



# THE ABSENTEE SHAWNEE NEWS

www.astribe.com

Volume 35, No. 10

October 2025

## Tribal Transportation Self-Governance Compact Signed



Governor Johnson recently signed the Tribal Transportation Self-Governance Compact. This action will finally give the tribe the ability to plan and oversee its own road construction projects.

"I am excited to see this finally happen. This will give us the ability to focus on projects that will help not only our tribal people but all citizens in this area," said Governor Johnson.

The signing was the culmination of several months of approval process and included a visit in August from US Department of Transportation Assistant Secretary for Tribal Affairs, James A. Crawford and his staff. Their visit coincided with the Mo Ke Ti Ya He Safety Bash the tribe hosted.

The Absentee Shawnee Tribe is the third tribe in Oklahoma and the ninth tribe in the nation to sign the TTSG compact. The Tribal Transportation Self-Governance Program (TTSGP) allows more control, flexibility, and decision-making authority to Tribes that choose to participate over Federal funds used to carry out transportation projects and activities in their communities.

This program, which DOT established in 2020, follows the model that the Departments of the Interior and Health and Human Services have set forth with their Tribal Self-Governance programs, which have been in place for the last two decades.

BIA Self-Governance is under Lt. Governor Diane Ponkilla. Twyla Blanchard is the director.

## AST 477 Program Hosts Education Fair

The AST 477 Department recently held their first Education Fair. The event on September 10 was held at the Heart of Oklahoma Exposition Center in Shawnee. Over 150 high school students were in attendance. They were able to visit with over 40 universities; vocational schools; armed forces and learn about financial aid opportunities. Education fairs are a great way for high school students to learn more about the types of schools and programs available. Being able to talk with representatives in a smaller setting can help them figure out what path they might want to follow.

"It was really interesting seeing all these different types of colleges and things that you can do," said tribal member Ethan Ferrell.







GOVERNOR  
John Johnson

GOVERNOR’S REPORT  
John Johnson, AST Governor

Hello Tribal Members,  
This year has really flew by, I can’t believe we are in October with Thanksgiving and Christmas just around the corner. Happy Halloween to everyone, be safe and enjoy your family. With the holidays coming up the AST Employee Committee will start a food drive soon. This event will help with Thanksgiving boxes to be distributed to the enrolled applicants of the food bank. Last year we received a lot of non-perishable food items for Thanksgiving. We hope to get just as much this year. We appreciate all the extra help; thank you Employee Committee.

The 95th Semi-Annual General Council is on October 4, 2025 at 10:00am at the Thunderbird Casino. Hope you are able to attend but if you can’t make it, you may watch the full video on the AST website along with all monthly EC meetings. All updates and upcoming events will be posted online.  
I attended the NATHPO conference in Reno, NV for the first time with the Cultural Preservation Department. While there I visited the Stewart Indian Boarding school, Grimes point archaeological site, and Stillwater point. These places were all cultural sites that held heartfelt historical stories. The importance of our culture and the history of it all was a true learning experience and I really enjoyed

it.  
Mr. Chris Larkin the director of Health has resigned and his farewell party was on September 16, 2025. It was a true honor to work alongside him, I truly appreciate all that he has done for our clinics and people. Mr. Larkin has done some amazing things and I wish him the very best on his next big opportunity.  
Should you have any question you may contact my office or my assistant at the information listed below.  
Thank You  
John Johnson - 405-275-4030 ext. 3500  
governor@astrobe.com  
Alvina Barnes - 405-275-4030 ext. 3501  
alvinab@astrobe.com



Lt. GOVERNOR  
Diane Ponkilla

LT. GOVERNOR’S REPORT  
Diane Ponkilla, AST Lt. Governor

Hello All,  
I would like to extend best wishes to all; I hope everyone enjoyed their Labor Day weekend. This month has been a slow one I do not have much to report. I assisted the Agriculture Department rounding up and running cattle through the chute for worming and shots. The Governor

was on travel status the week of September 08-12, 2025 with the Cultural Preservation Department; therefore I made sure to be in office. I attended the Elder’s meeting Saturday, September 13, 2025 @ 10am. On September 17, 2025 @ 10am will be the September Executive Committee Meeting. I will be on travel status September 21-26, 2025 attending the National Transportation in Indian Country Conference in Chandler, AZ. The follow-

ing week September 29-October 03, 2025 I will be in Durant, OK with the AST Elderly Committee at the National Indian Council on Aging (NICOA). On October 04, 2025 @ 10am will be the 95th Annual General Council at the Thunderbird Casino Event Center in Norman, OK. As always I am here for the Absentee Shawnee Tribal Members who have any questions or concerns.  
Ne yi wa



