



The Turtle Speaks

# Gyah'-Wish Atak-ia

A Wyandotte Nation Publication

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February 2022



Santa brings merriment to 'most'

## Holidays in Pictures

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- **Crosswinds Casino expands with non-smoking area**

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Chief .....Billy Friend  
 Second Chief ....Norman Hildebrand, Jr.  
 Councilperson..... Ramona Reid  
 Councilperson..... Vivian Fink  
 Councilperson..... Rob Nesvold  
 Councilperson.....Eric Lofland

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Editor/Design: William Swaim



**Cover Photo:**  
 Santa was on  
 hand to greet  
 kids at the Chil-  
 drens Christ-  
 mas Party.

PHOTOGRAPHER: WILLIAM SWAIM

## Contact Us

### Have News? Share it

We want to hear from you! Send us  
 news or stories you may have or suggest  
 features for us to work on.

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## From the Chief

## Billy Friend



# Opportunity met with success

Happy New Year!

At the end of each year, most of us  
 take stock of what we have achieved  
 and make plans for the year to come.

If we take a close look at what we  
 accomplished during the year, it is  
 surprising to discover we have made  
 some real headway. Of course, we  
 have days during the year when we  
 feel as if we have just been spinning  
 our wheels. However, if you look at  
 some key accomplishments, you can  
 measure the results and see how much  
 progress you are making!

At the Wyandotte Nation, the  
 Wyandotte people were at the top of  
 our minds during the year. Our team  
 actively worked to develop new oppor-  
 tunities to make your life better and  
 bring you closer to your Tribe.

This past year we have been able to  
 increase our educational scholarships  
 and death benefits, expand the Elder's  
 Assistance Program nationwide, and  
 several other programs increased and  
 expanded services.

As our society has changed over the  
 past several decades, it is important  
 to be responsive to those changes,  
 and especially to your needs. Today,  
 single parents raising children are  
 much more common. People are living  
 longer, which mean our elder popula-  
 tion is growing. These changes present  
 opportunities for improvement in our

delivery of services.

The Wyandotte Nation began de-  
 livering meals to elders in our service  
 area who were unable to travel to our  
 Elders Nutrition Center. We also  
 doubled the size of the Bearskin Clinic  
 and added on a drive-thru pharmacy  
 window. We continue to build more  
 houses and duplexes to provide hous-  
 ing opportunities for our citizens. We  
 hope to have the infrastructure in  
 place for our newest housing edition,  
 "Turtle Hill Estates," and begin build-  
 ing housing by early to mid-summer.

The Board of Directors voted to  
 make our Wyandotte Cultural Depart-  
 ment their own division within the  
 Tribe. By doing this, we are dedicat-  
 ing the resources necessary to help  
 fulfill their mission of "Preserving the  
 Future of our Past." Kim Garcia, our  
 Cultural Administrator, and her staff  
 have done a great job providing our  
 citizens the opportunity to participate  
 in a wide variety of cultural activities.

Years ago, we had strictly limited  
 resources for services and were almost  
 completely dependent on federal  
 funds, which were inadequate to fulfill  
 our true needs. We instituted changes  
 in order to develop new resources for  
 us and, in turn, present new opportu-  
 nities for all Wyandottes. It was de-  
 termined that, as a sovereign nation,  
 we would grow our own, self-made  
 businesses to get where we needed

to go. We even made plans to enter  
 commercial businesses and generate  
 returns to support our programs.

The Wyandotte Nation is an ac-  
 knowledged leader among the federal-  
 ly-recognized tribes here in Oklahoma  
 and across the nation. We have met  
 with success in commerce, and those  
 successes fueled the growth of our  
 essential programs and provided new  
 opportunities for Wyandotte people.  
 Every day we witness success stories,  
 and it is incredibly gratifying to see  
 Wyandottes grow and prosper.

We are now one of the largest em-  
 ployers in Northeast Oklahoma, and  
 our growth continues daily. We are  
 engaged in several business ventures,  
 which indicates our value of diversifi-  
 cation. We have a very innovative and  
 dedicated management team keeping  
 our businesses operating and produc-  
 tive.

We must continually adapt to  
 the changing lifestyles and needs of  
 Wyandottes across the country and  
 around the world. We desire to always  
 bring to you the very best your Tribe  
 has to offer!

Yes, 2021 has zoomed past, and  
 we can take a bit of time to check our  
 achievements. We plan to keep up  
 the pace in 2022 with our mission to  
 enhance and improve the quality of  
 life of the Wyandotte people.

## From the Second Chief

## Norman Hildebrand, Jr.

# History: Wyandottes & tobacco

Kweh Omateru

Hello, my friends. Well COVID is  
 still a thorn in our side and we expect-  
 ed a surge after the holidays, we just  
 didn't expect one this huge so quick.  
 Our new drive-thru COVID testing  
 and vaccination building have been  
 busy, with cars lined up every day. We  
 have also had a high rate of positives,  
 which is never good, but hopefully,  
 it will start to diminish in the next

few weeks. I know the hospitals are  
 getting full again and that takes a toll  
 on our health care workers. God Bless  
 them for what they do.

I heard an interesting statistic on  
 my way to the office: Freeman Hos-  
 pital in Joplin, Mo., has 35 COVID  
 patients they are treating, and 33 out  
 of the 35 patients are unvaccinated.  
 So if you aren't vaccinated, please con-  
 sider it, it could mean the difference

between life  
 and death  
 because  
 the vaccine is working. It isn't 100%  
 effective but so far it has shown to be  
 about 90% effective in fighting this  
 COVID virus. This is a global health  
 pandemic and we need everyone to do  
 their part so we can get back to some





# Board appoints Nesvold to fill vacant position

The Wyandotte Nation Board of Directors appointed Rob Nesvold to the Board to fill a vacant position left after the passing of Juanita McQuiston.

Nesvold was sworn in as the newest member of the Board Tuesday, Nov. 9, following the Board's meeting at the Tribal Administration Building. The vacancy was left open after no qualified candidates ran for the position during the last election. As defined in Article X of the Constitution of the Wyandotte Nation: If a vacancy occurs in any position of the Board of Directors, the remaining Board of Directors shall appoint a qualified person to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Nesvold previously served on the

Election Committee for the Wyandotte Nation for several years. In addition to his service on the election committee, Nesvold previously served as a City Council member for the City of Seneca, where he currently resides, and is currently a member of the Seneca School Board. He is married with three kids.

He said he looks forward to serving the Tribe again for the betterment of all tribal citizens.

**(PICTURED RIGHT) The Wyandotte Nation Board of Directors, from left, Eric Lofland, Vivian Fink, Rob Nesvold, Ramona Reid, Second Chief Norman Hildebrand, Jr., and Chief Billy Friend.**

WILLIAM SWAIM | WYANDOTTE NATION



## 2nd Chief

Continued from Page 2

sort of normalcy.

If you haven't been to the Wyandotte area the last couple of years and you get to come back hopefully for our Gathering and Pow-Wow this year you will notice a lot of changes. We have a new Administration building up on the hill, the renovation of the preschool will be done next month and the renovation of our Police and Courts building will also be done probably close to the first of March. We are very excited for those two departments.

