



THE ABSENTEE SHAWNEE NEWS

www.astribe.com

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October 2026

AST Celebrates New Art Acquisition at Jacobson House

The Absentee Shawnee Tribe held an art reception on September 11 and 12 at the Historic Jacobson House Arts Center in Norman. The event was open to the public to showcase the original Ernest Spybuck (1883–1949) painting that the tribe acquired in 2025. This was the second reception the tribe held to present the months long restoration work completed on the painting. Experts estimate that the untitled Spybuck work was done in 1920-1930.

Gann Preservation Services oversaw the delicate work to restore this piece. “This was an amazing experience for me and quite an honor to help with. I also learned quite a bit about his work” said Lyzanne Gann.

She went on to explain that during testing, it was found that some of the pigment used to create the metallic and red hues were found to be unstable and made of unknown material. “Those pigments heighten the telling of the story of what happened. It’s almost like watching

a video versus a still photograph, Gann said, “You have one second of time to capture, but when you see a video, you see the movement, you hear the sound. There’s all kinds of things going on that I think he was attempting to capture here. Because when you move in front of a piece and you can see those pigments, you realize that there’s movement in these figures that are depicted.”

Living in Indian Territory at the dawn of the twentieth century, Ernest Spybuck was a self-taught artist and member of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe. Known for his depictions of Indian culture and life in the early 1900s, Spybuck’s art repertoire is a collection of vignettes that offer a glimpse into Indian life and culture happening in early Indian Territory. His style of painting and aesthetics were unique for Indian painters of the twentieth century, especially in contrast to the popular flat line style of work being created by many Indian artists at that time.

Former curator for Oklahoma State art collection Alan

Atkinson stopped by to see the original piece as he only saw reproductions during his tenure. “This is wonderful to see. It’s a very special artwork and it has a connection to this place. Having it here at Jacobson House which most people think of as the root of Native American art and to have this piece returned to the tribe is great.”

Norman Mayor Stephen Tyler Holman was also in attendance. “It’s exciting for the Absentee Shawnee Tribe and their history to be able to put something like this on display. I hope it will continue to be in a place where people will be able to see it and learn about it.”

The return of this painting to the Tribe is more than the return of a piece of artwork—it is the return of a piece of our story. After traveling away from its people, its journey has now come full circle, bringing with it a connection to the generations who came before us.

It is undecided where the painting will reside.



Left Photo (L-R): AST Historic Preservation Programs Manager EJ Ruiz; AST Historic Preservation Director Carol Butler; Norman Mayor Stephen Tyler Holman; Lyzanne Gann. Right Photo: AST Historic Preservation Director Carol Butler and Mayor Stephen Tyler Holman.



Left Photo: AST Historic Preservation Director Carol Butler and Lyzanne Gann.



Right Photo: Lyzanne Gann and Alan Atkinson.



Left Photo: AST Historic Preservation Director Carol Butler and Jack Scott.



Right Photo: Lyzanne Gann explains some of the restoration work she performed on the painting.



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GOVERNOR
John Johnson



Lt. GOVERNOR
Diane Ponkilla



SECRETARY
Misty McGirt



TREASURER
Joseph Blanchard



REPRESENTATIVE
Anthony Johnson



GOVERNOR’S REPORT

John Johnson, AST Governor

Hello Tribal Members,
Happy Halloween everyone, enjoy your time with your family and all the little ghost and goblins. It’s always exciting to see all the different costumes during Halloween. The tribal offices will be handing candy out for Building Blocks (Shawnee) children and the CTSA children. We’re planning to do it a little different this year and hand candy out at the MPB. The past couple of years it has been too cold for the babies to walk around campus in their costumes. If your child attends either of

these centers look for details for dates and times.
The 97th Semi-Annual General Council is just around the corner. It will be October 3, 2026 at 10:00am at the Thunderbird Casino (Norman). Hope you’re able to attend. If you can’t be there in person you may watch the video online after the meeting. Just be sure to log in using your CDIB card information.
Representative Johnson and I recently attended the Sovereign Table in Orlando, FL. The mission for the sovereign table is to build mutually beneficial relationships with other tribal officials, to engage in long term strategic thinking and create ideals for the future. This conference was

SECRETARY’S REPORT

Misty McGirt, AST Secretary

Greetings Tribal Members,
I hope everyone has been doing great in this Oklahoma heat. We are finally in our fall month! I am looking forward to the just right weather as I like to call it, not too hot not too cold. My office has been busy with the monthly, weekly meetings as well planning for General Council.
On September 11, 2026 I joined The Rising Warrior (Domestic Violence Dept.) in Tulalip, Washington to give testimony for the 21st Annual Government-to-Government Violence Against Women Tribal Consultation Presented on behalf of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma by Monique Carpitcher, the testimony emphasizes the vital impact of Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) grant funding—including the Abuse in Later Life Award—in sustaining life-saving community services. These dedicated resources allow Tribal advocates to address complex barriers faced by older survivors, such as mobility limitations, fixed incomes, and age-related social isolation. The testimony underscores that strong fiscal stewardship and tailored crisis intervention are essential for upholding federal trust commitments to Tribal Nations. The consultation also brought national attention to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) crisis, moving beyond statistics