SECRETARY  
Misty McGirt

SECRETARY’S REPORT  
Misty McGirt, AST Secretary

Greetings Tribal Members,  
I hope all has been well with everyone and their families and if you like had a chance to check out the state fair. Some important updates General Council will be October, 4, 2025 at the Thunderbird Entertainment Center at 10:00. My office has been very busy especially with general council and handling the day to day

operations weekly/monthly meetings. To recap on my absence of last month’s meeting in August, US DOT Assistant Secretary James Crawford was on our campus and attended the safety bash held August 13. That same day I attended a Tribal Elders Abuse Code Summit held in Tulsa with staff. It was a very good conference even found out we are in desperate need to update our codes so staff and I are making sure this is taken care of. September 6 I attended the swearing in of

the Seminole Nation chief and assistant chief. It was the first time for that tribe to have both positions held by women. I got to witness this moment along with other tribal leaders from other tribes in attendance to show support. That’s all I have to report at this time if you have questions or concerns please contact my office 405-275-4030 Ex. 3505.  
Ne yi wa!  
Secretary McGirt



TREASURER  
Joseph Blanchard

TREASURER’S REPORT  
Joseph Blanchard, AST Treasurer

Hello Fellow AST Members,  
As I begin this month’s report, let me start by saying, “How about them Sooners?” At the time of this writing, our favorite college football team is currently ranked 11th and has a 3-0 record. They are about to open SEC play so we’ll see how the next couple months transpire. Hopefully it ends up with another Conference championship. Besides the NCAA ranks, I normally try to make a few of our local high school events throughout the week. This is a great opportunity to show support for our AST athletes, families, and their respective communities. Fall truly is the best time of the year as the weather gets cooler and we don’t have the long, hot and humid days.  
Now, let me discuss some of the regular business my office was able to coordinate this past month. I did not have any out of state travel, which means there were not many emails or phone calls to return. We are beginning the last quarter of the calendar year and I have been waiting for announcements from our banking

friends and the Federal Reserve. If you had not heard, the Fed cut interest rates by a quarter point, dropping the rate by .25%. Additionally, it was mentioned there is potential for two (2) more cuts before the end of the year. The major concerns we have been working around this year has been all the Executive Orders from the Trump Administration and the effects. These actions have created an action/reaction response from all Tribal Nations, especially where Grant funding is concerned.  
Last week, I received the official notice our annual Audit was submitted to the National Clearinghouse. Normally, this is completed earlier in the year, before school is back in session. However, due to issues with the Casino, we kept being delayed while waiting for their data and reports to get completed. As of this date, we have still not received their final report. According to email, their auditor suggested it would not be available until the end of October. In an effort to remain compliant, we submitted without their data. As expected, the Auditor came back with an “Unmodified Opinion”, which is the best result we can receive.

Also, this past week, I was given notice from our Budget Officer she has initiated emails to EC, Directors, and Coordinators to coordinate date and time for 2026 Budget Prep meetings. These will begin in the latter part of October and compiled for the EC to review and provide comment prior to the final documents presented in December. Likewise, the Health System will begin their process as well so they can have theirs completed in time for Board approval.  
In completion of this month’s submission, here are my final thoughts. I hope you were able to attend General Council. My office was able to provide new data from recent surveys and Tribal participation. If there was any information within my programs you would like to discuss further, please coordinate with my assistant to schedule a date and time for an office visit. You may reach out to me by email at: jblanchard@astrobe.com or call me directly on one of these two lines: (405) 275-4030 Ext. 3510 or cell (405) 695-1487. Again, I appreciate the words of advice, encouragement, and support.  
Respectfully,  
Joseph H. Blanchard



REPRESENTATIVE  
Anthony Johnson

REPRESENTATIVE’S REPORT  
Anthony Johnson, AST Representative

Hello Tribal Members,  
In September, Governor Johnson and I travelled to Reno, Nevada with our Cultural Preservation department to the 25th Annual NATHPO Conference 2025 “Upholding Tribal Sovereignty: Protecting Native Places in a Shifting Landscape”. We attended lectures and sessions on topics regarding national historic preservation legislation and policies. We also attended site visits to observe local archeological and tribal historic sites. Thank you to the Cultural Preservation staff for inviting me

and Governor Johnson to attend the 25th Annual NATHPO Conference. The start of the fall season is here and we are getting ready to host our 95th Semi-Annual General Council meeting this month on Saturday October 4th at Thunderbird Entertainment Center. Thank you to the staff at Thunderbird for hosting our meeting. Should you have any questions or need assistance, please contact my office:  
Email: adjohnson@astrobe.com  
Phone: (405) 531-3512.  
Sincerely,  
Anthony “Tadpole” Johnson,  
Tribal Representative



Representative Johnson takes notes on a site visit at the 5th Annual NATHPO Conference





DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS NEWS

KEEP THE HOME SWEET NOT SILENT!

Friday, October 24, 2025 | 11:30am - 1:30pm  
Multi-Purpose Building, Shawnee Complex

Join us  
AS WE SPREAD  
AWARENESS ABOUT  
DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE



Featuring Two  
Survivor  
Speakers:  
They will share  
their stories of  
survival.

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While  
Supplies Last

- HOT DOGS
- CHIPS
- CUPCAKES
- WATER





https://www.astribе.com/  
domestic-violence

Rising Warrior

405-273-2888

This project was supported by Grant No. 15XJWV-21-GG-02363 TRB 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.