We have architects working on the plans for the new preschool and a new Title VI building, and everyone is excited about these projects. The Wyandotte Nation continues to grow for the betterment of our citizens and the Wyandotte community.

The Wyandottes, as well as many tribes in this country, have used tobacco for ceremonies and eventually for pleasure, but mainly for ceremonies. There are many myths regarding how the Wyandottes obtained tobacco and here is one that William Connelly had published.

### How the Wyandots obtained the tobacco plant:

*The village stood by the lake. Clear streams flowed into the lake from the hills. On the hills were large trees.*

*The Hawk Clan lived in this village. In the village lived an old man of the Bear Clan. He had a young wife of the Hawk Clan. Two daughters were born to them. When she was twelve years old the first daughter died. Much grief did her death bring to the Old Man and his young wife. When the second daughter reached the age of twelve, she, too, was seized with a fatal sickness, and soon died, also. And the mother soon died of grief. The Old Man was left alone in the lodge, in deep sorrow. But he went about to do good. He was held in much esteem by all the village of the Hawk people.*

*One day when the Old Man, and others of the village, were standing by the lake, a large flock of immense Hawks half-a-tree tall came flying over the blue hills to the lake. They wheeled and circled about the lake and its shores. One of their number fell to the ground. It lay on the lake shore with its wings thrown above its back like a dove shot with an arrow. The other Hawks flew about for a short time. They screamed and called to each other. Then they flew back over the blue hills from whence they came.*

*The visit of the Great Hawks to the lake terrified the people in the village. And those standing on the bank of the lake by the Old Man ran about and called aloud from fright. The Old Man was not frightened by the Great*

**"In order to deserve, we must pay our dues and steadily work for perfection. We must relish in struggle, and relinquish pride. We must dispel fear and seek enlightenment. We must shun division and honor love. We must know our hearts and seek to understand others. We must try, live, create, feel, grow and love."**

---Bryant McGill

*Hawks. He said, "I will go and see the stricken Hawk that fell down. The people said, "Do not go to the Hawk." But the Old Man replied, "I am old, my life is almost done." The heavens are black. I am full of sorrow. I am alone. It can matter little if I die. And I am not afraid of death. I will see the stricken Hawk.*

*He went on. The way grew dark. But the Hawk lying on the ground remained before him. As he advanced a great flame swept down and consumed the Hawk. When he came to where it had lain ashes were all about. Lying in these was a living coal of fire in which he saw his firstborn daughter. He stooped to look. He saw it was indeed his daughter. He took her up, she spoke to him. Then the other people of the village came also. The child spoke to them. She said, "I have returned with a precious gift for the Wyandots. I am sent with it to my own clan, the Hawk people."*

*Then she opened her hands, they were full of very small seeds. These she*

*planted in the ashes of the fire from which she had risen. Soon a large field of Tobacco grew from the little seeds. The girl lived with her people. She taught them how to cultivate and cure the Tobacco, she taught them to make offerings of it, and to smoke it in pipes. And the Wyandots were thus more fortunate than other people, they alone had Tobacco.*

Quite a little story isn't it? Chris Houk at the Cultural Center grew tobacco last year in the garden outside of it as well as the Three Sisters (beans, corn, and squash) from which he made a very good soup -- everyone will have to ask him about it. They are doing many fascinating things at the Cultural Center to keep up to date with our website for the many various classes they offer online.

It always has been and still is an extreme pleasure and honor to serve the Citizens of the Wyandotte Nation as Second Chief!





# Holidays in Pictures

PHOTOS BY WILLIAM SWAIM | WYANDOTTE NATION



(Counter clockwise from top left) We hosted a Thanksgiving Dinner in November for our elders and the community. We held our annual Children's Christmas Party Dec. 11. Santa was on hand to take photos with children in front of a Longhouse backdrop made by the Culutral Center. The Elders Christmas Dinner was held Dec. 16. The Wyandotte High School Choir kicked off the dinner, singing a few Christmas Carols. Santa passed out goodies.





## Pieces of Our Past | Tribal Heritage

# The Walker Collection

All items discussed below were donated by some of the great, great, grandchildren of Isaiah and Mary (Williams) Walker and delivered by Wyandotte Nation citizen Bert Walker. Their generosity has allowed the future opportunity to see Pieces of Our Past. These are things that were used and held, written, and cherished by our Ancestors.

## Spoons

The spoons, most of which are of the “fiddle-back” design, are very much like tracks of our ancestor’s time in Ohio. The Makers’ Marks on their backs tell a story that would be easily missed to the casual observer.

**The oldest are marked with a simple J.S. Three makers used J.S.:**

- John Sanders
- John Shea
- Josiah Snatt

These spoons are from London circa 1808.

**The next oldest is marked, H. Safford:**

- Harry Safford, maker.

These spoons were made in Zanesville, OH circa 1816-1822.

**The last identifiable were marked H.R. Holman and Holman & Co:**

- Henry Ralph Holman, maker.

Holman made these spoons in Cincinnati, OH circa 1855-1858, and then in Kansas City circa 1859-1862.



WILLIAM SWAIM | WYANDOTTE NATION

Some of the pieces of the Walker Collection feature a rare book (above), a spoon collection (below left), and diploma (below right). Also pictured (Courtesy Photo) is a choker necklace made of wampum worn by BNO Walker.



## Wampum

The wampum donated by Bert originally comprised our sacred wampum belts. A Union Captain named Hopkins and his men had been defeated at the July 1st and 2nd, 1863 Battle of Cabin Creek, and were retreating. They found Tauromee’s cabin unoccupied but did find the chest of wampum belts. These were promptly taken out and destroyed. According to BNO Walker, after the war, several women

Contact period of our history. The kettle is surprisingly light considering its size. Walker Family legend states it was used for boiling sap to make syrup. Another Walker family member recalled having a bath in it as a young child.

## Chilocco Diploma

*Books, Chilocco Diploma, and Manuscripts*

Stories and histories about our people by our people are very valuable. Among the collection, you will find an inscribed (signed) copy of Origin and Traditional History of the Wyandotts by Peter Dooyentate Clarke. This is a rare book as only 1,000 were privately printed in 1870 using Peter Clarke’s own money. (A transcription of the book can be found on the Nation’s website).

The collection included the diploma of Bert’s grandfather, Kenneth Walker, from Chilocco Indian School in 1908. Kenneth attended three Indian Schools – Seneca Indian School in Wyandotte, OK, Haskell Indian Institute (now known as Haskell Indian Nations University) in Lawrence, KS, and Chilocco Indian School near Ponca City, OK. His high school notebooks from a botany class are another glimpse into the coursework required of students at that time. There was also a 1915 Yearbook from his time at college.

Family bibles can also be valuable

went to the cabin site and collected the wampum and put it on strings, often used as necklaces. All the wampum in the collection is on strings. In addition to the strings, there is a choker necklace made of the wampum that was worn by BNO Walker in a performance of the Song of Hiawatha and can be seen in this photograph.