to highlight the critical law enforcement breakdowns impacting Native families. Tackling the Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) crisis requires confronting root systemic failures, including underfunded Tribal Police, jurisdictional dead ends, data exclusion, and inadequate media coverage.
The testimony highlights the tragic case of Jacob Washington, a 33-year-old Seminole Nation citizen whose family was completely blindsided by a reduced plea bargain made without victim consultation. His family’s successful public campaign to revoke the plea deal spotlights the broader, urgent need for transparency, victim family notification, and immediate local response capabilities within Indian Country’s legal systems. Looking toward policy solutions, the testimony urged Congress to route funding directly to Tribal Nations rather than centralizing dollars in federal agency budgets like the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Crucially for tribal advocacy, it strongly opposes Department of Justice proposals to consolidate OVW into a generic "Bureau of Justice Grants," warning that resource blending would subordinate victim services to general law enforcement priorities. Protecting OVW’s statutory independence ensures a firm firewall for Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) funding, keeping trauma-informed care and survivor safety at the heart of federal Indian policy.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Joseph Blanchard, AST Treasurer

Good Afternoon fellow AST Tribal Members, Family, and Friends:
I hope all is well with you and your loved ones. It seems like I just submitted a report and here we are again. After review, there were 2 documents submitted within a short timeframe; last month’s newsletter then my report for the General Council booklet. Fall has still yet to make an appearance and it’s been relatively hot lately. I’ll be glad for the smell of a wood fire and crisp cool mornings. Time is flying and we’ll be at the end of the year before we know it.
Entering the 4th quarter, there are lots of meetings and discussions taking place. Besides managing assets, it’s that time to start preparing for 2027 budgets prior to closeout. I have already informed Executive Committee members and relayed information to Directors at MidYear Review regarding how we will operate. I mentioned previously, due to the current Presidency and end of ARPA funding, there was a great likelihood changes would need to be implemented over the next few years to combat rising inflation and other unnecessary fees.

As a part of this process, I have initiated several meetings with existing vendors and potential new clients pertaining to our Insurance coverages, regular annual expenses, and specific operation expenditures. Recently, notification was sent out to Departments and Programs for the last day to enter Purchase Orders. We do this in order to confirm all invoicing and requests for payment are submitted prior to December 31. Part of my job requires I confirm the Tribe to bid out certain functions or responsibilities. This process creates competition and affirms we receive the best pricing for special services or projects.
Earlier this week, I was able to coordinate a meeting with individuals from the Energy sector in our State. I appreciate the gentlemen from Canadian Valley Electric Cooperative (CVEC), Oklahoma Electric Cooperative (OEC), and Oklahoma Gas and Energy (OG&E) for coming to visit our AST Complex, providing details of their respective companies, and giving suggestions for how the Tribe can collaborate in future opportunities. I reminded them, “The Absentee Shawnee Tribe has been here since 1835. This is Home and we’re not going anywhere. Y’all should take advantage of the great neighbors we are and let us help you help us and our

very detailed and helpful; I really wished I had attended when I first got into office, it would have been beneficial for me.
Don’t forget about the online podcast. A new department will share updates and/or monthly events each month. It’s an easy way to stay updated.
Should you have any comments or concerns you may always call or email myself or my assistant at the emails listed below.
Thank you,
Governor John Johnson
governor@astrobe.com
405-275-4030 ext. 3500
alvinab@astrobe.com
405-275-4030 ext. 3501

We had a chance to visit the local Tribes in the area. I was really impressed with the Swinomish tribes’ Boys and Girls Club. The Tulalip Tribe had an apartment complex area that assisted with people that are recovering from substance abuse. The Boys and Girls Club were really great for all ages of children and they even had a sewing area to teach their younger generation. And with the recovery apartments it would be nice to find a way to help Our People who struggle with substance abuse. This not only would help them with their life but also if they have children in our ICW it could be a great thing for our children so their parents can get on the path to recovery and being in there lives as a family.
On September 17, I briefly attended the 14th annual BCBS Oklahoma Tribal partners roundtable. Health Services hosted this event and they had a really great turn out. September 18 Health had their annual health fair event and, in the evening, I attended the Shawnee high school football game for Jim Thorpe night, that they have each year. They had Tribal leaders come and help present the Jim Thorpe art contest winners. September 25, I attended a walk and talk event for prevention for suicide awareness month. That is all I have to report at this time is you should have any question or concerns please don’t hesitate to call my office.
Ne yi wa!
Secretary McGirt

communities.
The last thing I’ll talk about is Tecumseh Frontier Days. A couple months ago, folks from Chamber of Commerce reached out for discussion and a meeting. Besides myself, also in attendance were Governor John Johnson and Language Director Scott Miller. The request was simple, can we get participation from the Tribe? The event is an annual celebration but this one had greater significance. The individual agreed the City could do a better job of interaction and wanted to create new future opportunities. The Executive Committee discussed and agreed to be the Legacy Sponsor for the 135th anniversary. Yes, we understand there is another concern with the School mascot but not everyone supports moving any actions forward and our membership hasn’t given direction or suggestion. And after a recent Facebook post about a t-shirt, it is quite alarming there are still racist comments and ignorance spread so openly.
Don’t forget to attend the upcoming Semi-Annual General Council Meeting. I hope to see you there. As always, I appreciate the continued support, advice, and words of encouragement.
Neyiwa!
Joseph H. Blanchard