BE A  
WARRIOR

WEAR PURPLE ON  
OCTOBER 23RD

IN  OF  
ALL  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
SURVIVORS



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Join Us  
in bringing AWARENESS against  
Domestic Violence

with a  
TIE DYE T- Shirt Event

October 8, 2025 + 11:30am - 1:30pm

Front Entrance of the  
Little Axe clinic  
While supplies last  
405-273-2888



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Join Us  
in bringing AWARENESS against  
Domestic Violence

with a  
TIE DYE T- Shirt Event

October 10, 2025 + 11:30am - 1:30pm

Under the awning in parking  
lot of old building 3  
While supplies last  
405-273-2888



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TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY  
& INDIAN CHILD WELFARE

New podcast episode – Tribal Sovereignty & Indian Child Welfare

Our podcast, Among the Shawnee just released a new episode!

Join Shawnee Martinez, Paige LittleCharley, and attorney Jeremy Otis as they discuss the intricacies of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and its critical role in protecting Native American children and tribal sovereignty. The conversation covers legal challenges, historical context, and the importance of cultural identity. The hosts also explore the need for better education among legal professionals and social workers regarding ICWA provisions. Their insights provide an essential understanding of how ICWA continues to safeguard cultural lineage and community connections for Native American families.

Episode available on YouTube, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, SoundCloud and <https://www.astribе.com/podcasts>



VETERANS DAY!  
TO REMEMBER AND HONOR

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!  
IF YOU ARE AN AST VETERAN OR KNOW AN AST VETERAN,  
WE WOULD LOVE TO FEATURE THEM IN THE  
NOVEMBER AST NEWS/SOCIAL MEDIA.  
SEND PICS TO [MEDIA@ASTRIBE.COM](mailto:MEDIA@ASTRIBE.COM).  
DEADLINE TO SUBMIT IS OCTOBER 15.



CELEBRATE  
NATIONAL  
SAVINGS DAY  
NOW!

Start Saving for Your Future

IT'S ALWAYS THE RIGHT TIME TO START

Celebrated on October 12, National Savings Day is a time to give thought to the future and the importance of putting money aside for when we get there.

While we can never know what's ahead, we can be pretty certain of this:  
THERE WILL BE A COST ASSOCIATED WITH IT.

So, start saving now... even if you don't know what you're saving for.

AllNations  
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# AST Grant Director Earns Distinguished Grants Management Credential

Shawnee, OK – September 15,2025 — Kryste Carter, AST Grants Director recently joined the elite group of grants professionals who have earned the Certified Grants Management Specialist (CGMS) credential from the National Grants Management Association (NGMA). Carter is one of more than 300 grants managers who have earned this prestigious designation. She is one among the few in Tribal government who have earned this credential. Other tribes to have CGMS holders include Chickasaw Nation, Choctaw Nation, Cherokee Nation, and the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

Kryste Carter has been working for the Absentee Shawnee Grants Department for 6 years. She graduated from Northeastern State University with a Bachelor’s in Political Science and Public Administration and received her M.Ed. in Adult and Higher Education from the University of Oklahoma.

Her prior experience includes working within the education field for Muscogee (Creek) Nation in various positions including Bursar for College of the Muscogee Nation and Education/Learning Specialist. Kryste is of the Muscogee and Choctaw Tribes and originally from Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

To obtain the CGMS credential, individuals must meet all eligibility requirements and demonstrate proficiency in grants management by passing the CGMS examination. The CGMS is a rigorous examination that provide a mechanism to measure judgment, application of knowledge, and problem-solving abilities in the full lifecycle of grants management. It is comprised of questions in the following knowledge domains: General Grants Management Knowledge, Pre-Award Activities, Award Activities, Post-Award Activities, and Audit/Closeout Requirements.

“Earning this credential means a lot to me because it’s a reflection of my esteem I hold for the Absentee Shawnee Tribe for allowing me to serve them in this capacity and for my leadership who hold to me to a higher standard,” states Carter. “As the Tribal Grant Administrator I am committed to protecting the integrity of the tribe and ensuring compliance so that we demonstrate being good stewards of federal dollars.”

### About NGMA

Since 1978, the National Grants Management Association (NGMA) has been providing national and international leadership, helping its members achieve success in the grants management community through the advocacy of best practices and the promotion of professional excellence. To learn more about NGMA, visit <https://www.ngma.org/about-ngma>.

*Si ta pi ki no fe ke s'fwa*  
(sah teh pah kah noh thee kee s'thweh)  
Wilted Month (October)

October is the first full month of fall. The leaves start to change colors and wilt, hence the name wilting month. This is also the time of year when our ceremonial cycle comes to a close and we prepare to hibernate.