## Copper Kettle

A large copper kettle with an iron bail was donated that will probably hold close to 40 gallons of liquid. It is believed to have belonged to Mary Williams Walker and had been passed down through her side of the family. One professional from the Smithsonian stated he believed it was from the Early



See **WALKER**, Page 7

# Crosswinds expands with non-smoking area

BY HANNAH KING, KAKE

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LINK TO VIDEO/ARTICLE: [WWW.KAKE.COM/STORY/45632164/CROSSWINDS-CASINO-](http://WWW.KAKE.COM/STORY/45632164/CROSSWINDS-CASINO-ADDS-ALLNEW-NONSMOKING-GAMING-FLOOR)

ADDS-ALLNEW-NONSMOKING-GAMING-FLOOR

PARK CITY, Kan. - Located at 777 Jackpot Way in Park City, sits the Crosswinds Casino.

Despite opening less than a year ago, the Sedgwick County Casino has already expanded.

Crosswinds Casino has announced its all-new- non-smoking gaming floor is now open. The new addition now accounts for 1/3 of the casino's space.

"Oh I tell everybody... come down... try it out. It's very clean and people are very nice," Patty LeDuc, someone visiting the casino said.

The casino has been in Park City for 10 months. It's full of bright lights, bling and is a facility many like to frequent.

Patty LeDuc has been visiting the casino since it opened in early 2021.



(FILE PHOTO) WILLIAM SWAIM | WYANDOTTE NATION  
The night view of Crosswinds Casino in Park City, Kansas. The casino recently expanded to include a non-smoking area.

"This has been great for the community... They should have done it a long time ago, but I guess it couldn't

pass," LeDuc said.

"We opened up to a huge response from the players. One of our main

complaints was smoking and we needed to expand," Kevin Lien, General Manager of Crosswinds Casino said. "We had two complaints, one was smoking, the other was a line."

So they did expand, by adding another 300 machines and making an entire section non-smoking.

The casino is all in one building, but now you can choose to go in either a smoking or non-smoking side.

Now, the casino sits at 30,000 square feet total.

"I think they like our product, we try to provide entertainment for them. It's a different product than what is offered in the area," Lien said. "Our product is closer to what has been offered in the Oklahoma market."

General Manager Kevin Lien says, as the casino grew, its parking lot also needed to keep up.

"We are putting in an additional parking lot," Lien shared.

See **CROSSWINDS**, Page 7

# Jan Woody retires from WTK after 16 years of service

BY WILLIAM SWAIM  
WYANDOTTE NATION

A retirement reception was held Dec. 20 at River Bend Casino & Hotel for longtime Wyandotte Tribe of Oklahoma (WTK) employee Jan Woody. Woody is retiring as Controller for WTK after 16 years.

WTK CEO Kelly Carpino and co-workers presented her with a few going away gifts and shared stories.

"As much as we are going to miss Jan, we are excited for her as she gets to set out on this next venture of retirement," Carpino said. "She wears the hat of controller, overseeing the integrity of our financial reporting, but she's played such a bigger role in each of our pieces."

"Jan, thank you very much for 16 years, we are going to miss you very much and I am excited for you. We want you to come back and visit us any time. We love you, we thank you."

Wyandotte Nation Chief Billy Friend echoed

those thoughts in wishing Woody the best, adding that not only did Woody fulfill her job description, but went above and beyond, especially volunteering to help out at many Wyandotte Nation community events.

"You can replace positions, but you can't replace people, and we will never be able to replace Jan Woody as a person, but we appreciate everything she's done for the Wyandotte Nation," Chief Friend said. "I always say everyone who works for the Wyandotte Nation makes a difference, Jan has been here long enough to see the difference we have made in people's lives."

She leaves a big hole to fill, but Carpino said Woody has been preparing her successor, Dalana Rutledge.

Woody was touched by the kind (and funny) things said about her years at WTK.

"I want to thank you all for coming. All the wonderful things you have said about me, are tenfold over how I feel about all of you and



WILLIAM SWAIM | WYANDOTTE NATION

Jan Woody, front row right, pictured with fellow department managers Scott Horner, Ron Brown, CEO Kelly Carpino, Katie Thompson, and Ed Lambert.

the Wyandotte Nation," she said. "I love you guys, I'm going to miss you so much."



## WTOK News & Notes

This past year has brought much excitement and change to our organization. After many years of battling the land in trust process, we were able to open the first phase of the long awaited property in Park City, KS, Crosswinds Casino. The launching of Crosswinds triggered the first of several leadership changes within our gaming division. I am excited to announce formally the transfer of Kevin Lien from 7th Street General Manager (GM) to Crosswinds GM and the promotions of Jerrell Royal to 7th Street GM and Casey Ellett to River Bend Casino and Hotel GM.

### River Bend Casino & Hotel

Casey Ellett was recently promoted to General Manager for River Bend Casino and Hotel. Casey brings to the GM role more than 10 years' experience in the gaming industry along with an in-depth knowledge of the RBCH property and customer base.

Casey joined the former Wyandotte Nation Casino team in 2009 and has been serving the property as Assistant General Manager since June of 2018. Prior to that, he led the marketing team as the Marketing Manager for the casino.

Casey's brings with him passion for the casino industry and a proven dedication to building a business for the Wyandotte Nation that aligns with our core values.

Casey is a graduate of Missouri Southern University with a BA in Mass Communications and BA in Public Relations. He and his wife Alyssa, have two children, Asher and Parker.

### 7th Street Casino

Jerrell Royal was named the new General Manager at our 7th Street Casino property in Kansas City, KS in March. He has been with the casino for the past 8 years serving as the Assistant General Manager in charge of operations since August 2020 and Marketing Manager responsible for developing daily promotions, direct mail and media campaigns. Jerrell holds a Master's Degree in Administration from University of Missouri Kansas City and prior to joining the 7th Street Casino team he was the Assistant Director of Marketing at a casino property in Iowa.

Jerrell is originally from Atlantic City, New Jersey and grew up in the gaming industry from the time he was 18. His career has given him

the opportunity to work in several markets, including Las Vegas, New Orleans, Chicago and North Kansas City, as a marketing leader. With experience of working in frequency and destination markets, he brings a unique perspective to 7th Street Casino. His focus is to continue to build on the success of the property and to improve the guest experience. Jerrell's is married and has two children ages 12 and 13. He is very excited to be in his new role as General Manager and is looking forward to meeting the challenges of the future.

### Crosswinds Casino

Kevin Lien is the new General Manager at our Crosswinds Casino property in Park City KS. Kevin joined the Wyandotte properties in November 2014 as the General Manager of 7th Street Casino, where he operated that property until the opening of Crosswinds Casino. Kevin has work in the gaming industry for 23 years, starting as a Controller in a small Tribal casino in South Dakota. He has also worked as an Associate Manager and Bingo Manager before becoming a General Manager 18 years ago. Over his gaming career, he has worked for six

different tribes.

Kevin grew up in rural South Dakota where he started his career in the construction industry after receiving his business degree from Arizona State University. He worked in numerous trades in that industry. He earned a second degree in Accounting from Northern State University in Aberdeen, S.D., while working in the construction industry and before venturing out into the gaming industry. Since entering the gaming industry, he has worked for three tribes in South Dakota, a tribe in Michigan and a tribe in Wisconsin. Kevin is very happy to be working with the Wyandotte Tribe and enjoys the challenges of expanding the casinos with the whole team.