REPRESENTATIVE’S REPORT

Anthony Johnson, AST Representative

Hello Tribal Members,
In September, our partnership with Hanover College was finalized. We look forward to strengthening our relationship with Hanover College and ensuring that the community is aware of the history, resilience and culture of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe.
Historic Preservation Department. This month I traveled to a leadership conference, where they spoke on the value of investing in the next generation.
In September, the Education Department began the Reading Warriors program at Little Axe Public Schools. This is a collaboration between the AST Education Department and the Little Axe Public Schools Indian Education – Title VI program to encourage our native elementary, middle and high school students to read more. The Education Department (Ed-

ucation, Tribal Youth Program, and Native Connections) hosted the first Native American Student Association meeting at Grove School. The club is for 5th through 8th graders at the School. Trevor with Native Connections recognized World Suicide Prevention Day by encouraged the Tribe and our surrounding community to Wear Yellow on September 10th. The Education Department will co-host the first Tribal Resource Night at Grove School with the Sac and Fox Education Department. We have invited all tribes who have members enrolled at Grove. Education and Native Connections will have a table at the ASTHS Health Fair.
From August 24th through August 27th, I, along with the staff of the Historic Preservation Department, attended the 26th Annual NATHPO (National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers) Conference in Albuquerque, NM. One of the main reasons we wanted to attend was to get the chance to hear

from lawyers and others in the preservation field on the proposed changes from the ACHP (Advisory Council on Historic Preservation) of the Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The Section 106 process currently allows tribes to engage in government-to-government consultation with federal agencies regarding federal projects that could affect historic properties that are culturally significant. If these changes are approved, they would severely undermine the tribe’s sovereignty leaving all the power in the federal agency’s hand which could ultimately result in the destruction of many sacred sites that are culturally and historically significant to the Absentee Shawnee Tribe.
If you have any questions, comments or need any assistance, please contact my office at (405) 531–3512, or by email: ad-johnson@astrobe.com.
Anthony “Tad” Johnson
Tribal Representative

LT. GOVERNOR’S REPORT

Diane Ponkilla, AST Lt. Governor

Hello All,

Sending my Condolences to the ones who have lost a loved one, I know all too well the feeling of sadness and heartache. I hope all the students had a good start to school and adjust to being back on their school schedules. 2026 is flying by and holidays will be upon us before we know it and I am looking forward to cooler weather.

I would like to give a brief reminder of the requirements for Emergency Repairs for Homeowners: Home must be owned and occupied (1 year) by applicant and be the primary residence. Proof of home-ownership: Filed Stamped Warranty Deed, BIA Lease Agreement/Signed notarized usage agreement approve by the AST Realty Department, Life estate documentation filed with the courts if on Trust Land must have Tribal Status Re-

port (TSR) from AST Realty.

Enrolled AST: copy of proof of enrollment card.

Reside within AST jurisdiction: Pot-tawatomie, Cleveland or Oklahoma County

Mobile Home: Applicant must have title and own the land.

Must provide income for all residence 18+ years.

Program will not do renovations, cosmetic repairs, appliances, or new construction.

Must update application yearly.

The Emergency Tribal Housing Repairs Program is not an entitlement program.

July 28-29, 2026: Zoom meeting: IHS Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committee (TSGAC) during this meeting I was appointed the Alternate Representative for the Southern Plains Region on the DOI Self-Governance Advisory Committee (SGAC).

August 13, 2026 Governor, I and Rep-

resentative attended the BancFirst annual get together at the BancFirst Tower downtown OKC.

August 24-26, 2026 I attended the Office of Tribal Government Affairs-Modal Day “The Road Ahead Strengthening Transportation in Tribal Communities” with Twyla Blanchard, BIA, Self-Governance, Tribal Transportation Director in Washington, DC at the Media Center-DOT Headquarters-West Washington, DC. It was an all-day session with the following panelist:

- » James A. Crawford Assistant Secretary, OST-T
- » Milo Booth Director, OST-T
- » Barak Myers-United South & Eastern Tribes
- » Twyla Blanchard, Inter-Tribal Transportation Association
- » Matthew Vogel, National Congress of American Indians
- » Ron Allen, Chairman-Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe
- » Janet Hernandez, FTA Tribal Tran-

sit Program

- » Alex Clegg, DOT-Routes
- » Steve Suder, DOT, TTP
- » Vanaaisha Pamnani, DOT, Build America Bureau
- » Allen Gutierrez, Director, DOT, OSDBU
- » Rita Hill, NHTSA
- » Matthew Fraterman, MA-RAD-Acting Director Federal Assistance and Engagement
- » Gerry Hope-Central Council Tlingit & Haida (Virtual)
- » Nikki Navio, Denali Commission (Virtual)

Looking forward to seeing and hearing from Absentee Shawnee Tribal Members at the 97th Semi-Annual General Council Meeting on Saturday, October 3, 2026 at the Thunderbird Event Center, Norman, OK.

Ne yi wa

Jim Thorpe Night - September 18, 2026



AST Secretary Misty McGirt and AST Treasurer Joseph Blanchard participated in Jim Thorpe Night at the Shawnee High School football game held Friday September 18th. They presented the Legacy Art Contest winners certificates.

