?" try "Could you take David to his day program on Tuesday?" If they can't do what you ask, then let them know the opportunities for assistance you identified in your list. There are websites that can help you find resources that can provide useful information and help.

While it can seem at times to be a lonely job, being a care partner can be a rich experience when you create a village to help care for you and your loved one.

Remember, the Alzheimer Disease Program Initiative team is here for you! We can help! Please contact us for more information about our two dementia caregiver support programs:

Savvy Caregiver in Indian Country and Music & Memory

Check out our web-page: [Absentee Shawnee Tribal Health System
https://www.asthealth.org](https://www.asthealth.org)
Programs and Prevention
Seeking Hope

You can also contact me directly at: (405) 561-7893.

Best regards,
Atheda Fletcher
Grant Project PI



Tip on Brain Health: Keep Smiling!!

Smiling helps you stay positive. Try this test: Smile. Now try to think of something negative without losing the smile. It's hard. When we smile our body is sending the rest of us a message that "Life is Good!" Stay away from depression, stress and worry by smiling.



SEEKING HOPE is pleased to announce that the second ADPI testimonial will be released the first of May 2024. Ms. Tina Ontiveros shares her story of how her dementia journey started with her mother, Ms. Hazel Battice, and what she has done to help increase her knowledge about dementia. We greatly appreciate and thank Ms. Ontiveros for participating in the Absentee Shawnee Tribal Health System's (ASTHS) two caregiver support programs, Savvy Caregiver in Indian Country and Music & Memory. Her desire to learn about dementia in order to provide the very best care for her mother is a big step towards meeting the challenges in their dementia journey.



Please take a break to listen to Ms. Ontiveros' message. You can view this video on several different media outlets:

- [AST and ASTHS websites](#)
- [AST and ASTHS Facebook](#)
- [ASTHS YouTube Channel](#)

The Seeking Hope programs are funded by the Administration for Community Living (ACL) through the Alzheimer's Disease Program Initiative (ADPI) grant.

These programs have benefited many individuals, both the caregiver and the person living with dementia. The dementia education positively affects knowledge, self-efficacy, and attitudes towards dementia and people with dementia.

The ADPI staff is available to help provide support for your dementia journey. Please contact us at (405) 561-7893 or (405) 447-0300. You can also read more about our programs on the ASTHS website under Programs and Prevention. Online registration is also available..

AST HEALTH SYSTEM DIRECTORY

LITTLE AXE HEALTH CENTER..... 405-447-0300

- Administration
- Business Office
- Little Axe Dental
- Health Information Management
- Lab/X-Ray
- Optometry
- Patient Benefit Advocates
- Primary Care
- Public Health
- Security
- Electronic Health Record
- Physical Therapy
- Behavioral Health..... 405-701-7987
- Little Axe Purchased Referred Care 405-701-7951
- Diabetes & Wellness 405-701-7977
- Pharmacy..... 405-292-9530
- CompleteCare Home Health..... 405-701-7085
- Transportation..... 405-701-7603

SHAWNEE CLINIC 405-878-5850 OR 877-878-4702 TOLL FREE

- Administration
- Business Office
- Health Information Management
- Lab/X-Ray
- Patient Benefit Advocates
- Contract Health
- Physical Therapy
- Primary Care
- Public Health
- Behavioral Health..... 405-878-4716
- Diabetes & Wellness 405-701-7977
- Pharmacy..... 405-878-5859 OR 866-742-4977 TOLL FREE
- Transportation..... 405-701-7603

PLUSCARE 405-447-0477

GENERAL

- AST Resource Center..... 405-364-7298
- Corporate Compliance Hotline..... 405-701-7135
- Patient Advocate 405-701-7623
- AST Tribal Complex 405-275-4030
- AST Tribal Police 405-275-3200
- AST Housing 405-273-1050
- COVID Hotline 405-695-1787



FLIP Nursing Scholarship 2024

About the Scholarship

The FLIP program is proud to announce the 2nd annual FLIP Nursing Scholarship! We understand there are countless exams, study hours and dedication that go into completing a nursing program. Finances should not be a barrier to pursuing your educational and career dreams. The FLIP Nursing Scholarship Program will provide financial support for 4 bachelor or associate level American Indian/Alaska Native nursing students by providing a stipend of \$500 per month (prorated for number of days enrolled/month) and mentorship support while enrolled and in good academic standing at an accredited nursing school.



Application Deadline

- Thursday, July 1st, 2024



Important Requirements

- Completed Application form
- Two Essays and a 1 page Resume
- Two Letters of Recommendation
- Must be American Indian/Alaska Native and provide a copy of Tribal Enrollment Documentation
- Must be 18+ years of age
- Must be enrolled or have a letter of acceptance in an associate or bachelor's Nursing Program



Visit Our Website
<https://www.the-flip.org/>
Call Us: 617-732-5069





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U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

PACT ACT ELIGIBILITY



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VA PHONE SUPPORT



1-800-MyVA411
(800-698-2411)

The one number all Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors can use to access VA resources 24 hours-a-day, 365 days-a-year.

VA'S OFFICIAL MOBILE APP

Download the VA Health and Benefits App!



- View and cancel appointments
- Check claims and appeal status
- View payment information
- Download Veteran Service Letters






VA WELCOME KIT

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[VA.gov/welcome-kit](https://va.gov/welcome-kit)



Download the VA Welcome Kit and explore VA benefits and services, including:

- Disability Ratings
- Education Benefits
- VA Health Care
- Veteran-Owned Small Business Support