Kevin is single and enjoys home project both interior and exterior. He spends his free time working on home improvement projects. He also has a large family, being the second of six siblings. Though not living close, he does spend time visiting them on occasion.

**Please join me in congratulating all three of our leaders on their new opportunities.**

**– Kelly Carpino, CEO, Wyandotte Tribe of Oklahoma**

## CROSSWINDS

### Continued from Page 6

Lein says the casino works hand in hand with the City.

"We are here to support the community. We are a team player," Lien

said.

The Wyandotte Nation owns the casino and where it sits. It's on around 100 acres. The casino only takes up about 10 (acres).

"There is extra land for potential growth. We would like to help develop this area for the City of Park City. The tribe is very diverse and we could bring other opportunities here too

besides the just casino," Lien said.

Lien says, it was a challenge, expanding during a pandemic, with supply issues and shortages and delays with products, but they made it work.

## WALKER

### Continued from Page 5

sources of information as it was common practice to write down inside marriages, births, deaths, and other family histories to record it all in one place. If you have an old family bible with this information but the bible itself is falling apart – please do NOT have it rebound; instead, find an acid-free storage box. Rebinding requires the binder to cut the

original book and if the information is written down, it can be lost in the process. Personal correspondence gives another important glimpse into our ancestors' lives. This collection contains a letter from BNO Walker to his brother, Tom, written in 1905, which gives insight into a story BNO submitted to a contest, "The Navajo Ring." The story is also included in the collection but has no date on it. Thanks to the letter, we can put an approximate date of creation – some-

thing we wouldn't have had without the letter! We also learn that BNO feels like he does not have enough time to write all that he wants to write.

Other manuscripts donated include a second unpublished story by BNO Walker, also carefully typed. The writing was very important to him when he was very young. At age 11, he was invited to co-edit the Seneca Indian School newspaper – the only boy and the youngest student

ever asked. He later returned to the school as a teacher.

We hope you will consider donating items by and about Wyandottes to our museum: books, bibles, letters, photographs, documents, not just artifacts. If you are unsure it is something we would consider, please reach out and ask! We would be happy to discuss it with you. Contact our Tribal Heritage Department.

**– Chris Houk, [chouk@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:chouk@wyandotte-nation.org)**

# TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

## Human Resources

*Submitted by Deana Howard, HR Director*

The Wyandotte Nation Police Department is proud to welcome T. Danny Morris as a Wyandotte Nation Police Officer. Danny has 22 years of experience with Law Enforcement between Missouri and Oklahoma. He graduated from MSSU Law Enforcement Academy. Danny enjoys spending time with his wife and family.



MORRIS

In his spare time enjoys hunting and the outdoors. He is also very active in his church. We are very fortunate to have Danny and wish him much success in his new position.

The Human Resources Department is happy to welcome Christopher Smith. Chris will now be serving in his new position as Information Technology Technician I for the Wyandotte Nation. WTOK Economic Development employed Chris since March of 2019 and he transferred to the Wyandotte Nation in November. He has his degree in Information



SMITH

Technology from Tidewater Community College. Chris has worked for several years in the Information Technology field. He enjoys hunting and fishing, and loves spending time with his family and friends. We are happy to welcome Chris and wish him success in this new position.

The Wyandotte Nation Title VI Department is very happy to welcome tribal citizen Randee Crouch as a Food Service Team Member. Randee has two Associates Degrees, and previous customer service and food experience. She enjoys working out and having "me" time. Randee loves



CROUCH

spending time with her family, fur babies, watching movies and anything outdoors. We are very fortunate to have Randee.

The Wyandotte Nation Education Department is very happy to welcome Emma Loding as an After School Childcare Assistant. Emma is currently a senior at Wyandotte High School. She moved to Miami from Rosemead, Calif., in 2017. She enjoys crafts, specifically sewing, and playing with dogs. When



LODING

not in school she spends time going on hikes with her family members. We are very glad to have Emma in Education.

## Family Services

*Submitted by Dana Butterfield, Family Services Director*

I am sure like most of you, we in the Family Services Department are tired of dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic. The New Year has started with an increase in cases across Oklahoma Green Country, which appear to be the same for most of the country. Fortunately, we have not had an interruption to services and hope this remains the case. However, we ask that you refrain from visiting the office in person if you are not feeling well or have tested positive for Covid-19, even if you believe you are asymptomatic. We are happy to assist you by phone and/or email to the best of our ability. We are also working to incorporate a drop box in front of our office to help with limiting contact for the safety of you, the tribal citizen, and the staff.

On Dec. 11, we held a drive-thru Children's Christmas party with 210 children participating. All children and youth 15 and under received small gifts and a \$25 Walmart gift card. Children were also able to get out of the vehicles and have a picture taken with Santa in front of an amazing Longhouse backdrop purchased by the

Heritage Department. If you have not seen pictures yet from this event be sure to check them out on the Nation's Facebook page or earlier pages in the newsletter.

At this moment, we are still moving forward with plans to host Town Hall meetings in both Newport Beach and Sacramento, Calif. The Newport Beach meeting is scheduled for Saturday, April 9, with the Sacramento meeting to be held the following day, Sunday, April 10. Tribal citizens who reside in these areas will receive a postcard invite to the meetings. Please watch the website and social media for updates that will be coming in regard to the meetings.

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](http://www.wyandotte-nation.org). The website is also receiving a facelift shortly so be sure to check back often.

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

### Winter Programs:

**Winter Clothing** – Began Nov. 1 and ends Feb. 28 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 is for \$100 per child. Applications, along with guidelines, are available on the home page of the Tribal website. 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, with services available between Dec. 1 and Feb. 28 for tribal citizens residing in Oklahoma. This program is income based and proof of income is required, along with other required documentation.

**NOTE: APPLICATIONS FOR THE ABOVE WINTER PROGRAMS MUST BE RECEIVED OR POSTMARKED BY FEB. 28 TO BE ELIGIBLE. BILLS/RECEIPTS MUST BE DATED BETWEEN OCT. 1, 2021, AND FEB. 28, 2022.**

**Elders Assistance** – One-time expense for \$250 for tribal elders aged 55 and over. This program was expanded to all Wyandotte Nation Elders as of Oct. 1, 2021.

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

**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. An appointment card must be presented and fuel must be received before attending the appointment; Major Medical – extreme medical issues (must be life-threatening, terminal, etc. not chronic medical issues) that require multiple trips outside of the local area. The 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 Family Services:

**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



# TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

## Winter Clothing Program Information

**Application dates Nov. 1, 2021 – Feb. 28, 2022**  
**Receipts can be dated between Oct. 1 and Feb. 28**

- Program is available to enrolled citizens 18 (enrolled in high school) and under who reside in the states of Oklahoma, Missouri, Arkansas and Kansas.
- All purchases need to be rang up separately for each child!
- Please only have program eligible items on each child's receipts and there should only be one child's purchases on any receipt that is submitted with the application.
- Allowable purchases include: coats, gloves, earmuffs, scarves, winter hats (no ball caps), pants, shirts, socks, underwear, pajamas and shoes/boots.
- Unallowable purchases include, but are not limited to: shorts, swim wear, food or accessories, i.e. hair care products, jewelry, perfume, make-up. If you have any questions as to what is eligible, please feel free to call the Family Services staff at any time.
- You must show \$100 for each child on the Walmart card program. For example: don't spend \$50 on one child and use the remainder of their card on another child's purchases.
- For online purchases: Must send full receipt/full email. No screen shots or partial receipts. Receipts must show purchase date, individual item price, subtotal, tax and payment information (visa/store card/paypal, etc.). The order summary is not enough as these usually only show estimated taxes. Also, when you add up the receipts on the application be sure figure in the discounts and promotions on your amounts.