<i>Ti qi ke ke</i> – fall time	<i>M'sa s'ke</i> – leaves	<i>Wi pe ko</i> - pumpkins
<i>Ke le ke ne ki</i> – sumac	<i>Hi ne qi ke</i> – squirrels	<i>M'ta ko me</i> – acorn
<i>Ho ma ke ni</i> – gather	<i>Na ki hi la</i> – to change or turn	<i>M'si ta</i> – colors
<i>M'sko ta qi le</i> – grass	<i>Ma li me wa fe ne</i> – dew (laying wet)	<i>M'sqi we</i> - red
<i>Ka ma ke ni pa</i> – let’s gather up (pick)	<i>Ho me ge ni wi</i> – they are eating	<i>Ne ke</i> - those
<i>Ki fa me</i> - pecan	<i>Hi la me</i> – turning	

- Ke le ke ne ki m'sa ske hi la me m'sqi we*  
Sumac leaves are turning red.
- Ne ke hi ne qi ke ho ma ke ni ni wi m'ta ko me*  
Squirrels are gathering acorns.
- He ne m'sa ske na ki hi la m'si ta*  
Leaves are turning colors.
- Na ki ma li me wa fe ne m'sko ta qi le*  
There is dew on the grass.
- Ho wa ka ma ke ni pa wi pe ko*  
Let’s go gather up pumpkins.
- Ne ke hi ne qi ke ho me ge ni wi ki fa me*  
Squirrels are eating pecans.

## GET READY FOR WINTER

IT'S TIME TO HAVE YOUR HEATER & FURNACES TESTED BEFORE IT GETS COLD!

- Must have application on file
- Elderly will be given priority first
- Be a current homeowner
- Current CDIB
- Only Service those in AST jurisdiction

Absentee Shawnee Tribe  
2025 S. Gordon Cooper Drive  
Shawnee, OK 74801

Contact Lt. Governor Office:  
**(405) 275-4030**  
[www.atribe.com](http://www.atribe.com)

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# AST 477 Department Hosts Career & Resource Fair

The AST 477 Department recently held their first Career & Resource Fair on September 17. The event was held at The Well in Norman. The attendees were able to receive information about everything from employment opportunities, supportive services and educational opportunities.

If you want more information about the 477 program, visit our website, <https://www.atribe.com/477-program> or call (405) 878-4545.








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

**OCTOBER NEWSLETTER**

Building Blocks II is a 5 Star OKDHS Licensed Center. Our teachers & children love this time of year. October is busy for our center; with preparing for our Fall Festival, Halloween and Trick or Treating. The children love the cooler weather that allows for more outside play and exploration.

**Dates to Remember:**

**October 10<sup>th</sup>: Christmas Picture Day @8:00a.m.**

**October 13<sup>th</sup>: Building Blocks is closed for Indigenous Day**


**October 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>: AST Pumpkin Patch Trips**

**October 24<sup>th</sup>: Fall Festival @6:00p.m.**

**October 31<sup>st</sup>: Trick or Treat AST Complex 9:00a.m. & Halloween Parties 3:00p.m.**

It's Parent-Teacher Conference time. Our teachers are preparing for Parent-Teacher Conferences. They will schedule the Conferences for October 14<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>. The teachers are preparing portfolios for the parents, testing skills with the children and preparing conference papers in preparation for the conferences.

We are accepting Waiting List applications. We accept ages 6 weeks through 4 Year Olds. Please call to inquire about our waiting list and spots available for enrollment. You may drop by for a waiting list or we can email one to you.





**Building Blocks III Newsletter**

**October 2025**

**Upcoming Events**

- Orr Family Farm 10/06/25
- Visit the AG Farm 10/15/25
- Trunk-or-Treat & the Zombie Run 10/23/25
- Trick-or-Treating 10/30/25
- Halloween Parties 10/30/25

**Reminders**


Closed October 13<sup>th</sup> for Indigenous Day

Halloween safety tips:  
Reflective clothing, checking treats, supervision while trick-or-treating



**Grandparents Day**

**Our Roots Our Strength**





**New Sign Installed at Horseshoe Bend After School Building**



The newly built facility finally has a new sign for visitors to see. The building located at 46309 Garretts Lake Road in Shawnee celebrated their grand opening April 2025. The 5500 square-foot building has 4 classrooms, a gym, splash pad, playground and 2 offices.



If you are interested in enrollment, please call (405) 759-4893 or visit their website, <https://www.atribe.com/after-school-program>

**Get Your GED in Shawnee**



The Oklahoma City Community College Adult Learning Center is now offering an **evening GED class** at the GCTC Main Campus in Shawnee.

You could take a GED class in Shawnee and soon be a high school equivalency graduate. Visit [www.occcadulced.com](http://www.occcadulced.com) or call 405.682.7873 to get started!



**The Absentee Shawnee Tribe will be closed**

**Monday, October 13th - Indigenous Peoples' Day**

**\$70,000**

**CRIMSON CASH**



**SEVEN GAMES EVERY WEEK**


**PLAY LIKE A CHAMPION!**

**SATURDAYS**

**7PM TO 10PM**


**DRAWINGS EVERY 30 MINUTES**

ONE ENTRY FOR EVERY 100 POINTS EARNED SUNDAY - SATURDAY



THUNDERBIRD CASINO  
NORMAN

MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN. MUST ACTIVATE ENTRIES FROM 5PM TO 8PM TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR DRAWINGS. MANAGEMENT RESERVES ALL RIGHTS.