GET READY FOR WINTER

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

- ☒ **MUST HAVE APPLICATION ON FILE**
- ☒ **ELDERLY/HANDICAPPED – FIRST PRIORITY**
- ☒ **MUST BE A CURRENT HOMEOWNER**
- ☒ **PROVIDE CURRENT TRIBAL ID**
- ☒ **MUST RESIDE IN AST JURISDICTION**

CALL LT. GOVERNOR’S OFFICE (405) 275-4030

Make October SPOOKTACULAR for your Finances!

At AllNations Bank, we’re here to help you reach your goals—so you can enjoy the things you love this season and beyond.

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Checking, Savings & CDs to fit your life.

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Local decisions. Personal service. Right here at home.

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Manage your money anytime, anywhere.

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BIG JIM YOUTH AWARDS



The Big Jim Youth Award Program identifies tribal members to receive prestigious awards for their High School Academic and Athletic performance. When required there is a selection committee for these awards consisting of individuals who are either educators, coaches, or affiliated in these areas or to the area of higher education within the State of Oklahoma. None of the members of the selection committee are Absentee Shawnee Tribal members. This stipulation was incorporated into the program to maintain fairness to all applicants.

The Big Jim Youth Award Program was open to all Absentee Shawnee High School Seniors within the 50 United States. “The purpose of these awards is to recognize the outstanding contributions of our tribal youth and to promote excellence in academics and athletics in high school and beyond” said Tresha Spoon, Educational Director of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe.

Academic Achievement, \$1000.00 Scholarship



Jasey Engledowl
Queen City, Texas
Parents: Stephanie Anderson
Attending: Arkansas State University
Accomplishments: Honor Roll 4 years
Cheerleading 4 years
2024 Bronze Medal
2023 Silver Medal
2025 Outstanding Student – Art 4,
Medical Terminology
2024 Outstanding Student –
English, Biology, Art 3
Concurrent Enrollment – 21 credit
hours

Essay: “...After graduation I plan to attend Arkansas State University to pursue a Bachelor’s degree in Radiology with specialization in Ultrasound Sonography...I have...taken 21 hours of college classes while in high school and still managed all my other responsibilities such as babysitting, [and] starting my own cleaning business...currently working at Dominoes Pizza to save money for college. I am currently taking a Patient Care Technician Class to help prepare me for my future in the medical field.”

Athlete of the Year, \$1000.00 Scholarship



Jocelyn Hayes
Shawnee, Oklahoma
Parents: Charles Hayes and Briana Ponkilla
Attending: Southwestern College
Accomplishments: Shawnee High School Fastpitch –
Co-Captain
2025 5A Fastpitch All-District 1st
Team – Utility
2024 5A Fastpitch All-District 2nd
Team – Utility
National Honor Society – 2023-25

Essay: “Throughout high school I have done softball, basketball, and track. I am going to Southwestern College in Kansas to pursue my future career as a pediatric nurse and will also play softball while in college. My main sport inside and outside of school has been softball since I was 5 years old...I am grateful my tribe has given me the opportunity to prepare myself for the future. In return I want to give back to my tribe by being an example for others in the medical field...it is okay to have doubts and feel certain ways about my performance, but how I take it and get through the problem is what’s important.”

Help Support Survivors of Domestic Violence

Purple

POWER

Donation Drive

Now Collecting New and Unopened

Toiletries - Shampoo, Conditioner, Body wash, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant

Baby supplies - Diapers, baby wipes, lotion, shampoo, bodywash

Collection Dates October 1st through October 31, 2026

Drop Off Sites
Building Blocks Shawnee
Governor Building
Main Building
HR Shawnee
Procurement
Shawnee Clinic
Little Axe Clinic

Questions please call 405-273-2888

WEAR PURPLE DAY

OCTOBER 22

Help us to bring awareness to Domestic Violence by showing up as the **BEST DRESSED IN PURPLE**

Dress up • Take a photo • Show your support
Get creative. Get stylish. Get PURPLE!

WHO WORE IT BEST?

Contest + Bragging Rights and a T-Shirt!!

Together, we wear purple to stand with survivors and raise awareness.

Share your pictures at kkisor@atribe.com

This project was supported by Grant No. 15JQVW-25-GG-00248-TRIB 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.

Join Rising Warrior in

BREAK THE SILENCE

PAINT THE CHANGE

A Community Painting Class Raising Awareness for Domestic Violence

Come together through art, conversation, and creativity as we use our voices and our paintbrushes to stand against domestic violence.

- No painting experience necessary
- All supplies provided
- Everyone is welcome
- Create. Connect. Speak Up.

CALL TO RESERVE
405-273-2888
SEATS LIMITED

October 27, 2026
6pm

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ELECTION COMMISSION

PO Box 741, Tecumseh, OK 74873 | ☎ (405) 275-4030 Ext. 3537 | Fax (405) 273-1337
✉ Election.Commission@atribe.com

MEDIA RELEASE

The Election Commission is seeking two (2) alternates to serve on the board. The Commission meets monthly at the Election Commission Office in Building 2 of the AST Complex, Shawnee, Oklahoma. Interested individuals may contact the Election Commission at 405-275-4030, Ext. 3537, or email Election.Commission@atribe.com.

Mission Statement

To ensure that the democratic process is protected, secure, and strong. We strive to ensure that the voices of the Absentee Shawnee members are not only heard but also valued by their elected representatives.

The Absentee Shawnee Tribe will be closed

Monday, October 12th - Indigenous Peoples' Day



AST Tribal Member Receives Award

AST tribal member, Sianna Morgheim was recognized at the recent OPhA (Oklahoma Public Health Association) Conference. She was presented with the CHW (community health worker) Professional Excellence Award. Sianna was also recently promoted to the Public Health Director Position for Absentee Shawnee Tribal Health System.

Sianna is a graduate from the University of Oklahoma with a BA in Indigenous Health and Wellness in 2019 and is currently enrolled in the MPH program through OU College of Public Health.

Absentee Shawnee Members Shape History Through University of Oklahoma Archaeology Program



BETHANY, Okla. — This summer, AST members and high school students Harper Brown, a senior, and Eli Brown, a junior, completed the “Voices of Oklahoma” archaeology summer internship. Hosted by the Oklahoma Public Archaeology Network (OKPAN) at the University of Oklahoma, the program offers students from traditionally underrepresented communities a hands-on introduction to archaeology, historic preservation, and community heritage. Both Bethany High School students received college credit and a stipend upon completion.

Over the course of the intensive summer program, interns utilized archaeology, oral history, and archival research to explore diverse historical narratives. Rather than writing a traditional final paper, the student cohort collaborated to design the official statewide poster for Oklahoma Archaeology Month. They also created individual posters on archaeological topics of their choice and participated in a multi-day field trip to historic sites and cultural events across Oklahoma.

“The Voices of Oklahoma program uses archaeology as a powerful tool for community heritage and social justice,” said Kaylyn Moore, program co-lead. “These students brought incredible perspective, creativity, and dedication to their work, connecting deeply with our state’s complex history.”

The internship empowers participants to see archaeology as a pathway to higher education and community advocacy. By designing the statewide poster, the students’ work will directly educate the public about the importance of preserving local history.

For more information about the Voices of Oklahoma program, visit ou.edu/okpan.
About OKPAN - The Oklahoma Public Archaeology Network promotes the preservation and public appreciation of Oklahoma’s archaeological heritage through education, community engagement, and collaborative research.

Spooky BINGO!

WEDNESDAYS AT 6PM

PROGRESSIVE BLACKOUT BONUS

\$1,000 Minimum & \$100 Added Each Week

Players must earn 25 points on their Thundercard to receive a Bonus Bingo card. Earn 100 points and receive one additional card.

PLUS, YOU DOUBLE THE PRIZE WHEN YOU EARN A SECOND CARD!

9 BINGO games will be played. 8 games will be played for straight line BINGO and winners will receive \$25 in Free Slot Play. The final game each Wednesday will be a "blackout" game for \$250 CASH. Progressive jackpot is awarded when blackout is earned in 55 balls or less.

Management reserves all rights.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31

HALLOWEEN PARTY

WIN YOUR SHARE OF

\$4,500

IN CASH!

5 WINNERS

HOT SEATS EVERY HOUR

6PM-9PM

COME IN COSTUME AND GET \$10 FREE PLAY!

Players must be playing with risk and action to be eligible. Management reserves all rights.

Monster Smash Burger \$10.50
double patty smash burger with white American cheese & fries

\$9 Red Spider Soup
Cup of Red Pepper & Gouda Soup with a sour cream spider-web & a Grilled Cheese Slider

\$5 Morticia's Gloom

\$6 Wednesday Shot

NORMAN

Monster Smash Burger \$10.50
double patty smash burger with white American cheese & fries

\$4 MICHELOB ULTRA

SHAWNEE



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

Fall is here and we are ready for cooler weather. Lots of learning adventures await us. Fire Prevention week is October 5th-9th and we are inviting a fire department to visit the center. On October 16th @ 9a.m. the children will be going to the AST Farm Pumpkin Patch for fall learning. October 23rd, Building Blocks will hold its Fall Festival @ 6p.m. with lots of fun games and snacks.



Building Blocks will be closed Monday, October 12th for Indigenous Day.

The children and staff love Halloween. Trick or Treat on the Complex will be at 10a.m. on October 29th at the Multipurpose Building. On October 30th Building Blocks Classroom Halloween Parties will be @ 3p.m. October will be busy and fun!

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

Building Blocks is accepting waiting list applications; 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. You can also put in a waiting list application at <https://www.astribes.com/building-blocks>.

Have a Happy October!



**THUNDERBIRD
CASINO
NORMAN**



MOVIE NIGHTS

10/2 - THE ADDAMS FAMILY (1991)
FREE CANDY FOR KIDS

10/9 - ADDAMS FAMILY VALUES (1993)
FREE CANDY FOR KIDS

10/16 - THE ADDAMS FAMILY (2019)
TRUNK-OR-TREAT

FREE FAMILY FRIENDLY EVENT!
BRING A BLANKET/CHAIR & COME ENJOY
A MOVIE, CONCESSIONS, & COMMUNITY!

FRIDAYS IN OCTOBER
GATES OPEN AT 6PM | MOVIE STARTS AT DUSK

Saturdays in October



Starting at 9pm

October Bands



OCT. 3RD

**BRAD
HEMPHILL**



OCT. 10TH

**TRAVIS MCKINZIE &
ANTHONY SPENCER**



OCT. 17TH

**LOOSE
GRAVEL**



OCT. 24TH

KURT ALLEN BAND



OCT. 31ST

**NEW
DYNASTY**

BBIII newsletter

OCTOBER
2026

WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

September was full of fun, hands-on experiences at Building Blocks III! We loved welcoming our Health & Wellness team for a special cooking demonstration with the children. The kids had the opportunity to learn about food, participate in the cooking experience, and try something new together.

We also celebrated Grandparents Day with our Goodies with Grands event! We were so happy to welcome grandparents and special guests into our center for a sweet celebration with the children. Thank you to everyone who joined us and helped make the day special!

WHAT WE'RE LEARNING IN OCTOBER

Infants: Exploring fall through seasonal colors, textures, sensory experiences, and hands-on activities.

Toddlers & 2s: Learning about opposites through fall, exploring concepts like big and small, hot and cold, up and down, and more through seasonal play and activities.

3-Year-Olds: Exploring fall and transportation through stories, art, dramatic play, and hands-on activities.

4-Year-Olds: Discovering fall through changing leaves, pumpkins, cooler weather, seasonal activities, and school-readiness experiences.

Center info

Business Hours 7am-6pm
16051 Little Axe Drive,
Norman, Ok 73026

Director: Renee Richardson
Asst. Director: Sara Garcia

BBIII newsletter

OCTOBER
2026

**5X
POINTS
EVERY
MONDAY
10AM-10PM**

THUNDERBIRD
CASINO
SHAWNEE

Tribal Member Corner October Article:

Could the Elders Fun Day Sponsors pass on the recipes, that you share to the Title VI Program participants. In addition, the chef recipes from the Diabetes and Wellness. Maybe they can utilize the recipes.

Can the speed bumps at the Little Axe Clinic be removed and utilize speed signs, instead.

Also, an automatic door opener would assist seniors with their meals and the Title VI employees, others at the Little Axe Resource Center.

More information for you on spam calls: Another useful tool, is when the call is ringing, answer the green telephone button and press 9 on your mobile device. You do not have to say anything. This removes you from their call list.

Attend a church service and take the time, to write an article.

Eileen Pearce, Tribal Member Comments: Lapearce@att.net

ASTHA Recognized Statewide for Excellence in Advanced Primary Care

On August 25, 2026, the ASTHA Leadership Team was recognized at the Oklahoma State Capitol as one of only three health systems selected statewide for exemplifying excellence in the application of Advanced Primary Care services.

This recognition reflects the Health System’s continued commitment to improving access, strengthening the delivery of primary care, and providing high-quality services to the patients and communities we serve.

This achievement also highlights the dedication of ASTHA leadership, providers, and staff who work each day to improve the patient experience and advance the quality of care across our Health System.



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OPIOID RESPONSE
CHRONIC PAIN & CLINICAL RESEARCH

Among the Shawnee Podcast

New episode out now

How can chronic pain education, Tribal-led research, and culture work together to strengthen opioid prevention and recovery?

In this episode of Among the Shawnee, guests Alicia Miller, Amanda Upshaw and Ashlynn Foreman talk about the Absentee Shawnee Tribe's evolving opioid reduction efforts and the development of its Clinical Research Center.

Episode available on astribe.com, Spotify, SoundCloud YouTube.





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Scheduled Closures

October 7th - Closed at NOON
for Townhall Day.
PlusCare & Pharmacy will
re-open at 5pm

October 12th - Closed in
observance of Indigenous
Peoples' Day

Follow us on Facebook or visit
asthealth.org for closure information and
updates!





Respiratory Illness Season: Taking Steps to Protect Our Elders

As respiratory illness season begins, Absentee Shawnee Tribal Health System is encouraging community members to take precautions to help protect themselves, their families and especially the elderly.

Respiratory illnesses such as influenza, COVID-19 and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) typically become more common during the fall and winter months. While anyone can become ill, adults 65 and older are at greater risk of developing serious complications from respiratory infections, particularly those who have underlying health conditions.

For families with elderly parents, grandparents and other loved ones, simple preventive measures can make an important difference. "Protecting the health of our elders starts with the everyday choices we make as a community," said McKenna Watson, Quality Services Director at ASTHS. "Washing our hands, paying attention to symptoms and being mindful about visiting loved ones when we are sick may seem like small actions, but they can make a meaningful difference in reducing the spread of illness and protecting those who may be more vulnerable."

Community members are encouraged to wash their hands frequently with soap and water, cover coughs and sneezes, clean frequently touched surfaces and avoid close contact with others when experiencing symptoms of illness. Wearing a well-fitting mask can also provide an additional layer of protection when appropriate, particularly around individuals who are at higher risk of becoming seriously ill.

Vaccination can also help protect against severe illness. Our elders and their caregivers should talk with their health care provider about recommended seasonal vaccines, including those for influenza, COVID-19 and RSV, and determine which are appropriate based on age, health history and individual risk factors.

Families should also pay close attention when an elderly loved one becomes sick. Older adults may not always experience illness in the same way as younger people, and respiratory infections can become serious. Difficulty breathing, chest pain or pressure, confusion, severe weakness or symptoms that are worsening should not be ignored. When there is concern about the severity of symptoms, seek medical attention.

Checking in regularly with elderly family members throughout respiratory illness season can also help ensure they have medications, food and other necessities, particularly if they become ill and need to remain at home.

Our elders are an important part of the strength, history and knowledge of our community. By practicing healthy habits and being considerate when we are sick, each of us can play a role in helping keep them healthy throughout respiratory illness season.





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KNOW YOUR MEDICARE

Protect Your Native Care



The 2027 Medicare Annual Enrollment Period spans from **October 15 – December 7**, but it can be difficult to know where to start.

Let us help! Schedule your ASTHS medical screening to determine the best Medicare plan option for you.

Medicare Town Hall Meetings

- Saturday, October 17 – 1-3pm
AST Resource Center
- Thursday, November 5 – 1-3pm
AST Multipurpose Building

Navigating Your Medicare Tribal Health Path Together

Patient Benefits Advocates

LITTLE AXE HEALTH CENTER
405.447.0300

pba@astribe.com

SHAWNEE CLINIC
405.878.5850

ELDER'S FUN DAY FALL EVENT SCHEDULE

Elders ages 55 & older are invited to join the Public Health Department for cooking demos, bingo, and other educational activities.

Oct 8	LA Resource Center 11am-1pm
Oct 22	Shawnee Title VI 11am-1pm

Lunch is provided for those enrolled in the Title VI Program. Meals are \$5 for those not enrolled.

Elders ages 55 & older are invited to join the Public Health Department for fun games, activities, & helpful health education topics.

For registration, contact
Terra Little Jim: 405-827-7704
TLITTLEJIM@ASTRIBE.COM

SoonerCare WORK REQUIREMENTS START JAN. 1, 2027

Federal H.R. 1 Medicaid Changes

Who is Affected?

- Applies to **expansion adults ages 19-64** who are not otherwise exempt. **Work requirements do not apply to:**
- Individuals entitled to or enrolled in Medicare
 - Children 18 years old and younger
 - Adults 65 years old or older
 - Foster and former foster youth 25 and younger
 - Pregnant and postpartum women
 - Parents or caretakers of children 13 years old and younger
 - Parents or caretakers of individuals with disabilities
 - American Indian/Alaskan Native individuals
 - Veterans with a disability rated total/100%
 - Individuals with a health condition that makes it difficult to meet the work requirements
 - Blind or disabled individuals
 - Those with a substance use disorder or disabling mental disorder
 - Individuals with a serious or complex medical condition
 - Participants in a qualifying addiction or alcohol treatment program
 - Individuals who meet TANF work requirements, or receive SNAP and are subject to SNAP work requirements
 - Individuals currently incarcerated or incarcerated within the last 3 months

SoonerCare WORK REQUIREMENTS START JAN. 1, 2027

Federal H.R. 1 Medicaid Changes

Who is Affected? (Continued)

- Members may request short-term exceptions. OHCA will provide additional information on the process to request one. The short-term hardship exceptions are:
- Individuals receiving inpatient hospital, nursing facility, ICF/IID, inpatient psychiatric, or other similar inpatient or outpatient services.
 - Individuals who must travel outside their community for an extended period to receive necessary medical treatment for a serious or complex medical condition. This also applies when the individual's dependent must travel for such treatment.
 - Individuals residing in a county where an emergency or disaster has been declared by the President. OHCA must obtain federal approval before this specific exception can be utilized.
 - Individuals residing in a county that has an unemployment rate that is at or above the lesser of 8 percent or 1.5 times the national unemployment rate. OHCA must obtain federal approval before this specific exception can be utilized.

What is Required?

- Requires **80 hours per month** or **demonstration of minimum monthly income**. Hours can be through **employment, community service/work programs, and/or educational programs**.
- SoonerCare/Medicaid members are given **30 days to demonstrate compliance** after initial adverse determination.

View the screener and learn more at
oklahoma.gov/ohca/workrequirements

OCTOBER is Domestic Violence AWARENESS MONTH

OCTOBER

LUNCH IS SERVED 11 AM TO 1 PM

SERVING AT SHAWNEE & LITTLE AXE RESOURCE CENTER

OCTOBER 7 LARC WILL CLOSE AT NOON

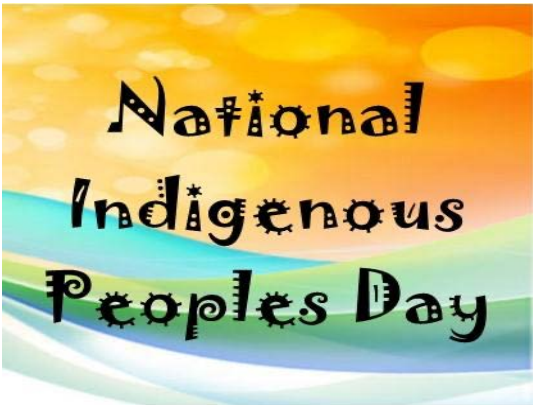
MENU SUBJECT TO CHANGE2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 CHICKEN POT PIE SPINACH COOKIE	2 SLOPPY JOE PICKLES FRUIT SALSA & CHIPS	3 AST GENERAL COUNCIL 10 AM THUNDERBIRD EVENT CENTER, NORMAN
4	5 CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP GRILLED CHEZ SANDWICH/FRUIT	6 SPAGHETTI W MEATSAUCE GREEN BEANS GARLIC TOAST	7 BAKED CHICKEN TURNIP GREENS BREAD CAKE	8 BEEF TIPS & NOODLES PEAS & CARROTS PEARS	9 PORK CHOP MIXED BEAN SALAD ROLL/FRUIT	10
11	12  Indigenous Peoples Day	13 SALMON SALAD PITA BREAD LETT & TOM FRUIT	14 VEGGIE LASAGNA COBBLER SALAD BAR*	15 ORANGE CHICKEN VEGGIE FRIED RICE FORTUNE COOKIE	16 HOT HAM & CHEZ PASTA SALAD FRUIT	17
18	19 HAM BRUSSEL SPROUTS YAM PATTY ROLL/APPLESAUCE	20 CHICKEN & WAFFLE FRESH FRUIT	21 BEEFY SWEET POTATO SKILLET APPLIE SLICES	22 PINTO BEANS W/ HAM CORNBREAD/CRISP	23 FRITO CHILI PIE CHEZ, ONIONS JELL-O W FRUIT	24
25	26 CHICKEN FRIED STEAK MASHED POT/GRAVY ROLL/BEETS PUMPKIN FLUFF	27 CHEF SALAD HAM, EGGS,CHEZ CRACKERS PEACHES	28 MEATLOAF MASHED POT/GRAVY GREENBEANS CHOCOLATE PUDDING	29 MINESTRONE SOUP CRACKERS MANDARIN ORANGES	30 MIPPA EVENT @ MPB MORE INFO LATER	31 

97th SEMI-ANNUAL GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING

Sat, 10/03/2026 - 10:00am
97th SEMI-ANNUAL GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING OF THE ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE OF INDIANS OF OKLAHOMA ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2026 AT 10:00 A.M. AT THUNDERBIRD ENTERPRISES INC. EVENT CENTER IN NORMAN , OK.

OCTOBER 12



OCTOBER 30, MIPPA EVENT WILL BE AT THE MULTI-PURPOSE BUILDING
11 AM TO 1 PM
MORE DETAILED INFORMATION WILL BE PROVIDED LATER IN THE MONTH

Zombie Run Brings Frightful Family Fun

Get ready to run, walk and have a frighteningly fun evening at Lake Thunderbird State Park! The Absentee Shawnee Tribe Diabetes & Wellness Program, in partnership with Lake Thunderbird State Park, will host the Zombie Run 5K & 1K Walk on Thursday, October 15.

The event combines physical activity with plenty of fall fun for the whole family. Participants can take on the 5K run or 1K walk while encountering people dressed as zombies along the way. Whether you're racing for the finish line or enjoying the walk, expect a few spooky surprises throughout the evening.

The fun doesn't stop with the race. Families can enjoy a Trunk or Treat, games, a fall festival and a food truck, making the event a great opportunity to bring the kids, wear your favorite costumes and enjoy an evening outdoors with the community.

Race participation is free, with check-in taking place from 5 to 5:30 p.m. at Lake Thunderbird State Park, 1297 Clear Bay Ave. in Norman. Participants are encouraged to register by October 1 to guarantee an event T-shirt.

The Zombie Run is about more than making it to the finish line. It's a fun way to get moving, spend time with family and friends, and celebrate healthy habits in a way everyone can enjoy.

So lace up your running shoes, bring your best costume and get ready to run from the zombies—or join them!

For more information, contact (405) 701-7192 or khancock@astribes.com

The Absentee Shawnee Tribe Diabetes & Wellness Program & Lake Thunderbird State Park Present:

ZOMBIE RUN

5 K Run & 1 K Walk

Thursday October 15th

Check-in 5:00pm - 5:30pm

Fall Festival!
Food Truck!
Trunk or Treat!
Games!

Location:
Lake Thunderbird State Park
1297 Clear Bay Ave
Norman, OK 73026

For more information contact:
(405)701-7192 or khancock@astribes.com

Race participation is free
Register using the QR code below by 10/1/26 to guarantee T-shirt



Ki Ke Ki Ka Mi Ge
"Keep Moving"



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
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LAURIE WEBBER
Referral Specialist LPN



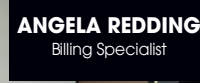
LISA NESSE
Referral Technician



DYLAN MOORE
Referral Specialist LPN



KREEGAN KENNEDY
Billing Assistant



ANGELA REDDING
Billing Specialist



DARLA GATZMAN
Admin Asst.



FLO MANN
Referral Specialist LPN



JENNIFER WELLS
Billing Specialist



GLENDINE BLANCHARD
Director of AST PRC



MEET YOUR AST PRC TEAM

Contact PRC Office:
Little Axe Health Center
15951 Little Axe Dr.
Norman, OK 73026
405.701.7951
PRC@astribc.com



Purchased & Referred Care (PRC) exists to provide you resources when our in-house providers cannot give you a particular type of care. When Medicare, Medicaid, or other sources cannot cover your care, PRC steps in to make sure you receive medically necessary treatment with the best use of funding.





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