**Remember... individual receipts for each child, with program eligible items only. Please don't include other grocery shopping items or other family member clothing items on receipt.**

### Continued from Page 8

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. 15 is the deadline to be considered for enrollment at the 2022 Annual Meeting. Applications must be submitted along with an original state-certified birth certificate.

**New Enrollee Benefit** - Each ap-

plication received before 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. Please contact Tiffany Garner with any tag-related questions, at 918-678-6353.

**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 are now blue. However, if you still have a red card, it is still active. All accounts were loaded on Jan. 1, 2022, 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.

Account balances can be obtained at any time via [www.mytrustmark.com](http://www.mytrustmark.com), by calling Trustmark at 800-990-9058 option 2 for Flexible Spending Accounts, or via the mobile app. If you have a smartphone I strongly encourage you to download and use the app. With the app, you can view balances, file claims, see purchases/expenses, see if any receipts are required, and scan items to see if they are eligible expenses. A flyer with information to set up the app can be found on the homepage of our website.

**Burial Assistance** – This benefit was increased to \$2,000 beginning Oct. 1, 2021. Funds will be paid to the funeral home or 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 organizations providing education and awareness about these issues. On Oct. 1, 2021, the Wyandotte Nation Crime Victim's Advocate, Kristi Johnston, relocated from the Police Department to the Family Services Department. Kristi has worked for the Nation for five years and has been a great addition to the Department. She can provide services and advocacy to all victims of crimes. The Department has also added an Advocate to assist with Elder abuse; Jenny Reeves began employment in January and has prior advocacy experience.

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness month and April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Be sure to follow the Wyandotte Nation Family Violence Prevention (FVPP) Facebook page for information about program activities and outreach/awareness

**Continued on Page 10**

### 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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information. If you are currently involved in an unhealthy relationship, please reach out to Lisa Arnold (see below for contact information), regardless of where you live. If you are not 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](mailto:dbutterfield@wyandotte-nation.org)

**ICW Supervisor, Tara Gragg**, 918-678-6355, [tgragg@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:tgragg@wyandotte-nation.org)

**ICW Worker, Carmalita Ward**, 918-678-6485, [cward@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:cward@wyandotte-nation.org)

**Tag Administrator, Tiffany Garner**, 918-678-6353, [tgarner@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:tgarner@wyandotte-nation.org)

**Family Services Specialist, Leeanna Radabaugh**, 918-678-6329, [lradabaugh@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:lradabaugh@wyandotte-nation.org)

**DV Advocate/Educator, Lisa Arnold**, 918-678-6324, [lisaarnold@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:lisaarnold@wyandotte-nation.org)

**DV/SA Advocate, Cesilie Hale**, 918-678-3269, [chale@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:chale@wyandotte-nation.org)

**Victims of Crime Advocate, Kristi Johnston**, 918-678-6340, [kjohnston@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:kjohnston@wyandotte-nation.org)

**DV/SA/Elder Abuse Advocate, Jenny Reeves**, 918-678-6486, [jreeves@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:jreeves@wyandotte-nation.org)

## Elder Services

*Submitted by Brenda House, Elder Services Director*

The Elder Services (Title VI) Team would like to thank all of the staff and volunteers who helped with our Thanksgiving and Christmas Dinners. We served 342 meals for Thanksgiving and 383 for Christmas.

We are excited to be working on plans for our new Elder Services Building! We hope to break ground sometime this spring. It will be located across the street West of Bear Park. Our new building will have a

drive-thru window.

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

### Caregiver

For the safety of our staff and Elders, we have suspended our Care-

giver Support Group Meeting once again due to the spike in COVID numbers. We hope that we will be able to meet in person again soon.

This group is for all current and former caregivers. It is also for Grandparents raising grandchildren.

**Elder Services Team:**

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

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

**Seth Higginbotham, Robyn Beaty, Ashley Webb, and Randee Crouch Food Service Team Members**, (918) 678-6328.

## Honoring our Veterans



Our Elder Services Department honored veterans during a lunch and presentation in advance of Veterans Day in November. Helping with the presentation were the Wyandotte Nation Honor Guard (Larry Hamilton, pictured below left, and John Webb, pictured below right), as well as Beth Marsh with Good Shepherd Hospice and Hannah Weinrich with Grandwood Assisted Living.

PHOTO BY WILLIAM SWAIM | WYANDOTTE NATION





# TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

## Education

*Submitted by Cristi Hudson,  
Education Director*

I hope this addition of Turtle Talk finds everyone healthy and safe. The Education Department is looking forward to a great 2022! The Education Building is still in the renovation process, but we hope to be back in the building during the spring.

The Library will be closed during the renovation. While the Library is closed, I encourage you to look into the virtual library. If you have access to the internet, you may create an account using your phone, tablet, or PC and visit our virtual library at [www.okvirtuallibrary.overdrive.com](http://www.okvirtuallibrary.overdrive.com). By doing this, you will gain access to several different eBooks, audiobooks, magazines, and videos. You may contact the Librarian, Madeline Harnar, [mharnar@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:mharnar@wyandotte-nation.org) for more information.

Wyandotte Nation Child Development Center is currently full in our infant/toddler rooms, preschool, and after-school programs, but we are still accepting applications to be placed on a waiting list for all age groups: infants, toddlers, preschool, and before/after school. You may contact Lindsay Cooper for an application by email, at [lcooper@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:lcooper@wyandotte-nation.org), or by phone at 918-678-3267.

Wyandotte Nation Scholarship Program is processing spring 2022 semester scholarships. If you are currently on the scholarship program, now that the fall semester is over you will need to email or mail our Education Specialist, Evan Hotulke, your latest transcript. Your transcript will need to include your fall 2021 grades and your spring 2022 schedule for him to process your spring scholarship.

*Here are a few Wyandotte Nation Undergraduate Scholarship reminders:*

- **Undergraduate scholarships are limited to 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 program's duration.**
- **Deadline for spring submission is Feb. 15.**
- **Deadline for fall submission is May 1.**

## Housing

*Submitted by Kathy DeWeese,  
Housing Director*

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.

If you are in need of a rental home in the Wyandotte area, 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. 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.

Wyandotte Emergency Rental Assistance Program, which is part of the Consolidated Appropriation Act of 2021, is still available. If you are in need of help with past due rent, current rent, or utilities, please fill out and return the application for assistance, which is found on the Wyandotte Nation website. Income guidelines do ap-

ply. This is a nationwide program. If you have questions regarding this process, please call or email our office. We will be happy to talk with you.

Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) is now available for help for water utilities in the state of Oklahoma. This program is based on income. Applications are available on the website or by calling our office.

### 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 Staff:

Kathy DeWeese- Housing Director  
Don Graham- Housing Specialist  
Paul Parker- Project Coordinator  
Levi Griffin- Project Coordinator  
Randy Qualls- Residential Maintenance Technician  
Drew Lankford- Residential Maintenance Technician

will be needed once you are placed with a service and assigned to a 477 Specialist. If you need any of these services, you may request an application to apply for any of our 477 services by emailing [wn477@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:wn477@wyandotte-nation.org) or by calling Kasey Lewis at 918-678-3268.

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

### Department Contacts:

**Cristi Hudson – Education Director**, 918-678-6334 or [chudson@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:chudson@wyandotte-nation.org)

**Sami Butterfield – Caseworker/ Childcare Specialist**, 918-678-6330 or [sbutterfield@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:sbutterfield@wyandotte-nation.org)

**Lindsay Cooper – Early Childhood Program Coordinator**, 918-678-3267 or [lcooper@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:lcooper@wyandotte-nation.org)

**Madeline Harnar – Librarian**, 918-678-6332 or [mharnar@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:mharnar@wyandotte-nation.org)

**Evan Hotulke – Caseworker/ Education/Employment Specialist**, 918-678-6331 or [ehotulke@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:ehotulke@wyandotte-nation.org)

**Kasey Lewis – Intake Clerk**, 918-678-3268 or [klewis@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:klewis@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 as and septic assessments for private home owners. We also encourage and provide a place to recycle. Lost

Wyandotte Nations' 477 Program is accepting applications for services. 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

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TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

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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.

Thank you for recycling so many materials during the winter months! Usually we see a decrease in recyclable products during late fall and early winter, but many of you continue to bring us your metals, plastics, and papers.

Amounts collected for the months of October thru December are listed in the table (featured right) included with this article.

Through our EPA Water 106 Grant, we were able to sample the water for both tribal and non-tribal citizens within a 50-mile radius of Wyandotte Nation and the Grand Lake Watershed. Parameters sampled are for coliform bacteria, E. coli, heavy metals and nitrates. Our Water Technicians performed seven private well samples in addition to three retakes since the last article.

The Natural Resources Staff have been busy with routine monthly and quarterly sampling of eight ambient water sites within in the Wyandotte Nation Historic Jurisdictional area. For the monthly sampling, our staff measured stream flow, air temperature, wind speed, and YSI EXO parameters of dissolved oxygen, conductivity, turbidity, water temperature, and ph. For quarterly sampling, staff collects grab samples for E. coli, total suspended solids, and total dissolved solids. Heavy metals are sampled on an annual basis. The picture (right) with this article is of John Gerhard performing flow readings on Sycamore Creek.

During the week of Oct. 18 – 22, the Lost Creek Recycle Center held its Bi-annual Tire Collection Event. We had good participation from the surrounding community, with a total of 604 tires collected. We anticipate hosting an Environmental Festival at the same time we will have our next tire collection the week of April 18-22, 2022, in order to coincide with Earth Day.

On Oct. 22, staff from our department had an environmental information booth at the Bearskin



Some of the tires collected during our bi-annual Tire Collection Event. A total of 604 tires were collected at our Lost Creek Recycling Center during the October collection event.

PHOTO BY  
WILLIAM SWAIM  
| WYANDOTTE  
NATION

Solid Waste Collected from January - March	
Aluminum	308 lbs.
Cardboard	13,804 lbs.
Newspaper	992
Plastic (#1 & #2)	713 lbs.
Shredded Paper	1,104 lbs.
Tin	0 lbs.
Combined Total	16,921 lbs.

Health and Wellness Health Fair. The event was held outside at the old Eastern Shawnee Boarder Town parking lot. Approximately 100 elders attended the event.

(Possible) Annual Environmental Festival

(Per Covid restrictions)

Department Staff have been participating in virtual Meetings due to COVID restrictions. These meetings are with EPA, DOI, BIA, ODEQ and others tribes on a regular basis. Staff have also attended online trainings that pertain to environmental issues related to our grants and funding sources.

Development and construction at Wyandotte Ridge has continued over the past three months. The Tribe is going to complete the infrastructure for Turtle Hill Estates this spring. We are also working on the road and culvert next to this project. We will be working with the City of Wyandotte and Water/Waste Water District to expand the Sewage Treat-

ment Plant.

The Grants Department received three new awards from federal funding agencies that will benefit the tribal community in safety and education. The Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) awarded Wyandotte Nation \$55,272 in supplemental funds for the Tribal Opioid Response grant. We received \$48,185 in grant funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), which will allow us to hire a museum technician who will be able to learn best practices in creating an online exhibit. The one-year project will also help recover from the COVID-19 pandemic as we create an online exhibit in order to enhance connections with the Tribe and Tribal citizens nationwide. The Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART) awarded the Tribe \$319,634 to maintain our sex offender registry and participate in the National Sex Offender Public Website. This three year project will



(COURTESY PHOTO)

John Gerhard performing flow readings at Sycamore Creek.

also assist the Tribe by providing a full-time SORNA officer, a database to collect data, a community education program on sex offender topics and safety planning, and a fingerprint identification reader.

The BIA Self-Governance Coordinator Submitted the annual Tribal Transportation Program reports as required by 23 U.S.C. 201(c)(6)(C) Dec. 27.



# TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

## Continued from Page 12

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 the 1,294 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 is to serve and create a positive impact on all Wyandottes.

Feel free to contact our department if you have a community project idea for a grant.

### 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 John Gerhard**, jgerhard@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

## Tribal Heritage

*Submitted by Kim Garcia, Cultural Preservation Officer*

Kweh qmatəru?

As you may have noticed, we at the Cultural Division have been working toward having a more online presence. With Zoom and Facebook Live, we have been able to reach many more citizens from all over the country to teach classes, host meetings, and do more education. While we miss getting together in-person, the relationships that are being developed are invaluable. All of the Zoom events that we've been recording have been put on YouTube for the Wyandotte Nation Cultural Center and Museum. These videos are not professionally edited but we do plan on doing professional instructional videos and interviews in the future.

In the month of November, we celebrated Native American Heritage month by doing many different things. We taught edge beading on moccasins, hosted a shawl making class, had a

Facebook Live to teach how to make a 3 Sisters Stew, continued our Wa<sup>n</sup>dat language classes, hosted our first Wyandotte Book Club, taught how to bead on an ornament, and learned more of our Wyandotte History with Lloyd Divine. We also did a ribbon skirt and ribbon shirt contest on Facebook.

If you'd like to join us for future events, please check our Facebook page to see when events will take place or to register. If you're not on Facebook, you can email us and we will email you when there are events.

On Jan. 8, we hosted our annual Traditional Story Telling event. Our traditional stories are only to be told during the winter months because the animals do not like to hear us talking of them; in the winter months they are sleeping and cannot hear us. We heard so many amazing stories from the Creation Story to the 7 Sisters to all about Kwežahkweh (raccoon). It was also exciting to hear a story completely in our Wa<sup>n</sup>dat language.