**SATURDAYS IN OCTOBER**

9:30pm - 12:30am

**4th**

TRAVIS MCKINZIE & WILD BILL CRANE

**11th**

TWIST OF FAITH

**18th**

AWAY GAME WATCH PARTY

**25th**

KURT ALLEN

**BAR HOURS**

MON-WED

THURSDAY

FRI & SAT




SUNDAY

4PM-12AM

4PM-2AM

10AM-2AM

10AM-12AM





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



**COMMUNITY HEALTH**  
Centers of Oklahoma  
Family Health & Dental Clinics  
“A Mary Mahoney Grassroots Expansion”



PEDIATRICS

FAMILY PRACTICE

***YOU** are why **WE** are here...make an appointment today!*

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**Shawnee Family Medical Center**  
130 N. Broadway, Suite #300  
Shawnee, OK 74801



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BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

& MORE







## ASTHS October 2025 Monthly Update

### Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. This month is dedicated to raising awareness about breast cancer, promoting early detection, and supporting research and treatment. Breast cancer is a disease in which malignant (cancer) cells form in the tissues of the breast.

#### What is Breast Cancer Awareness Month?

Breast Cancer Awareness Month is an international health campaign that’s held every October. The month aims to promote screening and reduce the risk of the disease, which affects 2.3 million women worldwide. Known best for its pink theme color, the month features a number of campaigns and programs designed to:

- support people diagnosed with breast cancer, including those with metastatic breast cancer
- educate people about breast cancer risk factors
- encourage women to go for regular breast cancer screening starting at age 40 or earlier, depending on personal breast cancer risk
- raise money for breast cancer research

In the month of October, there are also specific dates designed to raise awareness of specific groups within the breast cancer community.

#### Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Day (October 13)

October 13 is nationally recognized in the U.S. as Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Day. About 168,000 women in the U.S. are estimated to have metastatic breast cancer (cancer that spreads beyond the breast to other parts of the body). Some researchers believe this number will rise to over 246,000 living with the disease by 2030. Despite the growing numbers of people living with metastatic disease, most money for breast cancer research doesn’t go toward studying it.

Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Day seeks to educate the public about the challenges that people with metastatic breast cancer face and the need for more research — and more treatments — for this deadly disease.

The day also serves as a reminder that people can do all the right things — breast cancer screenings and all the recommended treatments for early-stage breast cancer — and still have cancer spread to other parts of the body. As sf-cakes, a member of the Breastcancer.org Community, shared, “Being stage IV during Breast Cancer Awareness Month sucks. All the messaging about ‘if you catch it early, you’ll be fine,’ is simply not always true.”

#### Men’s Breast Cancer Awareness Week (October 17–23)

Although breast cancer is much more common in women, breast cancer affects men, too. In 2021, President Joe Biden designated October 17 to October 23 Men’s Breast Cancer Awareness Week. According to the American Cancer Society, about 2,800 men in the U.S. will be diagnosed with breast cancer in 2025, and about 510 are expected to die from the disease. But lack of awareness and stigma can be barriers to detection and care in men, trans men, and non-binary people.

#### U.S. breast cancer statistics

People of every country, race, ethnic group, and income level are affected by breast cancer. In the U.S., the percentage of women diagnosed with breast cancer has been slowly rising for the past couple of decades.

- A woman in the U.S. today has a 1 in 8 chance of developing breast cancer over her lifetime and a 1 in 43 chance of dying from breast cancer.
- Nearly 30% of women diagnosed with early-stage breast cancer later develop metastatic breast cancer.
- Lesbian, gay, and bisexual cisgender women may have a higher risk of breast cancer than heterosexual women due to risk factors like fewer childbirths and higher alcohol use.
- The average lifetime risk that a man in the U.S. will develop breast cancer is 1 in 726.
- Transfeminine people taking gender-affirming hormone therapy, including estrogen, are at a higher risk of developing breast cancer than cisgender men.
- There are about 4 million breast cancer survivors in the U.S., including women receiving breast cancer treatment.
- While the percentage of women dying from breast cancer has gone down in recent decades, Black women remain more likely to die from breast cancer than women of any other racial or ethnic group.

Breast cancer is a significant health issue for Native American and Alaska Native (AI/AN) women, who face disparities in late-stage diagnosis, higher mortality rates, and worse survival outcomes compared to White women. These disparities stem from barriers like limited access to healthcare, chronic underfunding of the Indian Health Service, cultural factors, and a lack of culturally appropriate screening and treatment options.

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death for Native women. Breast cancer occurs when breast cells grow abnormally and uncontrollably, forming tumors.

These tumors can be benign (non-cancerous) or malignant (cancerous). Malignant tumors can spread to other parts of the body. Most breast cancers start in the milk-producing glands or the ducts that carry milk to the nipple. Keeping up with regular screenings improves early detection and may help save your life.

#### Screening Guidelines

- Screening Tests: Clinical breast exam, Mammography, Breast MRI
- Screening Age: 40 – 74
- Frequency: Every two years
- Screening should continue as long as a woman is in good health and is expected to live at least 10 more years.

#### INDIGENOUS PINK CAMPAIGN

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among Native women, and is the second leading cause of cancer death. However, all bodies have breast tissue and are at risk for developing breast cancer.

