



The Turtle Speaks

Gyah'-Wish Atak-ia

A Wyandotte Nation Publication

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Drive Thru Christmas

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Cover Photo:
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 drens Christmas
 Party
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From the Chief

Billy Friend

Hope in a New Year

I hope this letter finds all doing well and that you enjoyed a wonderful Holiday season. I would like to wish each of you a happy and prosperous New Year.

We have reached the beginning of the New Year. This New Year, unlike so many others, follows a year full of trials, change and tragedy. We are thankful 2021 looks to be our year for renewal, optimism and appreciation.

Throughout the last year, we worked together to care for our relatives, friends and neighbors. The Wyandotte Nation continues to be a Tribe that places our principal value on the health of our citizens, and all those who live in our communities. Our healthcare employees at Bearskin Clinic have gone above and beyond the call of duty to fulfill their responsibilities in the midst of an international pandemic.

The COVID-19 virus has increased our mindfulness of the gifts, work ethic and flexibility of our entire tribal health care team. Our physicians and staff have been out front in this fight against the virus. Almost all the elements of health care have been subject

“Isaiah 43:18 Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. 19 Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, [and] rivers in the desert.”

to major shifts. As methods and strategies change, our health care workers are asked to quickly adapt to new operational structure. We want them to know we recognize and appreciate what they are doing for all of us.

While we know we have not yet defeated this stubborn and deadly virus, there is hope we can turn the tide permanently. We are now receiving FDA approved vaccines and as of now we have vaccinated over 400 patients. We are working hard to access this important resource for our patients as quickly as possible.

I also want to commend all of our Wyandotte Nation employees across every department for going above and beyond their normal job responsibilities this past year to make sure we met

the needs within our tribal community. We have a great team of employees who never cease to amaze me when it comes to caring for and helping others.

In spite of all the events of 2020, we have continued to make great progress on our new casino project (Crosswinds Casino) in Park City, Kansas. We look to be on target for our phase 1 opening in mid to late February. The first phase will consist of approximately 460 class 2 slot machines, dining facility and bar. Our economic development team has done an outstanding job keeping this project on track and we are very excited about this addition to our economic portfolio. The revenue generated by this project will continue to help and support our tribal mission of “improving the life of every tribal citizen.”

All these efforts, and more, point to a much happier and healthier 2021. We ask you to please remain mindful and exercise the basics of preventing the further spread of the virus. We are confident we will prevail in our efforts, and your help is critically important.

My wish, as always, is for good health and many new years ahead for you and your family.

From the Second Chief

Norman Hildebrand, Jr.

Navigating the pandemic

Kweh Omateru

Hello my fellow Wyandotte Citizens, wow this has been quite a year. The COVID pandemic has pretty much taken center stage of everyone's lives. It seems everything revolves around keeping contact with people to a minimum to keep from possibly being exposed to this terrible virus. In some instances even that didn't work, I know of people who took all the precautions and still got infected. My heart felt prayers go out to all those that lost loved ones to this terrible virus.

The Wyandotte Nation, in spite of everything happening around us, keeps moving ahead with many projects that will ensure a bright future. We finally finished our waterline project after four plus years. We managed to prevail through various setbacks on the project so with it being finished, we felt like doing a happy dance.

Our new Administration building

is almost ready to be moved into, just waiting on new furniture to be delivered. The completion of it has also been affected by the pandemic with slow manufacturing schedules or delivery drivers testing positive for COVID, but being a resilient people we will prevail. The old Administration building will become the Justice Center and will house the police department and our tribal courts.

We cancelled a lot of trips this year, including our Town Hall Meetings. We always enjoy seeing our Wyandotte Citizens on these trips and sharing with them how the Wyandotte Nation is progressing. I am sure I shared with you in the last Turtle Talk that many of the conferences we attend every year was either cancelled or went to a virtual format. I don't like the virtual conferences. Hopefully with the COVID vaccine being administered now it will be safer to travel and we won't have

to social distance as much.

Enough of that how about some history? Since we had an election recently this little tidbit has to do with an election that happened in 1859 in the town of Quindaro that was founded by our ancestors while in Kansas.

Quindaro began with 13 Wyandot Indian Allotments owned by Mathew Brown, Amelia Charloe, John B. Curleyhead, Esquire and Eliza Grey Eyes, Abelard and Nancy Brown Guthrie, Christopher Hicks, John and Jane Lewis, Ethan A. Long, George Peacock, George and Mary Spybuck, John Spybuck, Ebenezer O. and Rebecca Zane, and James C. Zane. In November 1856 the Quindaro Town Company was formed by an alliance between these Wyandot and the



NEW TRIBAL CITIZEN ENROLLMENT

**174 New Tribal Citizens
6,752 Total Tribal Enrollment**

Chigoziri DianeAlikor
Jakob Hayes Allen
Emmy Brooke Allen
Amy Kay Allen
Amiyah Leeanne Almarzan
Griffyn Oliver Aragon
Poppy Elise Ballard
Tate Beckett Barnes
Jay Dryden Ragnar Blackwell Rains
Elliett Nadine Blaeske
William Duan Boldery
Alexandrea Louise Boldery-Murray
Eliza Cole Boomer
Sebastian Paul Boomer
Dylan Christopher Bozarth
Jordan Alexander Bozarth
Katie Brianne Bozarth
Micah Adrian Brackett
Lincoln Beau Bright
Ryker Jay Brown
Jaaron Austin Bruce
Adalyn Jo Byrnes
Hunter Alan Chapman
Braiden Levi Clark
Jeremy Douglas Clark
Weston Drake Cloninger
Nevaeh Amara Jaelynn Conner
Paisley Ann Cox
Gareth Abbott Cox
Jacob William Coye
Evelyn Rose Curnutt
Aspen Raeleen Daniel
Kadden Lee Davies
Ripley Aurora Davis
Jamie Ryker Atreyu DeArmond
Kruz Rylan Dellacer
Mila Aiyana Dennis
Gloriana Rose Deshayes
Eleanor Faith Divine
Mason Darald Dixon

Greyson Stanley Doerger
Jacksyn Lee Douthit
Jonah Dean Douthitt
Katherine Elizabeth Ducey
Garrett Robert Egan-Earle
Tyler Marie Egan-Earle
Rhett Wade Ehrhart
Gage Thomas Ellis
Mason Todd Evans
Gunner Kris Ewell
Troy Rex Farmer
Samantha Michelle Farrar
Sidney Ann Farrar
Nora Grace Farrell
Jacob Alan Ferry
Lane Ronan First
Grant Reid Forshag
Grady Lee Forshag
Avery Michael Francis
Sloane Koko Franco
Shaylyn rianne Gammon
Charlotte Vivian Garner
Maverick Layne Steven Godfrey
Kallan Ray Gower
Jillian Marie Graham
Scarlett Ann Griffo
Vivian Raven Grace Handley
Ashton Brett Hart
Kellen James Hart
Hadley Drew Hart
Graham Liam Hendricks
Vivian Rose Henry
Adalynn Marie Hews
Brayden Trevor Hews
Lydia Jackalene Hews
Jayce Eros Hicks
Andersyn Kae Hilton
Knox Ryan Holsapple
Rhett Mekhi Hooker
Anniston Blayke Hooker
Madilynn Grace Huerta
Jacob Oliver Hutchins
Allison Elaine Isaia
Brandon Douglas James

Isaac Noboru James
Henry Paul Johnson
Lillian Rose Johnson
Stephanie Dawn Johnson
Paul Antic Kellogg
Zackary Nielsen Kite
Madison Joslyn Kriegshauser
Jodie Marie Kunkle
Lumi Aurora Landers
Isabella Rayne Diane Lawson
Esther Ellie Laxdal
Elsie Estelle Lemus
Elijah Blake Lindenburger
Finley Rose Long
Parker Reed Long
Benjamin Reece Manghum
Tiffany Leigh Martin
James Bodhi Martin
Braxton James Mathis
Rhaegar Jax Michael McCleary
Chloe Scout McMullin
Poppy Jay Miller
Sadie Mae Miller
Kaiden James Mitchell
Leo Wilson Mlady
Sabina Maria Mueller
Ryland Michael Nance
Boston Brandon Neil
Amelia Jo Nichols
Valorie Lynn Nickle
Gwendolyn Nickle
Olivia Jade Norman
McKenzie Grace Norton
Dakota Grant Norton
Addison Lee Nugent
Doris Elizabeth Parman
Martha La'Cather Ann Parman
Trenton Shaun Patterson
Madalyn Marie Patterson
Lincoln James Perry
Jaxton James Perry
Madison Marie Pierce
Grayson Lane Porter
Owen Grayson Pulido-Betts

Merritt Elizabeth Rasor
Daley Renae Reinhardt
Kinley Jane Reinhardt
Harper Blaire Richardson
Gideon Luke Rieck
Charlie Allen Robitaille
Ethan Frederick Ryan
Jenifer Mariette Sanders
Jacqueline Anne Sanders
Talulah Golden Audrey Sante
Braxtyn Lee Sapp
Jude Cantrell Sapp
Emery Lynn Sears
Monroe McCall Sebelius
Alicia Lee Sloan
Kayle Noel Sloan
Alyvia Kaye Smart
Rivers LaRee Smith
Nathaniel Joseph Sontag
Claytin James Sontag
Persephone Kanna Souders
Rhett Wesley Spoon
Emma Richel Spoon
Miles Ronald Tatum
Eleanor Alva Thompson
Ellis Blake Thompson
Jocelyn Nicole Torres McQuiston
Adyranna Laeshaylynn Donaciana Trejo
Brielle Nicole Tuohy
Rylan Nickle Tuohy
Thomas Carl Underwood
Lacy Nicole VanAntwerp
Owen Allen Vanantwerp
William James Vanantwerp
Henry Michael Vanantwerp
Easton Andrew Vandiver
Alicianna Rose Vasquez
Ty Patrick Vaughn
Kayley Marie Villeneuve
Elena Joy Vreeman
Jonathan Joseph "Waters, Jr"
Daxton O'Neal Watson
Gregory Eugene Weynand
Khloie Ryann White
Emma Grace Williams
Rylee Quinn Young

2nd Chief

Continued from Page 2

New England Emigrant Aid Company led locally by Charles Robinson. The plan was to develop a Free State port on the Missouri River and Quindaro had a good rock landing site available.

This partnership quickly gave an opportunity for Abolitionist Wyandot and New Englanders to work together. In an unusual move Joel Walker, a slave owning Wyandot was appointed President of the Town Company. Some have argued this proves the town was not really Abolitionist but there are numerous accounts of its involvement in the Underground Railroad. Part of the Wyandot's sold their interests while others such as the Browns and Zanes stayed on. The Browns were heavily involved with the town company itself while E.O. Zane developed the Wyandot

House Hotel near the levee. In fact its location made it one of the first structures passed by those people landing at the levee. The Wyandot presence and interest in Quindaro continued throughout its life. The town grew and developed until the financial panic of 1858, when the national economy slowed.

During the election of 1859 the City Electoral Judges allowed two runaway slaves to vote in the city election which further increased Missouri and Proslavery rage at the town. Eventually the votes were disallowed at the County level, but two former slaves had voted, a lesson they could look back on for the rest of their lives. With statehood in 1861 the need for a Free State Port was no longer critical and the War took its toll in many ways. River traffic slowed to a trickle as attacks from the shore

caused problems across Missouri where the highest number of slave owners was concentrated on the Missouri River. The early animosity directed at Quindaro and Lawrence made them natural targets and part of the towns people left for less exposed areas, especially after the river froze solidly enough to allow parties of horsemen to ride across whenever and wherever they chose. Federal troops were requested but they caused a great deal of destruction as they burned wood parts of buildings for warmth. The next major blow to the town occurred when the County and state began selling property for back taxes in 1862.

Eventually the tax sales, which included taxes at their highest values, would transfer the vast majority of the former town site to Reverend Eben Blachley and the Freedmen's School, which would serve as the originator of Western University.

It's amazing what our ancestors went

"Are you going out after the truth, or are you going out after something you believe?" --Richard D. Rosen

through to get to where we are today. If you want some interesting reading, some of it boring, but a lot of it is very interesting, read William Walker's Journal. It gives a pretty good account of his daily life while in Kansas.

During these trying times when we are hit with circumstances beyond our control, I ask everyone to reflect on where we came from and who we are as a people. The hardships we endure only make us stronger, especially when we keep a sensible head on our shoulders and do what is right to ensure the wellbeing of everyone around us. Stay well and be safe. You are probably tired of hearing me say this, but I am proud to be Second Chief of the great-est Indian Nation in this country.

Donations provide bit of history

Cultural Center & Museum continues to gather bits of history from tribal citizens

BY WILLIAM SWAIM
WYANDOTTE NATION

The importance of knowing history is vital to the future of the Tribe, and one way the Wyandotte Nation Cultural Center & Museum is helping piece together the past is by accepting donations from tribal citizens.

"The only way we will be able to put true Wyandotte artifacts in our Museum is from donations and loans from Wyandotte citizens," said Sherri Clemons, Tribal Heritage Director, adding that they have received roughly 200 items from tribal citizens. "We will protect and guard their treasures."

Most recently, the museum received donations from David and Vicki Keffer, and Brenda Lamb. The Keffers donated a painting of Chief Leaford Bearskin and a King George III Peace Medal. The painting is currently hanging up, and Clemons said the medal has been put into storage for now, but will be on display soon.

Lamb, inspired by the Wyandot Mission Church in Upper Sandusky, Ohio, being deeded back to the Wyandotte Nation, created beaded artwork to commemorate the moment the Tribe got back a piece of their history.

"The donations are so wonderful and a true blessing. Nice additions to our collections," Clemons said. "We do not charge to visit the museum, so donations are very important because if by chance something comes up, we can't always afford to purchase them. When treasures are donated, it is so wonderful to know it came from our own people. And that they are helping gather things we can display for the future."

David Keffer said in late October he was looking at one of the several Facebook groups that feature northeast Native crafts and histories when he saw a King George III Peace



Medal being offered for sale that had been found near Trois Rivers, Quebec.

"I recognized it as having been part of our tribal history that involved the English and several of our Chiefs that were part of the colonial struggle for independence in the early 1800s," he said. "One such medal was mentioned as being part of our Chief Walk in the Water's frustration with having aligned the Wyandot People with the efforts of the English. I knew I had to have it. It took several weeks of negotiation with the seller but we finally got it."

The history behind the medal is this: The Treaty of Ghent, negotiated in Belgium and signed on Dec. 24, 1814, ended the War of 1812 with the British and restored territories to pre-war status and established a commission to settle Northwest Territory Boundary disputes. Both sides claimed victory. According to the treaty, tribes were to have their possessions, rights and privileges restored to their 1811 status, and tribes were required to cease all aggression against the United States and Britain. All of the First Nations warriors who fought for the British were given a medal bearing the image of King George III. Those Wyandottes at that event were Walk-In-The-Water, Tarhe, Roundhead, Splitlog and Leather Lips as well as numerous other Native leaders at that time. All of those tribal leaders

who aligned with the British would have received this medal. There is a legend that Walk-In-The-Water was so disenchanted with the British that he threw his medal into the Detroit River. In recent years, a person found a King George III medal on the shore of the Detroit River in Quebec, Canada; it was sold at an auction to a private collector. Whether this was the one given to Walk-In-The-Water, we may never know.

As for the Chief Bearskin painting, Keffer said he ran across a very talented young artist by the name of Lauren Reed. She grew up in Norman, Okla., and is of Choctaw and Cherokee heritage.

"I loved her use of color in her paintings of Native American notables, he said. "I contacted her to see if she would be interested in doing a painting of our Chief Bearskin. When she answered with an enthusiastic yes, I sent her several



(LEFT) The King George III Peace Medal. (ABOVE) David and Vicki Keffer present Chief Billy Friend with the Chief Bearskin painting and Peace Medal. (BELOW) Tribal artist Brenda Lamb donated her beaded artwork of the Wyandotte Mission Church.



photos I was able to find and she went to work in her distinctive style of art on her version of our beloved Chief Bearskin. Two months later I was thrilled to receive the painting we have today. I feel it captures the dignity, strength and vision of our

Holidays in Pictures: Drive Thru Christmas Party



The Wyandotte Nation Children's Christmas Party looked a little different this year. Santa and his helpers (pictured below) had to brave a bit of a chilly morning to distribute gifts and goodies to tribal children via drive thru rather than the Bearskin Fitness Center Gym, where the event is usually held due to COVID-19. Still there were plenty of smiles as the children were greeted by Santa as they pulled up while his Little Helpers had a gift for everyone.

Photos by
William Swaim



TRIBAL CITIZEN NEWS



Hunting Season

COURTESY PHOTO

Derald Clemons, a member of the Wyandotte Wildlife Commission, nabbed this 18-pt deer during the 2020 hunting season.

CALENDAR

31ST ANNUAL POW-WOW



SEPT. 10 - 12

Pow-Wow Golf Scramble

May 21

Memorial Day Honoring

May 31

Lacrosse Camp

June 22-24

Gathering of Little Turtles

June 25-27

Fireworks Display

July 2

Gathering

Sept. 7-10

Annual Meeting

Sept. 11

Town Hall Meetings

TBD

NOTE: All events subject to change.

DONATIONS

Continued from Page 4

Chief Leaford Bearskin so well and we were very happy to pass it on to our Wyandotte Nation for posterity to enjoy."

For Lamb and her beaded artwork, it was a journey, much like the exploration of history itself.

"The Mission Church represents for me unwavering faith, that is evident in the Wyandotte Nation today," Lamb said. "That faith led to my existence as a tribal member. It makes me proud of the strength it took from all the past Wyandotte and the future legacy and cultural traditions of the Nation to survive as it does today."

The history of the moment, the church being given back to the Tribe,

was not lost on Lamb and it is then she set out to commemorate it.

"I was excited to attempt this meaningful tribute representing the Wyandotte Nation Mission Church, I set out on a daunting task, beads and paint combined on canvas. I wasn't sure it would work," she said.

"Four months later, this beautiful piece of artwork was laid out before me. The task was complete. My eyes kept looking at it in amazement, at what I had created. Wondering if I captured it correctly? Never having been to the Mission Church and taking inspiration solely from a 4x6 photo.

"The artwork that was created was a test that pushed my creativity further than I had thought possible."

The continued inspiration led Lamb and her husband Steve to visit

the Mission Church in October of last year. She said it allowed her to come full circle, from the capturing of the art to visiting the historic site.

Clemons said the art will be on display at the museum at different times.

She said the Museum have several different items it can accept. "We do request if the items are highly damaged, we may not take them. Papers sometimes are in poor shape. We will look at them to judge if we can store them. We like things that are true Wyandotte."

If Tribal Citizens have a donation, they should call the Museum and make an appointment to meet with staff.

The Cultural Center & Museum is open Monday-Thursday, 9 am to 4 pm and Fridays from 9 am to 3 pm.

TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Human Resources

Submitted by Deana Howard, HR Director

The Wyandotte Nation Cultural Department is proud to welcome tribal citizen Chris Houk as our Tribal Heritage Specialist and tribal citizen Beci Wright as our new Cultural Researcher.



HOUK

Chris has worked as a firefighter/ EMT and has almost 30 years of volunteering with state and national parks where he did historical interpretation and research. He also has over 20 years of experience creating historical footwear and clothing. He enjoys spending time with his wife doing projects around their home and traveling. He likes spending time with his four children and two grandchildren. His hobbies include cooking, particularly Italian and Cajun, reading, researching family and tribal history, hunting, and shooting sports. We are very fortunate to have Chris and wish him much success in this new position.

Beci has library, museum, and teaching experience. She enjoys spending time with her dogs, Lola and Rico. Her hobbies are gardening, reading, and learning the language. She is excited to start this new position because she will get to pursue things Chief Bearskin and herself discussed years ago. We are very fortunate to have Beci and wish her much success in this new position.



WRIGHT



WEBB

The Wyandotte Nation Title VI Department is very happy to welcome tribal citizen Ashley Webb as a Food Service Team Member/Delivery Driver. Ashley was previous customer

service and food experience. She is excited to give back to her Tribe and serve the elders. She enjoys spending time with her daughters and friends, having game nights and getting together with family. Ashley also enjoys reading, doing art, working outside, working out, cooking and movies. We are very fortunate to have Ashley.

The Wyandotte Nation Police Department is proud to welcome Ronnie Gilmore as the new Police Chief.



GILMORE

Ronnie began his law enforcement career as an officer with the Wyandotte Nation. He has more than 11 years of law enforcement experience including Tribal Law Enforcement. In his spare time he enjoys spending time with his family, playing music and spending time on the lake. Ronnie says coming back to Wyandotte feels like coming home. He is very excited to serve our community and citizens. We wish him much success in his new position.

The Wyandotte Nation Police Department is also proud to welcome back tribal citizen Denton Ward. Denton looks forward to serving the people and community of Wyandotte. Denton worked with the Wyandotte Nation as a Summer Youth Employee with the Nation Police Department, and went



WARD

on to receive his CLEET certification. He has experience in Law Enforcement on the Tribal, State, Municipal, and Federal scale. He also served one year with the Sheriff's Office. In his spare time, he enjoys hunting, fishing, and spending time with friends. We are very fortunate to have Denton rejoin the Wyandotte Nation and wish him much success in his new position.

The Family Services Department is very happy to welcome Carmalita Ward. Carmalita will serve as ICW



WARD

Social Worker. She obtained her Bachelor's Degree from RSU. Carmalita worked for OK DHS in this field. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with her family having cookouts or dinners. She also enjoys beadwork. We are very fortunate to have Carmalita join the Wyandotte Nation and wish her much success in her new position.

The Wyandotte Nation Education Department is very happy to welcome Grace Gorda as a Childcare Assistant, and Lorri Bowers, who joined the Wyandotte Nation first as an After School Childcare Assistant and has transferred to an Infant Care-giver position.



GORDA

Grace comes to us with over five years' experience and loves working with children.

Grace transferred from one of our other entities. In her spare time she enjoys spending time with her family, baking, cooking, and photography. We are very fortunate to have Grace on our team and wish her the best of luck in her new position.

Lorri worked in Turtle Tots when it first started opened and is excited to be back. She enjoys spending



BOWERS

time reading and being on Facebook. Lorri loves spending time with her family. She has been married for 38 years and has three children and eight grandchildren. We are happy to have Lorri join the Education Department and wish her much success in her new position.

The Wyandotte Nation Administration Department would like to welcome Tammy Landreth to her new position as Executive Assistant,

and William Swaim, who will now be serving in his current position as Communications Specialist for the Wyandotte Nation instead of WTOK.

Tammy has been an employee of our entities since August 2005 and brings a wealth of knowledge with her. She graduated from Seneca High School, and attended Crowder College. She enjoys playing piano, decorating, and sewing in her spare time. Tammy also loves spending time with her family, shopping, and watching football and baseball. We are happy to have Tammy join our team.



LANDRETH

William has been the Communications Specialist for WTOK Economic



SWAIM

Development since March of 2013. William has his bachelor's degrees in Science (Journalism and Mass Communications) and Arts (English) from University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He enjoys spending time with his family as well as kayaking, camping, reading, watching football and basketball, and photography. We are excited to welcome William and wish him continued success in this position.

Linda Barclay has joined the Title VI Department as a Substitute.



BARCLAY

Linda has an Associate's Degree from MSSU and a Bachelor's Degree of Arts from Western New Mexico University. Linda works part-time for State of Oklahoma doing Adult Protection Services, and retired from full time with them in 2015. She recently moved back to Oklahoma from New Mexico and just completed building a home in Wyandotte. We are pleased

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TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Continued from Page 6

to have Linda and wish her much success in her new position.

The Bearskin Healthcare and Wellness Center is very happy to welcome Jenna Lyons, RN, and tribal citizen Slade Botts, RN, as PRN Clinic Staff.

Lyons has a nursing degree and is certified in Surgical Technology.



LYONS

She has worked in healthcare for approximately six years. Jenna enjoys spending time with her family and friends and any outdoor activities. We are very fortunate to have Jenna on our team and wish her much success in her new position.

Slade worked for us previously as a Summer Youth for several summers. He has his Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and his nursing degree.



BOTTS

In his spare time, he enjoys hunting, fishing, and playing video games. Slade also enjoys spending time with his fiancée Haylee, a lot of time spent with nieces, nephews, and siblings. We are very fortunate to have Slade on our team and wish him much success in his new position.

The Bearskin Fitness Center is very happy to welcome Gentry Stelle and Moli Lewis as Fitness Front Desk Assistant/Childcare Providers.

Gentry graduated from Fairland High School, attended NEO A&M



STELLE

for 2 years, and is currently attending Oklahoma State University. In his spare time he enjoys music, movies, video games, graphic design, video production, and digital art. Gentry spends time watching YouTube, editing videos, and playing games. We are very fortunate to have Gen-

try on our team and wish him much success in this position.

Moli attended MSSU for 3 years and studied English Education. She has been a Substitute for Joplin and Neosho Schools for 1 year. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with her family, friends and kittens. She also enjoys scrapbook-



LEWIS

ing, traveling, exploring new areas, exercising, and she loves to cook. We are very fortunate to have Moli on our team and wish her much success in this position.

The Wyandotte Nation Gaming Department is very happy to welcome Nicholas Manning. Nicholas



MANNING

will serve as our new Background Investigator/Compliance Officer for Park City. Nicholas comes to us from 7th Street Casino in Kansas City, Kansas where he has been since 2019. Nicholas brings with him a wealth of knowledge. He graduated from Dollarway High School in Arkansas. He has a Bachelor's Degree of Business Administration from Henderson State University. Nicholas enjoys running and jeep watching. We are very fortunate to have Nicholas on our team and wish him much success in his new position.

Family Services

Submitted by Dana Butterfield, Family Services Director

Hopefully by the time you are receiving this publication we will have moved into our new offices! We've actually enjoyed our time in the "Little House on the Rez," but we're also excited to move into our new space. Be sure to watch the website and Facebook for an official announcement for a ribbon cutting

for the new Administration complex.

The past nine months have been a bit of a whirlwind for the Family Services Department, which I'm sure has been the same for most all of our tribal citizens. There have been so many changes that our staff and tribal families have had to deal with and it doesn't appear things will be going back to our old notion of "normal" any time soon. Tribal staff have worked diligently to continue providing services throughout the pandemic, to the best of our ability, while being mindful of CDC guidelines.

There was a great turnout for the drive-thru Children's Christmas party with 169 children participating. Santa was there to spread cheer and several of the littles were able to get pictures with him (see pictures elsewhere in this newsletter). Each child received a comfy blanket with the turtle emblem and a \$25 Walmart gift card. Tribal parents also received a \$25 gift card.

Unfortunately, we must postpone the 2021 Town Hall meetings. The meetings had been rescheduled from 2020 for California. We will continue to monitor the situation and consider hosting them later in 2021. This is disappointing for tribal staff, as we enjoy hosting the meetings as much as our citizens enjoy attending them, but we also want to keep everyone safe and healthy.

Family Services programs continue to expand. To help keep up with the increased duties we are in the process of adding two staff members to our team and have done some restructuring within the Department. Tiffany Garner will now be the Tag Administrator and be the primary contact for any questions regarding vehicle title/registration.

Carmalita Ward is our new Indian Child Welfare (ICW) worker. Carmalita comes to us from the Oklahoma Department of Human Services with nearly eight years of experience in social work. She is an enrolled member of the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe and is also Cherokee by blood. She brings with her a wealth of child welfare and ICW knowledge. We're thankful to have her as part of our team!

Tara Gragg will continue in her role as ICW Supervisor and LIHEAP program manager. Leeanna Rada-

baugh and Dana Butterfield will be primary contacts for all other social service programs, tribal enrollment and the Supplemental Health program (aka Benny card). Lisa Arnold is the Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Advocate Supervisor and Cesilie Hale is a DV/SA Advocate. The Tribe also received a new Office of Victims of Crime grant and are in the process of hiring a third program Advocate. All Advocates provide services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, dating violence and human trafficking. The new Advocate will also provide services to victims of Elder abuse.

In the remainder of this article, you will find information about some of the programs offered through the Department. For a full list of programs and information, please visit our website at www.wyandotte-nation.org under the Community/Family Services tab.

As always, it's our pleasure and honor to serve the Wyandotte people and if there's ever anything we can do for you please don't hesitate to contact us.

Winter Programs:

Winter Clothing – Began Nov. 1st and ends Feb. 28th for all enrolled Wyandotte Nation children age 18 (grade 12) and under who reside in OK, MO, AR and KS. Reimbursement program or Walmart gift card

Continued on Page 8

TAG REMINDERS:

- **Must be an enrolled citizen of the Wyandotte Nation, an Oklahoma resident AND the car must be principally garaged in Oklahoma Indian country.**
- **Oklahoma Insurance Verification must accompany renewals (except for RV's and Travel Trailers).**
- **If you are purchasing a new/used vehicle, the Tribal citizen's name MUST be on the Title at the time of assignment. Wyandotte Nation Tax Commission staff CAN NOT add or delete names.**

For questions, please call
(918) 678-6353

TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

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for \$100 per student. Applications, along with guidelines, are available on the home page of the Tribal web site. Please note there are separate applications for the gift card and reimbursement program. If you did not return your gift card receipts for either the School Supplies or last year's Winter Clothing, you will be required to use the reimbursement program this year.

Senior Energy - \$100 assistance paid directly to the utility provider. Available to all enrolled citizens nationwide age 55 or older.

LIHEAP - LIHEAP is a federal grant funded program, if funding is received, services will be available beginning Dec. 1st for tribal citizens residing in Oklahoma. This program is income based and proof of income is required, along with other required documentation.

APPLICATIONS FOR THE ABOVE WINTER PROGRAMS MUST BE RECEIVED OR POST MARKED BY FEB. 28TH TO BE ELIGIBLE. BILLS/RECEIPTS MUST BE DATED BETWEEN OCT. 1, 2020 AND FEB. 28, 2021.

The following are programs run throughout the year for residents in OK, MO, AR, KS. Applications must be received or postmarked by Sept. 30th:

Elders Assistance - One-time expense for \$250 for tribal elders aged 55 and over.

Extra School Expense/Extra-curricular Activities - One-time payment of \$100 per student aged pre - K (at least 3 years old) through 12th grade.

Jr/Sr Benefit - \$250 benefit for expenses associated with the Junior and Senior years of High School.

Fuel Assistance - Fuel assistance programs include: Hardship - personal hardships, travel for work/job interviews, etc; Medical - travel to/from doctor/dental appointments and pick up prescriptions; Major Medical - extreme medical issues (must be life threatening, terminal, etc. not chronic medical issues) that require multiple trips outside of the local area. Program provides fuel vouchers through the Turtle Stop convenience store for local tribal citizens or tribal citizens who travel to the Bearskin Healthcare and Wellness Center.

Other Programs provided by the Family Services Department:

Child Safety Seats - Each child is eligible for three seats in different sizes and can be picked up at the tribal office.

Promoting Safe & Stable Families/Indian Child Welfare - This program is funded through a federal grant from the Administration for Children and Families and is designed to help keep children in their homes with their family or ensure that if there is a need for removal that federal guidelines are adhered to and the best interest of the child is first and foremost. If your family is in a situation where the state is involved, please contact one of the Tribal Social Workers.

Enrollment - Aug. 15th is the deadline to be considered for enrollment at the 2021 Annual Meeting. Applications must be submitted along with an original state certified birth certificate.

New Enrollee Benefit - Each application received prior to a child's first birthday will receive a \$100 Walmart gift card and a blanket embroidered with the Tribal Turtle.

Tribal Tags - Available for tribal citizens who reside in Oklahoma. Passenger, RV, Motorcycle and Handicap tags are available. Proof of residency is required. Please call the office for prices and additional information. As mentioned above, Tiffany Garner, will be the main contact for this program, 918-678-5353.

Supplemental Health Benefit (Benny Card) - New Wyandotte Nation citizens should have received their Benny cards in December along with any replacements for cards that have expired. The new cards being sent are now blue in color. All accounts were loaded Jan. 1, 2021 and the benefits are the same as previous years with a \$1,000 per year benefit for adult (18 and over) tribal citizens. Tribal citizens who have enrolled Wyandotte Nation dependents will receive an additional \$1,000 for a maximum of \$2,000 per account. Please keep in mind that this benefit is only for enrolled citizens of the Nation and is not to be used for spouses, stepchildren, etc.

Quarterly statements are mailed by Trustmark to show remaining balances, but account balances can be obtained at any time via www.

mytrustmark.com, by calling Trustmark at 800-990-9058 ext 42086 or via the mobile app. If you have a smart phone I strongly encourage you to download and use the app. With the app you can see balances, file claims, see purchases/expenses, see if any receipts are required and scan items to see if they are an eligible expenses. A flyer with information to setup the app can be found on the homepage of our website.

Burial Assistance - \$1,500 to be paid to the funeral home or to the family representative if the funeral is paid in full.

Family Violence Prevention Program: The Wyandotte Nation receives grants from the Office of Violence Against Women, Office of Victims of Crime and the Administration for Children and Families to help support victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking and sex trafficking within a 25-mile radius of the tribal headquarters. A victim is not required to be Wyandotte or Native to receive services from this program. Services offered include advocacy, court accompaniment, assistance with obtaining protective orders, relocation expenses and other basic needs. The Domestic Violence Advocate/Educator regularly makes presentations to schools and orga-

nizations providing education and awareness about these issues.

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness month and April is Sexual Assault Awareness month. Be sure to follow their Facebook page information about program activities and outreach/awareness information. If you are currently involved in an unhealthy relationship, please reach out to Lisa, regardless of where you live. If you aren't in an area where we can provide services she can put you in contact with someone who can help you.

Family Services Staff:

Director, Dana Butterfield 918-678-6319, dbutterfield@wyandotte-nation.org

ICW Supervisor, Tara Gragg 918-678-6355, tgragg@wyandotte-nation.org

ICW Worker, Carmalita Ward, cward@wyandotte-nation.org

Tag Administrator, Tiffany Garner, 918-678-6353, tgarner@wyandotte-nation.org

Family Services Specialist, Le-anna Radabaugh, 918-678-6329, lradabaugh@wyandotte-nation.org

DV Advocate/Educator, Lisa Arnold, 918-678-6324, lisaarnold@wyandotte-nation.org

DV/SA Advocate, Cesilie Hale 918-678-3269, chale@wyandotte-nation.org

Wyandotte Nation Family Services Programs Dates to Remember

Elder's Assistance: Oct. 1 - Sept. 30
Senior Energy - Winter: Oct. 1 - Feb. 28
Senior Energy - Summer: July 1 - Sept. 30
LIHEAP - (if available) Winter: Dec. 1 - Feb. 28
LIHEAP - (if available) Summer: July 1 - Sept. 30
School Supplies: July 1 - Sept. 30
Children's Winter Clothing: Nov. 1 - Feb. 28
Extracurricular Activities: Oct. 1 - Sept. 30
Jr./Sr. High School Assistance: Oct. 1 - Sept. 30
Wyandotte Nation Annual Meeting: Sept. 11
Children's Christmas Party: Dec. 11

Note: All applications must be in our office or post marked on or before the last day of the program.

TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Education

Submitted by Cristi Hudson, Education Director

Kweh,

Wyandotte Nation is now providing services under Public Law 102-477, which allows us to combine certain formula-funded federal grants into a single plan. Our goal is to create safe and stable families, raise educational achievement, develop and enhance employment opportunities, integrate employment and training services, and increase self-sufficiency. Wyandotte Nation's 477 Plan services all counties within a 100-mile radius from our Tribal Headquarters in Wyandotte, Okla. Services provided under the 477 Plan include: job training and work experience, educational assistance, and childcare assistance. Eligibility requirements:

- Complete, signed, and dated application
- Member of a federally recognized tribe
- Selective Service Registration Card
- Proof of residency in Service Area

Additional required documents will be needed once you are placed with a service. You may request an application to apply for any of our 477 services by emailing wn477@wyandotte-nation.org or by calling Kasey Lewis at 918-678-3268.

The Wyandotte Nation Scholarship Program is currently processing spring 2021 semester scholarships. If you are currently on the scholarship program, you will need to email, mail, or fax our Education Specialist Evan Hotulke your latest transcript. Your transcript will need to include your fall 2020 grades and your spring 2021 schedule.

Here are a few Wyandotte Nation Undergraduate Scholarship reminders:

- Undergraduate scholarships are limited to eight (8) semesters.
- Students will be placed on probation for failure to complete 12 hours or more with a minimum of a 2.0 GPA.
- Students will be allowed one probationary semester during the

programs duration.

- Deadline for spring submission is Feb. 15.

- Deadline for fall submission is May 1.

To obtain an Undergraduate or Masters Scholarship application that Wyandotte Nation offers, you can email your request or any questions that you may have to Evan Hotulke, our Education Specialist at ehotulke@wyandotte-nation.org; or by calling his office at 918-678-6331.

Wyandotte Nation Honor Stoles: Wyandotte Nation honor stoles are distributed to graduates of a post-secondary institution. Tribal citizens may request a stole by contacting the Education Department and supplying proof of filing for graduation.

Children enrolled in the Wyandotte Nation Child Development Center are currently attending preschool Monday through Thursday, with childcare for school age children available daily along with childcare for all children offered on Fridays. Our infant, one-year old, and two-year old programs are operating Monday through Friday. If you have a child, ages 3-5, and live in the Wyandotte, Okla. area, we are accepting applications for the upcoming preschool year. Applications are available by emailing Lindsay Cooper at lcooper@wyandotte-nation.org or you can request one by calling Lindsay at 918-678-3267. Our Infant, One-year old and Toddler programs are currently full. You may contact Lindsay to request an application to get your child on the waiting list.

The Wyandotte Nation Historical Library is currently open during the Covid-19 pandemic. The hours are Monday through Thursday 8 am to 4:30 pm and Friday 8 am to 3:30 pm. There are lots of new books and DVDs on the shelves with more arriving soon. Be sure to let our Librarian, Madeline Harnar, know if there is a certain book or movie you would like to see added to our collection. Madeline's email address is mharnar@wyandotte-nation.org, and her office phone is 918-678-6332.

We are available to assist you with the application process in any of our programs and we look forward to working with you soon.

Elders Christmas Dinner Drive Thru



Elder Services

Submitted by Brenda House, Elder Services Director

Well here we are in 2021 and still continuing to serve drive thru and home delivered meals only Monday-Friday. Some meal sites are only serving drive thru two days per week. Congregate meals nationwide have all been suspended until this crazy virus gets under control. In spite of it all we have still been able to have some fun times as the Elders drive through to get their meals. There are several that bring their little fur babies with them and they get so excited when they get a treat. We have one particular fur baby that started coming in with his daddy when he was just a tiny puppy and is almost grown now. One day I got so excited to see him that I took his treat out and forgot to take his daddy's meal out to him. Lol!

Looking forward to seeing you all again soon!

Our Valentine Dinner will be Feb. 11.

CAREGIVER

(Suspended due to COVID-19) The Caregiver Support Group meets the first Thursday of each month in the Artie Nesvold Community Center (Title VI) Safe Room beginning at 10:30 am. This group is for all current and former caregivers. It is also for Grandparents raising grandchildren.

It is always a pleasure serving the Wyandotte Nation Citizens. Please feel free to call us anytime.

Department Contacts:

Brenda House, Elder Services Director, (918) 678-6327.

Stephanie Hamilton, Food Service Team Supervisor, (918) 678-6328, (Office) 6390

Seth Higginbotham, Chris Rhodes, Robyn Beaty and Ashley Webb, Food Service Team Members (918) 678-6328

Menu, (918) 678-6326

Education Department Contacts:

Cristi Hudson – Education Director 918-678-6334 or chudson@wyandotte-nation.org

Sami Butterfield – Caseworker/Childcare Specialist 918-678-6330 or sbutterfield@wyandotte-nation.org

Lindsay Cooper – Early Childhood Program Coordinator 918-678-3267 or lcooper@wyandotte-nation.org

Madeline Harnar – Librarian 918-678-6332 or mharnar@wyandotte-nation.org

Evan Hotulke – Caseworker/Education/Employment Specialist 918-678-6331 or ehotulke@wyandotte-nation.org

Kasey Lewis – Intake Clerk 918-678-3268 or klewis@wyandotte-nation.org

TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Important Numbers

Police Department

Ronnie Gilmore (918) 678-6365
rgilmore@wntpd.com

Family Services / Enrollment

Dana Butterfield (918) 678-6319
dbutterfield@wyandotte-nation.org
Leeanna Radabaugh, (918) 678-6329, lrada-
baugh@wyandotte-nation.org

Tags

Tiffany Garner (918) 678-6353
tgarner@wyandotte-nation.org

Domestic Violence Program

Lisa Arnold, (918) 678-6324, lisaarnold@
wyandotte-nation.org; Cesilie Hale, (918) 678-
3269, chale@wyandotte-nation.org

Indian Child Welfare

Tara Gragg (918) 678-6355
tgragg@wyandotte-nation.org
Carmalita Ward, cward@wyandotte-nation.org

Human Resources

Deana Howard (918) 678-6320
dhoward@wyandotte-nation.org

Nutrition & Caregiver Services

Brenda House (918) 678-6327
bhhouse@wyandotte-nation.org

Education / Library / Child Care

Cristi Hudson (918) 678-6334
chudson@wyandotte-nation.org

Tribal Heritage

Sherri Clemons (918) 678-6344
sclemons@wyandotte-nation.org

Environmental / Planning / Development

Christen Lee (918) 678-6341
clee@wyandotte-nation.org

Housing

Kathy DeWeese (918) 678-3229
kdeweese@wyandotte-nation.org

Bearskin Healthcare & Wellness Center

Kelly Friend (918) 678-3259
kfriend@wyandotte-nation.org

Clinic Appointments

Dee Dee Clapp (918) 678-3228
lcoatney@wyandotte-nation.org

Dental / Vision

Ashley Crawford, (918) 678-3222,
acrawford@wyandotte-nation.org

Pharmacy (call-in only)

(918) 678-3244

Fitness Center

Sharon Bartley (918) 678-3231
sbartley@wyandotte-nation.org

Contract Health

Bridget Hart (918) 678-3227
bburleson@wyandotte-nation.org

Diabetes Clinic

Donna Spaulding (918) 678-3258
dspaulding@wyandotte-nation.org

Housing

Submitted by Kathy DeWeese, Housing Director

Wyandotte Nation has accepted a bid from Whitewing Construction Company to build two family duplexes and three family homes. The duplexes will be located in the Heritage Aces neighborhood, and the homes will be in the new Wyandotte Ridge development. The projects should be underway by this spring.

If you are interested in renting, please fill out an application and return to the Housing Office. Federal income guidelines apply.

If you are 55 and older, our senior housing may be for you. The duplexes are all two bedroom, are equipped with appliances and a garage. All yard work is done for

you, and Title VI (Elder food program) and Bearskin Clinic are close by. If you are interested, please fill out an application and return to the housing office.

Nahasda (Native American Housing and Self-Determination Act) is the program governed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Each year a Housing Plan must be submitted and approved by HUD. This plan provides for the upkeep of Nahasda units, rental assistance to college students and down payment assistance, as well as the day-to-day activities of the Department.

IHS -121 Program

This program is funded through the Department of Health & Human Services to ensure safe drinking

water and proper sanitation facilities for our tribal families. These services include drilling wells, installing septic systems, rural water hook-ups, and connections to city water and sewer. There are no income guidelines. Tribal members must reside in the following counties: Craig; Creek; Delaware; Mayes; Nowata; Okfuskee; Okmulgee; Ottawa; Rogers; Tulsa; Wagoner; Washington.

Department Contacts:

*Kathy DeWeese-Housing Director
Don Graham- Housing Specialist
Paul Parker- Project Coordinator
Levi Griffin- Project Coordinator
Larry Hamilton- Residential Maintenance Technician
Drew Lankford-Residential Maintenance Technician*

Tribal Heritage

Submitted by Kim Garcia, Cultural Preservation Officer

Since October, the Cultural Division has been busy preparing for 2021 and the future. The Cultural Researcher position was created – responsible for research, language, and genealogy. We were fortunate to hire tribal citizen Beci Wright. Another position opened up when Courtney Cummings, the Tribal Heritage Specialist, transferred to the Education Department as a teacher. We hired another tribal citizen, Chris Houk, to fill that position. Both Beci and Chris immediately got to work. The Cultural Division, along with the Cultural Advisory Board, spent some time creating our strategic plan for the next three to five years and we are so excited!

One of our goals is to promote and employ Wyandotte citizens in all capacities, including those that preserve and promote our traditional ways. We have determined that the language program is a priority in working toward that goal. Beci will work closely with our linguist, Dr. Craig Kopriss, in order to continue the important work of preparing and revising curriculum for tribal citizens and the community. Beci and Chris will work together to teach the curriculum that has been created. All

language related questions should be directed to Beci in order to help coordinate our efforts and identify our needs.

Another goal is to provide classes and events on a regular basis. While COVID-19 has prevented in-person gatherings, it has also forced us to transition more to online meetings and classes. Fortunately, this allows more tribal citizens to be involved in cultural events. Currently, Facebook is the main avenue we are utilizing to inform, teach, and promote all things cultural. We are working toward a better platform for our events that will allow more tribal citizens to be involved.

Through Facebook Live, we have hosted beading classes. These are recorded and posted for future reference. Also through Facebook, we have had contests such as “Adorn Your Mask” and “Ornament Contest.” We plan to continue these contests to encourage participation and learning new skills. On Jan. 9, we had our winter story telling via Zoom. It was an amazing event with participants from Hawaii, California, Washington, Texas, Missouri, Kansas, Michigan, Washington DC, Canada, and more. This event was recorded and will be posted soon.

We are settling into the near year with new projects. Sherri is working on the tribal cemeteries. Our plan is

to purchase new cemetery software that will allow us to better serve tribal citizens and the community. She is also planning on hosting pow-wow dance classes beginning this summer. Later this year, the first phase of a Veteran Memorial Wall will be rolled out.

Beci is working with Dr. Wicks and Indiana University to digitize the Wyandotte collection there and add it to our Wyandotte Heritage Digital Archives (WHDA). These digital archives will eventually be available to all Wyandotte citizens. She is also working with Dr. Kopriss on our Wa'dat language. She created an excellent Holiday Booklet with language and other cultural information and activities for our Wyandotte children at the Christmas party. She is working on a basic wordbook that will be helpful for all of us wanting to learn more of our language. Beci is restructuring the library in the Wyandotte Nation Cultural Center and Museum so that it will be used as a research library. She is also working on the “Ancestors Project,” which will be tribal genealogy.

Chris has studied the best way to teach how to make traditional pucker-toe moccasins. He is currently researching more about wampum. He spent time learning and condens-

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ing our timeline and is preparing various classes and crafts that can be taught in the classroom. We have partnered with Seneca Schools and Chris and I will be teaching various crafts, history, and language of the Wyandotte people this quarter. For this summer, Chris is researching and planning for a traditional garden. We will have a 3 Sisters garden, and also hope to start growing our own tobacco, sage, and sweet grass.

Teresa is currently working on updating the Senior Turtles Gift Shop. Unfortunately, for almost a year, the Senior Turtles have not had a chance to meet in order to work on the shop. We are thankful she has also been able to help out Elders Services most days with meal distribution.

We would love to hear from you with any other ideas or requests for future classes or events.

Future Events:

(We will advise if any need to be cancelled due to COVID-19 within a month of event)

Pow-Wow Golf Scramble May 21

Memorial Day Honoring May 31

Lacrosse Camp June 22-24

Little Turtles June 25-27

Independence Day Fireworks July 2

Gathering Sept. 7-10

Pow-Wow Sept. 10-12

Ways to contact us and stay involved with Culture:

Facebook: Wyandotte Nation Cultural Center

Twitter: @nation_center

Tižamēh!

Thank you!

Department Contacts:

kgarcia@wyandotte-nation.org

sclemons@wyandotte-nation.org

bwright@wyandotte-nation.org

chouk@wyandotte-nation.org

twilson@wyandotte-nation.org

Planning & Natural Resources

Submitted by Christen Lee, Environmental & Planning Director

Wyandotte Nation's mission is, "To advance the standard of living

of the Tribe...and to promote in any other way the general welfare of the Indians of the Wyandotte Nation." To carry this mission forward in our tribal community, the Planning and Natural Resources Department provide a variety of services including, but not limited to, private well drinking water sampling and septic assessments for private home owners. We also encourage and provide a place to recycle. Lost Creek Recycling Center is open to the community and surrounding area Monday through Thursday from 8 am to 4:30 pm and 8 am to 3:30 pm on Friday. The facility can accept the following materials: paper, plastic, cardboard, tin and aluminum.

Department staff has been busy fulfilling the day-to-day duties required to meet deliverables in our PPG Grant (GAP, Water and NPS combined). Thankfully, we were able to attend two outreach events. On Oct. 24th, Kathleen Welch helped with the Ottawa County Hazardous Household Waste Event, which was held in Miami, Okla. A total of 63 cars came through the event, of which 21 were tribal residents. Each vehicle was given a goody bag with environmental information and giveaways.



We collected a total of 7,126 pounds of hazardous waste from this event, which is great success as it keeps hazardous waste from ending up in a land fill or dumped along a rural county roadside ditch. Every participating resident thanked the workers and they were very appreciative.

On Nov. 6th, department staff participated in a Drive Thru Elders Health Fair at Grove, Okla. Janice Wilson, Brittany Crowe, and Kathleen Welch prepared shopping bags made from recyclable materials, with environmental information about recycling, drinking water, surface water and septic systems, and handed the bags out to the elders



that attended the event.

November seemed to fly by and Christmas was upon us before we looked up at the calendar. Staff not only continued their normal duties, but attended several online meetings and webinars.

Wyandotte Nation has eight water monitoring sights on local creeks and nearby rivers that are sampled each month. Our department also monitors several private wells. All of these monitoring sights provide valuable information regarding the health of both surface and ground water for tribal members and local citizens.

Meet the Department

Each newsletter provides you with names, information, and duties performed by our department. We will begin highlighting a different staff member each quarter. This quarter we are showcasing Kathleen (Kathy) Welch.

Kathleen has worked for Wyandotte Nation for 24 ½ years. She has worked in the Environmental Department for the past 23 years. Mrs.

Welch started out as the Water Technician and became the Department Manager a couple of years ago.

"I have witnessed a lot of growth for both the department and Wyandotte Nation. One of the most tangible is starting up the recycling program within tribal offices, construction of the Lost Creek Recycle Center, which provides a huge service to not only Wyandotte Nation and its members, but also to the

surrounding community. By implementing this program, it has greatly reduced the amount of recyclable products ending up in landfills, roadside ditches, and area waterways."

The Planning and Natural Resources Department is also dedicated to researching and applying for federal, state, and foundation grants to benefit the Tribe and tribal community. Projects often serve Tribal citizens within a 50-mile radius of tribal headquarters; however, some formula funded grants may serve citizens within a 100-mile radius. Ultimately, the department's desire to serve and create a positive impact on all Wyandotte's across the United States. Selecting grants is based upon community and departmental needs as well as the availability of funding opportunities.

Department Contacts:

Director Christen Lee, cleee@wyandotte-nation.org

Environmental Program Manager Kathleen Welch, kwelch@wyandotte-nation.org

Environmental Technician 1 Janice Wilson, jwilson@wyandotte-nation.org

Environmental Technician 2 Brittany Crowe, bcrowe@wyandotte-nation.org

Recycling Center Coordinator John Quick, jquick@wyandotte-nation.org

Land Management Technician Robby Graham, rgraham@wyandotte-nation.org

Water Utilities Operator Braulio, Ramirez bramirez@wyandotte-nation.org

Grant Writer / BIA Self-Governance Coordinator Debbie Dry, ddry@wyandotte-nation.org

Grant Writer 2/ 477 Coordinator Michael Lowery, mlowery@wyandotte-nation.org

Healthcare

Submitted by Kelly Friend, Health Services Director

I hope this letter finds you healthy, happy and welcoming 2021! There has been so much uncertainty this past year with fear, anxiety and frustration all around us. These challenges have not gone unnoticed. We, here at Bearskin Healthcare &

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Wellness Center, want to reassure you that we are here for all your health and wellness needs. Whether it be releasing some frustration in the gym or stopping in for a wellness check-up, vaccination, behavioral health services or ill visit, we are committed to providing healthcare of the highest quality to tribal citizens and the community we serve.

In this past year we have made additions to better serve you. On Sept. 1, physical therapy services began here on site. A benefit coordinator, compliance officer and a Wyandotte Nation Community Health Representative (CHR) were added to the staff. These positions, among others, have been vital during the COVID pandemic, both in testing and vaccinations.

John G. Bearden joined our staff in November as the clinic compliance officer. John is a licensed Pharmacist, Navy Veteran and a graduate



BEARDEN

of the University of Oklahoma. He has worked in the healthcare industry for over 20 years and comes to us with an extensive background in the Indian Health Care arena. In his spare time, John enjoys hunting, fishing and playing music. He also enjoys spending time with his wife and three children. John is excited to work with the staff at Bearskin Clinic and is honored to get to help provide care to the community. Upon John's arrival, he hit the ground running. He was named the coordinator over our COVID-19 vaccination clinic, and participated in countless hours of listening sessions, webinars and workshops over anything and everything there is to know about the Moderna and Pfizer vaccinations. He is responsible for all the reporting of immunizations to the CDC. In addition, John's duties include oversight of lab and pharmacy services.

Renee Zumwalt, Community Health Representative (CHR), joined our staff in November as well. She is a Wyandotte tribal citizen and has worked in the healthcare field for over 13 years. In her spare time, she



Tribal Police Department

Shop With A Cop

Due to COVID-19, the Wyandotte Nation Tribal Police Department officers and volunteers weren't able to take the kids shopping this year in the annual 'Shop With A Cop' program, however, the WNTPD helped 26 Families (87 kids) have a Merry Christmas this year!



ZUMWALT

enjoys traveling and spending time with her grandchildren. Renee, too, has played a fundamental role in our vaccination clinic. With a background in phlebotomy and nursing, she filled a void in assisting John with this clinic. Between the two of them, they have ensured safety and comfort through this COVID pandemic. She is always willing to offer her assistance. She accomplishes all tasks with great initiative and with a positive attitude. Renee's duties will be providing an extension of the clinic into the community. This role will evolve more in the next few months, beyond the vaccination clinic.

Janet Camerer, Benefit Coordinator, joined us in June of 2020, after being in a temporary role. She coordinates patient benefits and additionally assists as a pharmacy technician, when needed. Janet has a degree in animal science, specializing in poultry science. She worked for multiple years in the dietary supplement industry before moving into a Human Resources



CAMERER

role within a local casino. She enjoys spending time with her children and her grandchildren, attending all their sporting events regularly. She is a member of Mountain Movers Church in Grove and has a passion for outreach ministry to the homeless and poor. In her free time, she loves crafting and all watersports, especially kayaking. Like the others, she has had a primary role in vaccinations. She is the individual that has been responsible for calling those that meet the phase one criteria for eligibility of the vaccine and scheduling. She keeps up to date with the immunization cards and necessary paperwork needed to stay in compliance. I have been consistently impressed by both Janet's attitude toward her work and her work performance on the job. Her interpersonal and communication skills have allowed her to develop productive working relationships with both patients and our staff.

I am optimistic that 2021 will have further positive impacts on

services being enhanced with the addition of a drive thru pharmacy and additional clinic space being added. Construction bids are expected toward the end of January and I hope that we will see ground breaking this spring. Our tribal community is plagued with a higher predisposition toward diabetes, heart disease, depression, and hypertension. Patient volume and patient needs are increasing annually. Per Michael Lowery, Grant writer, "The Bearskin Clinic Expansion Project is one project of the Wyandotte Nation Strategic Plan long-term goals and objectives, which serves as a roadmap for enhancing our community's viability. Our proposed Public Facility and Improvements project is the 2,275 sq. ft. expansion of our health clinic, which will be a wood-framed structure on the north side of Wyandotte Nation's Bearskin Clinic located on tribal trust land. The expansion of the facility will also include a drive thru pharmacy on the east side of the clinic with a canopy. The canopy will provide convenience as well as protection during inclement weather."

As mentioned before, COVID vaccinations are underway. Currently we are scheduling appointments for:

- Established patients age 65 and older
- Established patients, over the age of 18, with underlying medical conditions, including diabetes, high blood pressure, liver disease, stroke, asthma or immunocompromised

The next group served will be other established patients, in which we hope to begin scheduling mid-February.

Department Contacts:

Kelly Friend, Director 918-678-3259

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