We had our first Cultural Advisory Board Meeting of the year and we have begun plans for this year's events:

- **Lacrosse Camp:** June 21 through June 24
- **The Gathering of Little Turtles:** June 24 through June 26
- **The Gathering:** Sept. 5 through Sept. 9
- **Wyandotte NationPow-Wow:** Sept. 9 through Sept. 11.

We hope to see many of you at these events and other virtual events through-

out the year.

Eskwaye? (I will see you all again!)

### Department Contacts:

**Kim Garcia**  
kgarcia@wyandotte-nation.org  
918-678-6317

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

**Chris Houk**  
chouk@wyandotte-nation.org  
918-678-6318

**Beci Wright**  
bwright@wyandotte-nation.org  
918-678-6480

**Teresa Wilson**  
twilson@wyandotte-nation.org  
918-678-6385



## Wyandotte Book Club!

The Cultural Center is hosting an online book club every quarter. For our first meeting we read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. Our next meeting will be in February (offered once during the day, once in the evening). Look at the Cultural Center Facebook page to find out what we are reading next! Support your local independent bookstore when you can.

If you'd like to suggest future titles, remember that they 1) must be written by a native author, 2) must be available in paperback, and 3) must be available as an audiobook. If you are interested in leading a future session, let Beci know at bwright@wyandotte-nation.org.

## Directory of Wyandotte Names

Being gifted a traditional name in our Wandat language means that no other Wyandotte has the same name. If you have been gifted a name in the past, please be sure to add it to our Directory at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/WNames](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WNames) so we can insure it is not used by anyone else during your lifetime. (Over the years, records have been kept in several places and we don't want to accidentally overlook anyone!) Tižaməh!

If you cannot access the online Directory, please send: your English name, address, birthday, Wyandotte name, when & where you received it, and any story associated with it you'd like to share to the Cultural Center. We'd appreciate it!

Interested in receiving a Wyandotte name? Look for the updated procedure before the end of the year. Or send an email with your interest to bwright@wyandotte-nation.org and we will let you know when the procedure and paperwork is ready.

# TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

## Language Notes

**BY BECI WRIGHT**  
WYANDOTTE NATION

**Kweh ɔmateru? !** (Hello, friends!)

Last time we learned: **uturé? ndeketatéh** “it’s a cold day”

Depending on where you live, you might add **eya?ⁿgwéha?** “it will snow.” And many of us may experience **uⁿdinyéhtaé:tah** “snow on the ground.” But hopefully **ayaⁿdinyéhtaⁿda:mé?** “the snow thawed off.”

February may also be encouraging you to think of love and all things sweet. A vocabulary word you might be familiar with is **yɔduróhkwa?** which is “I love you” spoken to one person. To tell a group, such as your family or all

your friends, that you love them, use **waⁿduóhkwa?** “I love you all.”

Two holidays are coming up that feature treats: Valentine’s Day and Easter. To describe chocolate in Waⁿdat, you could say: **uyare?sayawih utsike?ta?** and for candy you could use: **aya?wahšrahšɔ?ah.**

As **yuhšréndeh** (wintertime) ends, it will be time to harvest sap from **wáhta?** (maple trees) because **etsikwatsike?tɔgya?** “we will make maple sugar again.”

**tsɔhkažuta?** “one taps the tree again”

**ewateyahsta?** “it (the sap) boils down” ... in a **yaⁿda?tsuwá:nɛh** “large kettle”

**wahta? utsike?ta?** “maple sugar” is also called **yaróta? utsike?ta?** “tree sugar”

And before you know it, we will be well on our way into **yéráhke:ⁿdeh** (springtime)!

**Remember:** AUDIO files for all bolded vocabulary are available at **wan-dat.org** (click on “Turtle Talk”) and join us every third Wednesday of the month at Wandat Wednesdays (on ZOOM) to practice together. Waⁿdat Wednesday will not happen in February due to the start of a new language class offering but will resume in March.

**Tižamɛh! Etsiskwaye?** (I will see y’all again)!

*(To sign up for the monthly Waⁿdat Wednesdays online afternoon or evening, go to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WandatWed> to receive the zoom link and reminders. If you are having difficulty getting to the audio files,*

*contact me and we’ll try to work out an alternative. Be sure to send any comments or suggestions, especially those on your language & culture wishlist, to: [bwright@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:bwright@wyandotte-nation.org).)*

**Pronunciation Reminders:** ? is a glottal stop, like in the middle of “uh-oh!”; the little hook under a vowel means it is nasal – try to pronounce it using your nose rather than the back of your throat. The colon : is a lengthener – say the vowel that comes before it twice as long as you would normally. And the little accent tells you where to put the stress.

*-- Language support courtesy of our Wyandotte Nation Linguist, Dr. Craig Koprís. All mistakes are my own. – Beci*

## Healthcare

*Submitted by Kelly Friend, Health Services Director*

The Bearskin Healthcare & Wellness Center is happy to welcome Vicky Weidner, MD, to its staff.

Weidner is a small town Oklahoma girl who was born and raised in Woodward, Okla. After attending the University of Central Oklahoma, she attended the University of Oklahoma in Oklahoma City for medical school and a year of Internal Medicine internship.

She said the only time she has lived outside of Oklahoma was during three years of residency in Emergency Medicine in Columbia, S.C.

“I loved the South Carolinians with their soft accents and warm southern manners but family and home called me back to Tulsa where I worked at the Saint Francis Trauma Emergency Center for 20 years,” she said. “Some of my colleagues and I started the residency in Emergency Medicine for the University of Oklahoma and I served as the Director of the Simula-

tion Center and taught residents and medical students in the emergency department and simulation center.”

She is married to Brian Edwards and said, “if you know him, you are a lucky person.”

“I am very blessed to have him as my life time best friend,” she said of Brian, who works for Grand River Dam Authority. “Together we have raised four young adults. Our first grandbaby arrived last summer and we are tickled to death to be able to see him almost daily.”

In 2017, after a lengthy illness and recovery, she began to work in the Integrity Grove Emergency Department.

“We love Northeastern Oklahoma and the people here. I am very excited to be welcomed into the Bearskin Clinic and for the opportunity

to continue to care for the people this region,” Weidner said.

Her hobbies are walking with her dogs, sewing costumes for her daughter’s entertainment business, and feeding birds. Her passions are God, her family and caring for patients.

### Department Contacts:

**Kelly Friend**, Director 918-678-3259

**John Bearden**, Compliance Officer / Vaccines 918-678-6482

**Sheryl Hogan**, Business Services Manager 918-678-3226

**Ashley Crawford**, Eastern Shawnee Liaison / Dental, Optometry, Audiology 918-678-3222

**Bridget Hart**, Purchased/Referred Care 918-678-3227

**Deana Sweatt**, Pharmacist 918-678-3247

*Refills, Automated Pharmacy Refill Line 918-678-3244*

**Did you know that Wyandotte Nation tribal citizens may be eligible for these benefits?**

- Up to \$275.00 towards glasses or contacts
- Up to \$1000.00 on Adult emergency dental
- Up to \$2,075.00 towards audiology services for hearing aids
- Up to \$750.00 towards Adult dental services
- Children’s dental is unlimited.