Indigenous Pink is a national breast cancer awareness campaign for Native people that occurs in October during National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The campaign aims to educate Native communities about the importance of early detection and remind women, men, non-binary, and gender-fluid relatives to talk to their doctors about breast cancer screening.

If you are between the ages of 40-74, now is the time to schedule your mammogram. Talk to your healthcare provider for advice and information on breast cancer screenings. Talk to your loved ones about the importance of early detection and encourage them to schedule a mammogram. At your next appointment, ask your provider to examine your breast tissue with their hands to feel for any lumps and other abnormalities. They can also teach you how to do a self-exam each month.

#### References:

American Indian Cancer Foundation (2025). *Breast Cancer*. <https://americanindiancancer.org/breast-cancer/>  
BreastCancer.org (2025). *Breast Cancer Awareness Month*. <https://www.breastcancer.org/about-breast-cancer/breast-cancer-awareness-month>

#### CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

##### Shawnee Health Center

39665 Benson Park Road, Shawnee, OK 74801 (adjacent to Tecumseh Lake)

Groundbreaking held Mar 19, 2025 (Anticipate completion in late 2026)

Clinic slab concrete pours have begun!

#### September 2025 Health Employee Awards of the Month

**Employee of the Month:** Mikel Carpenter, PRC Referral Technician

**Team of the Month:** EHR/ Clinical Applications

**Special Leadership Award:** Victoria Salamy-Sullins, Physician Asst.







ASSTribes HEALTH SYSTEM  
Prevention. Progress. Pride.

## Scheduled Closures

**Wednesday, Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> :**  
Close at **NOON**. PlusCare and Pharmacy will re-open at 5pm.

**Monday, Oct. 13<sup>th</sup> :**  
Close **ALL DAY** in observance of Indigenous Day

Follow us on Facebook or visit [asthealth.org](http://asthealth.org) for closure information and updates!







## ZOMBIE 5K FUN RUN/1K WALK

DIABETES & WELLNESS DEPT.

THE HOARD IS APPROACHING!  
OCTOBER 23RD 2025  
KI KE KI KA MI GE  
"KEEP MOVING"



CHECK-IN 5:00 - 5:45 PM  
NO SAME DAY REGISTRATION

FALL FESTIVAL!  
TRUNK OR TREAT!  
GAMES!  
FOOD TRUCK!

REGISTER BY 10/10/25 TO GUARANTEE T-SHIRT

LAKE THUNDERBIRD STATE PARK  
1297 CLEAR BAY AVE, NORMAN, OK 73026



SCAN QR CODE TO REGISTER



PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT PRESENTS

## Elders Thursday's Fun Day!

OCTOBER 8th | 11 AM - 1 PM  
Little Axe Resource Center

OCTOBER 23rd | 11 AM - 1 PM  
AST COMPLEX, TITLE VI

Lunch provided by Title VI if you are signed up with the program. \$5 a meal if you are not signed up with Title VI

Elders 55 years and older, come and join the Public Health Department for fun games and activities with health education topics.

For more information contact:  
Terra Little Jim 405.447.0300 or 405.827.7704  
or [tlittlejim@astribes.com](mailto:tlittlejim@astribes.com)

Caregiver Grant      Public Health

## Caregiver Event

OKLAHOMA FAMILY CAREGIVER CONFERENCE 2025

CALLING ALL CAREGIVERS AND GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

AST Caregiver Grant Information      State and Local Resources

Support Groups

MUST RSVP BY OCTOBER 24TH FOR PROVIDED LUNCH

NOVEMBER 6TH FROM 10AM-3PM  
AST MULTI-PURPOSE BUILDING

RSVP to Beverly Felton 405.701.7190 or 405.827.7704  
or [bfelton@astribes.com](mailto:bfelton@astribes.com)



### Lemon Chicken w/ Rosemary & Garlic

4 servings    ⌚ Prep time 15 min, total time 28 min    🍽️ cal/serv: 230/ 5 oz.

Cooking chicken on the stovetop can be tricky, and if the breasts are too thick, they may not cook through. Your best bet is to use quick-cooking chicken tenders, or you can use a mallet to pound the same amount of chicken breasts to an even 1-inch thickness.

<https://diabetesfoodhub.org/recipes/lemon-chicken-rosemary-and-garlic#recipe-steps-section>

#### Ingredients

- 2 garlic cloves (minced)
- 1 lemon (juice and zest)
- 2 tablespoons white wine
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1 ¼ lbs chicken tenderloin

- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 table spoons fresh rosemary

#### Step-by-Step Instructions

1. In a small bowl, whisk together the lemon juice, wine, and cornstarch. Set aside.
2. Sprinkle both sides of the chicken with the salt, black pepper, and lemon zest.
3. Heat the olive oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the rosemary and garlic and cook until fragrant, 30 seconds. Add the chicken and cook until a thermometer inserted into a chicken tender reaches 165°F, 5 minutes on each side. Add the lemon juice mixture and toss to coat. Continue cooking for 3 minutes; the liquid will slightly thicken. Serve warm.





## Help Yourself → Help Your Tribe

SEE IF YOU QUALIFY FOR A PLAN AT **NO COST** TO YOU OR THE TRIBE

Contact a PBA today to learn more! 405-447-0300

#### Important Enrollment Periods

Medicare Open Enrollment Oct 15- Dec 7  
Marketplace Open Enrollment Nov 1 - Jan 1



#### Did You Know?

- 60% of the cost to render care to tribal members comes from other payment sources outside of tribal funding?
- When you participate in enrolling in insurance plans- you help us add services, buy equipment and deliver care to more people?



[www.asthealth.org](http://www.asthealth.org)



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## OCTOBER BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

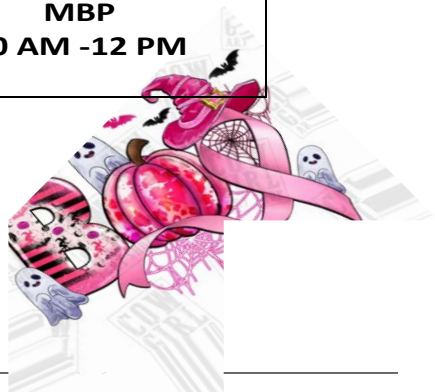




MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
		1 TITLE VI CLOSED TANKERSLEY FOOD SHOW	2 GRILLED CHEZ VEGGIE SOUP PEARS	3 OATMEAL SAUSAGE PATTIES TOAST
6 KRAUT & WEINERS GREEN BEANS BREAD/FRUIT	7 PORK CHOP MAC &TOM BREAD	8 HOT HAM & CHEZ SANDWICH PICKLES/CHIPS MIXED FRUIT	9 CHICKEN POT PIE VEGGIES BISCUIT/PINEAPPLES	10 SCRAMBLED EGGS SAUSAGE GRAVY BISCUIT
13 INDIGENOUS DAY	14 CHICKEN FAJITAS BELL PEPPERS/ONION SPANISH RICE TORTILLA/FRUIT	15 TURKEY WRAP LTOP/CHIPS MANDRAIN ORANGES	16 HOMINY & PORK SPINACH CRISP	17 KICKAPOO ELDER GAMES 10 AM – 2 PM
20 PULL PORK SANDWICH CHIPS ONIONS/PICKLES FRUIT	21 GOULASH OKRA/ROLL TOSSED SALAD*	22 BAKED CHICKEN WILD RICE BRUSSELL SPROUTS APPLESAUCE	23 COLD CUT SANDWICH LTOP MAC SALAD PEACHES	24 ENGLISH MUFFIN HAM/BOILED EGG FRUIT
27 TUNA SANDWICH LTOP BEETS PEARS	28 RIBLET POT. SALAD BREAD PUDDING	29 SPAGHETTI MEAT SAUCE GREEN BEANS BREAD STICK	30 BBQ CHICKEN BAKED BEANS VEGGIES FLUFF	31 MIPPA EVENT MBP 10 AM -12 PM

MENU SUBJECT TO CHANGE\*

LUNCH IS SERVED FROM 11 AM TO 1PM  
BREAKFAST IS SERVED FROM 9AM TO 11AM  
  
SERVING AT THE SHAWNEE SITE AND LITTLE AXE RESOURCE CENTER



# HEALTH BUZZzz!!

## I LOVE Fall (Prevention) and BINGO!

The buzz around the water cooler is that we are going to have an early autumn, so as summer comes to a close, I wanted to take a minute to reflect on our Bingo Event that we held back in July. For the past three years in November, we host a big Bingo event, but this year we switched things up a bit and had it in July. If you’ve never attended one before, you should make a point to attend the next one! It’s fun, interactive, educational, and community-mined. This year we had food, amazing prizes, and an excellent turnout. The atmosphere was lively as the crowd filled the room and everyone was beaming with anticipation as they kept eyes on their favorite prizes. You could really feel the excitement in the air!

Our Bingo Caller was everyone’s favorite, charming and charasmatic tribal member, Jason Bender. His energy was unmatched as he called out the numbers (and dad jokes) to the crowd. Our special guest speaker was Dr. Toni Donahoo. She specializes in physical therapy at our Little Axe Health Center. Her presentation was on the topic of Fall Prevention: For Older Adults With Alzheimer’s Dementia. She highlighted that people with Alzheimer’s or other dementia related illnesses are 2 to 8 times more likely to fall, and that approximately 47% of people 65+ years of age living in the community with Alzheimer’s will fall at least once a year. Pretty concerning, right?

Falls often lead to functional limitation, loss of independence, loss of confidence, associated illness, and can lead to an early institutionalization. With the colder months approaching, the risk for falls will increase but the good news is that falls can be prevented! It’s important to be proactive by keeping a cane or walker nearby, remove tripping hazards, use non-slip mats, and drink plenty of water to prevent any dizziness.

### Six Tips To Help Prevent Falls

More than one in four people age 65 years or older fall each year, yet many falls can be prevented.

Talk with your health care provider about medication side effects

Make your home safer by using night lights, installing grab bars in the bathroom, and securing carpet to the floors

Stand up slowly to avoid dizziness

Do strength and balance exercises

Get your vision and hearing checked regularly

Use a cane or walker if you need more stability

Learn more about reducing your risk of falling at [www.nia.nih.gov/falls-prevention](http://www.nia.nih.gov/falls-prevention).

In closing, I’d like to express my sincerest graditude to everyone who volunteered and those who made generous donations. Your selfless efforts made this event a fun and successful one. I appreciate YOU!

For those of you that were unable to attend this year, I hope to see you all at the next one!

If you or someone you know would benefit from the **Savvy Caregiver in Indian Country** or **Music & Memory** programs, contact [adpi@astribe.com](mailto:adpi@astribe.com), or call **405-701-7906**.

Check out our web-page on the **Absentee Shawnee Tribal Health System’s** website:  
<https://www.asthealth.org>

Click on: **“Programs and Preventions”** and then click on **“Seeking Hope”**. You can sign up on line also!

Lacy Gillean, CDCS  
Dementia Care Specialist





# SAMHSA National Recovery Month

September was SAMHSA’s National Recovery Month. We’re all in recovery from something whether that is a relationship, trauma, unhealthy ways, disease and sometimes substance use disorders. According to SAMHSA, recovery is: “A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.”

Many if not all American Indians are in recovery from the settlement of foreign persons in our territories and colonialism – the subsequent rule and influence of a foreign power through policy, laws, and beliefs. Before the influence of colonialism, sobriety was the norm. Now we have to practice awareness and increase our knowledge about how drugs and alcohol can lead us down a rocky and sometimes deadly path. And for our native people who have lost their way, we can educate ourselves on how we can support their recovery.

One of the ways AST TOR helped support recovery was to organize two Wellness Recovery Retreats, one for Men and one for Women. Participants received a day of holistic care to support their recovery journey. The strength and beauty of Native people gathering to encourage each other was truly powerful. AST TOR staff was thankful and humbled to be a part of this. We hope to organize more recovery related events in the upcoming year. You can help by becoming involved in supporting recovery.



Women’s Recovery Retreat



Women’s Recovery Retreat



## Back to School Highlights: SPF-PFS Ensuring Hope and TOR Wi Si Ka To Wi – Be Well

The SPF-PFS and TOR grant teams had the pleasure of participating in two recent outreach events in August, Cops N Kids and the Center for Children and Families' Back to School Bash. These events provided a great opportunity to connect with families, share resources, and support our community as we head into the new school year. School can be a stressful time for kids and parents alike, so our grants take every opportunity possible to get involved with the community to provide education and spread awareness about substance use prevention and mental health.

### CCFI Back to School Bash

On August 6th, SPF and TOR set up tables at the Center for Children and Families Back to School Bash. This event provides resources like school supplies for any families in need, and our grants shared information about our programs, provided educational materials on substance use, and conducted a survey to gauge community perceptions in relation to risk and protective factors. We had 99 people on our sign-in sheet and gave out all 150 bags of prevention materials!

### Cops N Kids

Our second big event in August was Cops N Kids in Shawnee on the 23rd. This was a huge event with hundreds of attendees! While 93 individuals signed in at our booth, the SPF team packed and handed out 213 bags of prevention materials and every single one found a home. This event continues to be a fantastic opportunity for youth and families to engage with local law enforcement, learn about their roles in the community, and build positive relationships in a fun and supportive environment.



SPF-PFS Director Jack Hartgrave and Bailey Harris (not pictured) after setting up table for the CCFI event.



Cops N Kids Event



Cops N Kids Event



Cops N Kids Event



HEALTH SYSTEM

Prevention. Progress. Pride.

Get Ready for 2026! Benefits Event

Sponsored by Patient Benefits & Purchased Referred Care

Tuesday, November 18, 2025 - 9 am - 12 Noon  
AST Resource Center  
1970 156<sup>th</sup> Ave NE ▪ Norman OK

Thursday, November 20, 2025 - 1-4 pm  
AST Multipurpose Building  
2029 James L. Edwards Lane ▪ Shawnee OK  
OKDHS Mobile Unit Onsite Assistance!

Giveaways, Spin-To-Win Prizes, and Snacks!

2026 HEALTH INSURANCE OPEN ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

Medicare and Marketplace Plan Comparisons by Legacy Tribal Services

2026 AST ELDER MEDICARE PART B PREMIUM REIMBURSEMENT RENEWALS

AST Elders 65+, get renewal assistance.

Get application assistance for SoonerCare, DHS Medicare Savings Program, and SSA Extra Help

PURCHASED REFERRED CARE UPDATES

Get PRC Compliant for a Hassle-Free Referral Process

Speak to a PRC Representative

Bring your Photo ID, CDIB Card, Insurance Cards, Proof of Residency



Legacy Tribal Services

Simple Solutions. Uncommon Service.



Medicare

Oct 15 - Dec 7, 2025



Health Insurance Marketplace

Nov 1, 2025 - Jan 15, 2026

Little Axe Health Center: (405) 447-0300

Shawnee Clinic: (405) 878-5850

www.asthealth.org