Call 918-678-3222 to find out more information.

### Optometry Benefits have increased!

- Single Vision \$225
- Multi-Focal \$275

Call 918-678-2282 for more details!

### Flu Shots

Flu Shots now available  
@ Bearskin Clinic. Walk-ins welcome

**8 am – Noon & 1 – 3:30 pm**  
**Monday through Friday**



## NEWS & NOTES

# Making a difference: 'Shop With a Cop' helps 27 families

The Wyandotte Nation Tribal Police Department (WNTPD) held its annual Shop With a Cop recently. Unlike previous years, due to concerns over COVID, the officers delivered gifts and food baskets to 27 families and 78 kids. Normally, the officers and volunteers would take the kids shopping and treat them to lunch and a wrapping party afterwards.

Local families experiencing economic hardships can't always provide their children with their own celebration of Christmas. That is where the 'Shop With a Cop' program comes in, joining underprivileged children with WNTPD officers and other area tribal officers, providing Christmas presents for kids and their families. Local donations and volunteers make this program possible.

Each child received \$100 for their gifts, a good bag worth about \$35,

and a candy train. In addition, each family received a food basket with about \$100 worth of goodies in it, including canned foods, fruit, bread, milk, chicken, ham and a lot more!

Officers would like to thank all the volunteers for their help as well as all who donated to this great cause.

*Donations:* Wyandotte Nation (Title VI, Tribal Heritage Department, Education Department), 7th Street Casino, River Bend Casino & Hotel, Allgeier, Martin and Associates, Town of Wyandotte, Crossland Construction, Dollar General, Linda & Marvin Garrett, Leslie & Linda Sparks, Anonymous donation, Grove Dental Associates, and WTOK.

*Volunteers:* Janet Camerer, Jason Moore, Cindy Pulido, Debbie Dry, Jenny Webber, Courtney Cummings, Jan Woody, Lori Clark, Lisa Ramirez, Jennifer Burwell, Kim Harnar, Heather D'Orvilliers, Tara Gragg, Janette Arnold, Susan Friend, Heather Hilliard, Jackie Dixon, Helen Meeks, Tammy Landreth, Drew Lankford, Randy Qualls, and Vera Hernandez.



(COURTESY PHOTOS)

Gifts and goodies filled the Wyandotte Nation Tribal Police Department as officers prepared to deliver them to 27 families and 78 kids in the area.

## Service Awards



The Wyandotte Nation honored 11 employees for reaching service milestones Monday, Dec. 20, at the new administration building's main conference room.

The Tribe recognized the following employees for their years of service:

**25 Years:** Judy Lofland, Kathy Welch, and Dana Butterfield.

**15 Years:** Sharon L. Bartley

**10 Years:** Norman Hildebrand, Ken Brodrick,

and Holly Hilliard.

**5 Years:** Drew Lankford, Dr. Cox, Evan Hotulke and Cat Robles. *(Pictured Left)*

**The honorees, from left, who were recognized by Chief Billy Friend:** Cat Robles, Ken Brodrick, Drew Lankford, Norman Hildebrand, Kathy Welch, Judy Lofland, Dana Butterfield, Holly Hilliard, Sharon L. Bartley, Evan Hotulke, Dr. Cox, and Chief Friend.

PHOTO BY WILLIAM SWAIM |  
WYANDOTTE NATION

## Newly redesigned website coming soon!

The Wyandotte Nation will be launching a newly redesigned website. We have overhauled the old Wyandotte Nation website to give it a much-needed

update, a fresh and clean look, plus some all new features.

The redesign focused on making the site more user-friendly so tribal citizens and other visitors can get to the information, services and forms they need much faster and easier.

The site is mobile and tablet friendly with its responsive design. We have added a Calendar of Events to help you keep up on the latest happenings and events.

The redesign also integrated online forms (where applicable/possible) like our new Careers page featuring the latest job openings at the Nation where you can now apply online, and attached your resume and/or cover letters. Some programs, forms still require us to have a physical copy, but we may add more online forms in the future when possible.

In addition, the Online Shop will have an all new look as it has been overhauled for a better shopping experience.

We will have more on what to expect soon on our Facebook page so keep a look out!

## Have news? Share it with us!

If you have news, accomplishments or something to share, please email your news and photos to: [wswaim@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:wswaim@wyandotte-nation.org).



# Important Numbers

**Family Services / Enrollment**  
Dana Butterfield (918) 678-6319  
dbutterfield@wyandotte-nation.org  
Leeanna Radabaugh, (918) 678-6329  
lradabaugh@wyandotte-nation.org

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

**Family Violence Prevention Program**  
Lisa Arnold, (918) 678-6324  
fvpp@wyandotte-nation.org

**Indian Child Welfare**  
Tara Gragg (918) 678-6355  
tgragg@wyandotte-nation.org  
Carmalita Ward, (918) 678-6485  
cward@wyandotte-nation.org

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

**Nutrition & Caregiver Services**  
Brenda House (918) 678-6327  
bhouse@wyandotte-nation.org

**Education / Library / Child Care**  
Cristi Hudson (918) 678-6334  
chudson@wyandotte-nation.org

**Environmental / Planning / Development**  
Christen Lee (918) 678-6341  
clee@wyandotte-nation.org

**Housing**  
Kathy DeWeese (918) 678-6339  
kdeweese@wyandotte-nation.org

**Police Department**  
Ronnie Gilmore (918) 678-6365  
rgilmore@wntpd.com  
Non-emergency: (918) 678-3100  
police@wntpd.com

**Tribal Heritage**  
Kim Garcia (918) 678-6317  
kgarcia@wyandotte-nation.org  
Sherri Clemons (918) 678-6344  
sclemons@wyandotte-nation.org

**Bearskin Healthcare & Wellness Center**  
Kelly Friend (918) 678-3259  
kfriend@wyandotte-nation.org

**Clinic Appointments**  
Dee Dee Clapp (918) 678-3228  
dclapp@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  
bhart@wyandotte-nation.org

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

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2022

## TOWN HALL MEETINGS

APRIL  
9-10

Newport Beach,  
Calif., (April 9) &  
Scaramento, Calif.  
(April 10)



## LACROSSE CAMP

JUNE  
21-24



## GATHERING OF LITTLE TURTLES

JUNE  
24-26



## FIREWORKS CELEBRATION

JULY  
TBD

Gates open 6pm @  
Wyandotte Nation  
Pow-Wow Grounds



## GATHERING

SEPT.  
5-9



## 31ST ANNUAL POW-WOW

SEPT.  
9-11



## ANNUAL MEETING

SEPT.  
10

10am @ Bearskin  
Fitness Center Gym



## ELDERS THANKSGIVING DINNER

Nov.  
TBD

11:30am-1pm @  
Title VI Building



## CHILDRENS CHRISTMAS PARTY

DEC.  
TBD



## ELDERS CHRISTMAS DINNER

DEC.  
TBD

11:30am-1pm @  
Title VI Building



ALL EVENTS IN WYANDOTTE, OKLA., UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.  
ALL EVENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE!