



The Turtle Speaks

# Gyah'-Wish Atak-ia

A Wyandotte Nation Publication

Volume 28, Issue 2

[www.wyandotte-nation.org](http://www.wyandotte-nation.org)

May 2024



Chief Leaford Bearskin Memorial

## Preschool Pow-Wow

Page 5

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The Wyandotte Nation  
8 Turtle Drive  
Wyandotte, OK 74370

(918) 678-2297  
(800) 256-2539  
Fax (918) 676-7022



### Inside:

- EPA awards grant to expand, improve Recycling Center
- Tribe helps feed local families in community
- Wyandotte Nation Easter Egg Hunt

### Board of Directors

- Chief .....Billy Friend
- Second Chief ....Norman Hildebrand, Jr.
- Councilperson..... Keith Gray
- Councilperson..... Vivian Fink
- Councilperson..... Rob Nesvold
- Councilperson.....Eric Lofland

### Content

- Notice of Annual Meeting..... 3
- Grant awarded for Recycling Center .. 4
- Food Distribution Event..... 4-5
- Preschool Pow-Wow in Pictures..... 5
- Easter Egg Hunt in Pictures ..... 6
- Tribal Department Reports..... 7-16
- Important Numbers ..... 13

Editor/Design: William Swaim



Cover Photo: Head Man Joshua Garcia leads the preschoolers during Grand Entry.

PHOTO: WILLIAM SWAIM

### Contact Us

#### Have News?

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

Email: [wswaim@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:wswaim@wyandotte-nation.org)



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From the Chief

Billy Friend

# A great day on the Wyandotte Reservation

Kweh, I hope this quarters Turtle Talk finds all of our Wyandotte people doing well and enjoying the Spring season. While for us here in Oklahoma it is usually ushered in by the threat and many times the reality of tornadoes and severe weather it is also a time of growth, vibrant colors and life. The land around us begins to awaken and everywhere plants and trees are in bloom. It is also a time of renewal that comes into people's lives as winter makes its exit and the warm weather invites us to enjoy nature. Spring is an exciting time of year as we open our minds to the many possibilities before us, and to the blessings we have received.

We received some very exciting news on March 7, concerning the affirmation of our Reservation. I have attached the press release below with the details.

### Celebrating Affirmation of the Wyandotte Nation's Homelands

Today, we celebrate affirmation of the continued existence of the Wyandotte Reservation. A Tribal Nation's jurisdictional authority over its lands is a bedrock principle of our inherent sovereignty. Through affirmation of the Wyandotte Reservation, the Wyandotte Nation is empowered to exercise its territo-

rial jurisdiction over its lands and people.

On March 7, 2024, the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals in Oklahoma v. Fuller, Case No. S-2023-409, affirmed what we already knew to be true: the Wyandotte Reservation—the seat of our government and the land on which our Ancestors sought refuge and created a home—continues to exist. The Court described its decision as “binding and precedential on all parties as to the existence of the Wyandotte Reservation.”

The Wyandotte Reservation was established through the Treaty of 1867. It was the last in a long line of treaties through which the United States promised to set aside a homeland where we could continue to exist as a Tribal community and government. In exchange for this promised homeland, we were forced to relocate farther and farther from our aboriginal lands to make way for settlers.

Despite the United States' promise, when Oklahoma became a state, many operated under the wrongful assumption that reservations throughout Oklahoma had been disestablished. This harmful position was corrected by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2020 in *McGirt v. Oklahoma*. Since that time, various reservations in Oklahoma have been reaffirmed. While the Wyandotte Nation knew the Wyandotte Reser-

vation was not disestablished, we are glad to see the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals affirm this truth.

The affirmation of reservation boundaries is meaningful. Under United States law, Tribal Nations are recognized to have jurisdiction within the boundaries of our reservations. Any government's ability to keep its community safe is premised on its authority to exercise jurisdiction within its territorial limits. Reservation status also brings law enforcement services and funding from the United States in furtherance of its trust and treaty obligations to Tribal Nations and Native people.

We look forward to working alongside the federal government and the State of Oklahoma to ensure criminal law enforcement on the Wyandotte Reservation is coordinated and robust.

Though subject to many attempts to disestablish and assimilate the Wyandotte Nation and its people, and many broken treaty promises, we have survived and thrived. Now, the Wyandotte Reservation will be recognized by all as our jurisdictional and governmental homeland. We know our Ancestors smile down on us today.

**It is a great day on the Wyandotte Reservation and a great day to be Wyandotte!**

From the Second Chief | Norman Hildebrand,

## Traveling exhibit showcases a bit of history

Kweh Omateru  
Hello my friends, Spring is upon us here in Oklahoma and so are the winds. It seems like every day is one of those hang onto your wig kind of days. When it is windy

and everything is blooming the pollen count is also very high. I've had people tell me they never had trouble with allergies until they moved to Oklahoma, I tell them “welcome to Oklahoma.”



We are officially a Reservation now after a recent court ruling that

# PUBLIC NOTICE

## Notice of Annual Meeting

On September 14, 2024, the Wyandotte Nation shall hold their Annual Meeting at the Bearskin Fitness Center Gymnasium in Wyandotte, Oklahoma. Registration will begin at 9:00 a.m. and the Annual Meeting will start at 10:00 a.m. **Please note that citizens will be**

**required to present their Wyandotte Nation membership/citizenship card to register for the meeting.**

The Election Committee of the Wyandotte Nation has determined that there are no contested posts for elective office within the government of

the Wyandotte Nation for 2024. Therefore, it is not necessary to hold an election at the tribe's annual meeting on Saturday, September 14, 2024 per the Wyandotte Nation Constitution.

**Zach Shockey, Chairman  
Election Committee**

## 2nd Chief

Continued from Page 2

reaffirmed that our Reservation was never disestablished Hooray for Us, we have been waiting for this ruling for months. So with that said here on the Rez our various projects are moving along very well. Duplexes are being built and finished, construction has started on the preschool addition, and the expansion of Town of Wyandotte's waste water treatment plant that we are providing the funds for is progressing very nicely. We are growing so much here on the Wyandotte Reservation that we are doubling the size of the Waste Water Treatment Plant to handle all of our future growth.

Before COVID I was contacted by the Ball State University Department of Anthropology to be a Humanities Scholar for a traveling museum project for The Battle of The Wabash. I started scratching my head and wondering why I have never heard of this battle that our ancestors fought in, well with good old Google I researched it and realized it was actually St. Clair's Defeat that they were referencing. I had never heard it called Battle of The Wabash, so I accepted their invitation. Here is an overview of the battle that took place along the Wabash River in Ohio, but first the traveling exhibit will be in Miami, Okla., at the American Indian Center for Excellence on the campus of NEO A&M College from Monday, May 20 through Monday, Dec. 2.

After several years of failed treaties and conflicts between the Native Americans and the Euro-American settlers and military, a Native American alliance was formed between the Wyandots, Seneca, Cherokee, Ojibwe, Ottawa, Potawatomi, Shawnee, Delaware, and Miami. On November 3, 1791, General

**"The past is a source of knowledge, and the future is a source of hope. Love of the past implies faith in the future."**

--Stephen Ambrose

St. Clair's U.S. Army numbering 1,200 to 1,400 soldiers and 200 to 250 civilians arrived on the banks of the Wabash River. St. Clair ordered the Kentucky militia to set up camp west across the river. The infantry camped in six outposts between the river and tributary Buck Run. The riflemen and dragoons were on the north and south sides of the main camp with civilians camped within. At the same time, the Native American alliance was finalizing a battle strategy based upon St. Clair's position. Led by Mishikinakwa and Weyapiersenkwa, Native Americans from nine tribes were organizing for a morning surprise attack to surround the entire U.S. Army from the north and south. Most of the night was spent establishing the Native American's positions. Information received during the night from

volunteer militia scouts regarding Indians "skulking about" the area was not relayed to St. Clair.

At dawn on November 4, the Miami, Shawnee, and Delaware attacked the Kentucky militia camped northwest of St. Clair's main camp. Caught completely unaware, the militia rushed back across the Wabash River causing utter chaos and confusion. Simultaneously, the tribes on the left and right of the crescent surrounded St. Clair's camp in less than 15 minutes. The ensuing battle lasted three hours, an overwhelming victory for the American Indian tribes.

The U.S. casualties were enormous. Over 650 U.S. soldiers were killed including 31 commissioned officers. Nearly all of St. Clair's several hundred camp followers were killed or taken prisoner. His

torical accounts show that between 20 to 35 American Indians were killed. This well planned and calculated victory is often called the greatest defeat of the U.S. Army.

After the battle St. Clair was the subject of the first congressional investigation and the entire battle was investigated by a group of the President's trusted advisors. St. Clair was not found to be completely at fault for the crushing defeat but was still relieved of his duties. Anthony Wayne, Revolutionary War hero, was chosen by President Washington to replace him.

I am going to stop there, but I hope a lot of you will see the exhibit and read about more details of the battle that I just wrote about especially about the tactics that the Native Americans used to defeat the American Army and the weapons used by both combatants, it is interesting to read about and view the details of this great victory for the Native American Tribes.

**BEARSKIN HEALTHCARE & WELLNESS CENTER**  
**5K & 1 MILE FUN WALK**  
**SATURDAY, MAY 4TH 2024**

REGISTRATION OPENS AT 7AM  
 5K BEGINS AT 8AM  
 FUN WALK BEGINS AT 8:15AM  
**FIRST 300 REGISTERED WILL RECEIVE A FREE T-SHIRT!**

REGISTER HERE: [HTTPS://REGISTER.CHRONOTRACK.COM/R/78954](https://register.chronotrack.com/R/78954)

**#1 TURTLE DRIVE - WYANDOTTE OK 74370 - 918-678-2070**

**MAY THE  
 4TH BE  
 WITH YOU**

## Lost Creek Recycling Center

# EPA awards grant to expand, improve center



PHOTO: WILLIAM SWAIM | WYANDOTTE NATION

Representatives from the EPA tour the Lost Creek Recycling Center with Planning & Natural Resources staff. The EPA awarded a grant to help improve and expand the Recycling Center.

With the help of a nearly \$1 million grant, the Wyandotte Nation will expand and improve its Lost Creek Recycling Center.

“The Planning and Natural Resources Department is excited to receive this funding to help increase our recycling capacity at the Lost Creek Recycling Center,” said Christen Lee, Planning & Natural Resources Director for the Tribe.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded a total of \$947,266 in a Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) grant to expand the center’s recycling infrastructure. Wyandotte Nation’s SWIFR project encompasses several features that expand and improve the Lost Creek Recycling Center by planning and constructing major renovations and permanent improvement to the facility, purchasing collection bins for recyclables, purchasing recycling equipment

and other items for post-consumer materials management recovery, and hiring a full-time recycling technician to assist in recycling the increase in solid waste materials.

Once implemented, the proposed project will help reduce solid waste generated in the tribal community by enhancing, improving, and maintaining the recycle program.

“We feel the center has been a positive resource for the Tribe and the surrounding community,” Lee said of the Tribe’s recycling efforts.

The goals and objectives addressed from the EPA’s FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan include: Ensure clean and safe water for all communities along with protecting and restoring waterbodies and watersheds.

In addition, goals and objectives include: Safeguarding and revitalizing communities and reducing waste and preventing environmental contamination.

# Tribe helps feed 350 families in community

Thanks to grant funds from the USDA, the Wyandotte Nation was able to distribute free, local food to nearly 350 families in our community (Native and non-Native) during our March distribution event.

The Saturday, March 23 event marked the third food distribution to the local community. The first distribution event was held at the new Artie Nesvold Elders Center and the second at Wyandotte Nation Administration Building as was the third.

Local families who took part in the more recent opportunity received food that included beef, bison, sourdough cinnamon rolls, pecans, apples, carrots, almonds, chocolate pecans, jerky sticks, dried mushrooms, goat cheese, bread, lettuce, honey, ketchup, bbq sauce, microgreens, salad dressing and sourdough hot cross buns.

Wyandotte Nation received grant funds from USDA’s Local Food



PHOTOS: COURTESY (LEFT) & WILLIAM SWAIM (RIGHT) | WYANDOTTE NATION

(PICTURED ABOVE LEFT) In addition to the USDA grant, the local food distribution events were made possible by partnering with local food growers like Avery Acres Farm. (PICTURED ABOVE RIGHT) Volunteers help distribute food to the community Saturday, March 23, during the Wyandotte Nation’s Food Distribution Event.



## Chief Leaford Bearskin Memorial Pow-Wow

Photos by William Swaim

Our Child Development Center's Annual Leaford Bearskin Memorial Preschool Pow-Wow took place Thursday evening, April 11, at the Wyandotte High School Gym. The event was kicked off with the Lord's Prayer by Wyandotte Nation Princess Chloe Friend and Junior Princess Veyda Marlow which was followed by the Grand Entry. The Wyandotte Nation Color Guard presented the Colors and the kids performed a Numbers Song and Tizameh Song before joining friends and family for a Round, Snake, Buffalo and Intertribal Dances. The Head Staff included Head Man Joshua Garcia, Head Lady Chloe Friend and Veyda Marlow, Host Drum Medicine Eagle Singers, and the Emcee Choogie Kingfisher.



## Community

### Continued from Page 4

Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program. Money for this project allows the Tribe to distribute locally grown, sourced, and produced food to our underserved community.

*The Wyandotte Nation thanks our local food producers for partnering with us:*

**Avery Acre Farm** ([www.facebook.com/AveryAcresFarmTulsa](http://www.facebook.com/AveryAcresFarmTulsa)) – Carrots

**Hey Sugar** (<https://heysugarnwa.com>) – Sourdough Cinnamon Rolls

**Knight Pecan Farms** ([www.knightpecanfarms.com](http://www.knightpecanfarms.com)) – Kanza Pecans

**Livesay Orchards** (<https://livesayorchards.com>) -- Apples

**Miller Pecan** ([www.millerpecancompany.com](http://www.millerpecancompany.com)) – Creamy White Almonds, Milk Chocolate Pecans

**Modoc Market** (<https://modocmarket.com>) – Bison Beef Jerky Sticks

**Montana Max BBQ** (<https://montanamaxbbq.com>) – Ketchup & BBQ Sauce

**Oklahoma Mushroom Company** (<https://okmushco.com>) – Dried Oyster Mushrooms

**Prairie Thyme Farm** ([www.prairiethymefarm.com](http://www.prairiethymefarm.com)) – Goat Cheese

**Quapaw Cattle Company**

([www.quapawtribe.com/511/Quapaw-Cattle-Company](http://www.quapawtribe.com/511/Quapaw-Cattle-Company)) – Beef & Bison

**Redings Mill Bread** ([www.facebook.com/Redings-Mill-Bread-100057497048161](http://www.facebook.com/Redings-Mill-Bread-100057497048161)) – Bread

**Resilient Growers Farm** ([www.facebook.com/resilientgrowers](http://www.facebook.com/resilientgrowers)) – Lettuce

**Roark Acres Honey Farms** ([www.roarkacres.com](http://www.roarkacres.com)) – Honey Robinson Ranch (<https://robinsonranchveggies.com>) – Pea Shoot Microgreens & Salad Dressing

**Wild Folk Bakery** ([www.facebook.com/wildfolkbakery.com](http://www.facebook.com/wildfolkbakery.com)) – Sourdough Hot Cross Buns

*We would also like to thank*

*all the volunteers who helped with the assembly and distribution of the boxes, bags, and food:*

Becki Burleson, Brynlee Wilson, Caleb Lowery, Casey Ellet, the Casino & Wyandotte Nation Maintenance Crews, Chief Billy Friend, Cristi Hudson, Deana Howard, Debbie Dry, Eric Fonseca, Jennifer Rosenstiel, Jon Quick, Joseph Lowery, Katie Thompson, Kayla Friend, Keith Gray, Kristy Fink, Lindsay Cooper, Mason Lowery, Rhonda Stork, Ryan Haggard, Samantha Proctor-Smith, Seth Lowery, Shelby Desha, Shelly Oakley, Sherri Clemmons, Smoke Ezell, Teresa Wilson, Valari Richards, Veyda Marlow, and William Swaim.



# Wyandotte Nation's Annual Easter Egg Hunt

Photos by William Swaim



# TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

## Human Resources

*Submitted by Deana Howard, HR Director*

The Wyandotte Nation Family Service Department is very happy to



COX

welcome Emily Cox as our new Supervised Visitation Specialist, Kade Calloway as Adult Protective Services/ Indian Child Welfare Social Worker, and Lexi King as a Pandemic Support/ Domestic Violence/ Sexual Assault Advocate.



CALLOWAY

Emily graduated from Quapaw high School and has always had a love for healthcare. She started her nursing career in 2020 after graduating from NEO. Emily worked at Freeman on the TCU floor as an RN and most recently worked at Quapaw schools as a school nurse. She loves shopping and spending time with her family. They enjoy spending the day at the zoo or aquarium. They also love spending



KING

time outdoors camping or going to the creek.

Kade graduated high school from Cliff Schools in Cliff, NM. He then graduated New Mexico State University with a Bachelor's degree in Individualized Studies. He worked for the state of Oklahoma ARS for 3.5 years. Kade's hobbies include snowboarding, and hiking. He also enjoys taking cruises with family and friends.

Lexi has a Bachelor's degree in criminal justice, an Associate's degree in law enforcement, along with a certificate in criminal investigation and policing. While in college, she worked with individuals with disabilities. Lexi loves and enjoys hanging out with her family and friends. In her free time she enjoys going on

walks and going to the gym. She also loves to travel.

We are very fortunate to have Emily, Kade, and Lexi on our team and wish them much success in their new positions.

The Wyandotte Nation Education Department would like to welcome Jennifer Rosenstiel as an Early Childhood Program Specialist, Tammy Heffren as an Early Childhood Toddler Program Assistant, and Delayne Hudson and Lora Gibson as Substitutes.

Jennifer has more than 20 years of experience working with children; both in a public school and in childcare. She is currently attending NEO A&M, pursuing a Certificate of Mastery and an associate's degree in Early Childhood Education and social work. Jennifer's hobbies include reading, watching movies and listening to music. She has three grown children and two grandsons. She enjoys spending time with them. Sleep-overs at Grammy's house are especially fun!



ROSENSTIEL



HEFFREN



HUDSON



GIBSON

Tammy has her Certificate of Mastery in Child Development. She enjoys sewing and gardening with her mom. She also enjoys spending her time with her family and taking her 3 granddaughters on mini vacations.

Delayne spends most of her free time working for her online boutique and making all kinds of graphics. She enjoys hanging out with her family and friends.

Lora has 24 years in advertising sales. Her hobbies include cake and cookie decorating. Lora says her family are her life. She has 2 sons, 1 daughter, 4 grandsons, and 1 granddaughter. She lives on the lake and enjoys the lake in the summer. Lora is a cruise addict. She goes on a cruise several times a year and she loves it when the family can join her.

We are happy to have Jennifer, Tammy, Delayne and Lora join our team.

The Wyandotte Nation Title VI Department is very happy to welcome Kelli Snell as a Food Service Team Member. Kelli has 6 years of food service experience with Fairland Public Schools. She enjoys reading mystery books and spending time with her husband and three children. They enjoy road trips in their RV and going to Branson. We are very fortunate to have Kelli on our team and wish her the best of luck in her new position.



SNELL

The Environmental Department welcomes Ryan Haggard as an Environmental Technician I. Ryan graduated from McDonald County High School and received his Associates degree in general studies at Crowder College. He received his Bachelor's degree in Biology at MSSU.

He spent 2.5 years in an analytical lab as a chemist. Ryan enjoys most anything outdoors and hopes to spend more time on local lakes and rivers. He also enjoys singing and playing the guitar and being active. Ryan spends most of his time raising and making memories with his 2-year-old daughter. We are very fortunate to have Ryan on our team and wish him much success in his new position.



HAGGARD

The Bearskin Healthcare and Wellness Center is very happy to

welcome Noemie Dyer as a Pharmacist, Dr. Jequita "Jac" Snyder as a Physician, tribal citizen Leeah Tunnell as a Community Health Representative, and Stephanie Smith as a certified Pharmacy Technician.

Noemie's friends and family call her Joy. She has been married to her wonderful husband David, for 25 years. Noemie's first job after graduating from Pharmacy college was in a hospital as a staff pharmacist. She also worked for RiteAid Pharmacy. She moved to Oklahoma in December 2013 and started working for Walgreens, until this opportunity with the Wyandotte Nation. Noemie's hobbies include gardening, cooking, baking, fishing and kayaking. She spends her time with her husband and playing with Moonpie, her dog.



DYER



SNYDER



TUNNELL



SMITH

Dr. Snyder was a lab tech in the US Navy Reserve and was a lab tech for 10 years prior to medical school. She attended Seminole Jr College and OSU Medical School. Her hobbies include hiking and camping at national parks as well as reading and quilting. She also enjoys spending her spare time with her family and playing Pokémon. She loves Harry Potter and Maleficent.

Leeah graduated from Baxter Springs High School. She worked as a dental assistant/oral surgery assistant for 43 ½ years. She also received her Phlebotomy certificate

# TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Continued from Page 7

from Franklin Tech and Anesthesia Assisting from UMCK. Leeah's hobbies include being outside, sitting on her porch and watching wildlife. Leeah loves spending time with her family and going to Wyandotte Bears basketball games. She is married and together they have 4 children and 13 grandchildren. Leeah is proud of being a Wyandotte Nation citizen and thanks God each and every day for the life he has given her.

Stephanie's hobbies include camping, fishing, anything outdoors, and art. She enjoys spending time with family and going to church. She is a triplet momma (identical boys) and they are her whole world!

We are very fortunate to have Noemie, Dr. Snyder, Leeah, and Stephanie on our team and wish them much success in their new positions.

The Wyandotte Nation Police Department is proud to welcome Christopher Pooler as a Police Officer. Christopher has 2.5 years of law enforcement experience as well as 3 semesters of law enforcement education from a Bachelor's degree and several I.T. certificates. He enjoys gardening and taking care of his farm animals which consist of chickens, turkeys,

ducks, goats and rabbits. Christopher enjoys spending time with his wife and 5 kids, doing sports and homesteading. We are very excited to have Christopher in his new position and wish him much success.



**POOLER**

## Family Services

*Submitted by Dana Butterfield,  
Family Services Director*

In April, I was fortunate to attend the National Indian Child Welfare Association Conference. This event brings together tribal leaders, tribal social workers, state social workers, federal employees and others who have a desire to make sure every child has a safe and healthy childhood as well as the opportunity to stay connected to their cultural heritage and identity. The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) was passed in 1978 to protect the best interests of Indian children and to promote the stability and security of Indian tribes and families. ICWA has been challenged many times over the past several years in the court system, with the most recent Supreme Court decision, in June 2023, upholding ICWA, which has been referred to as the "gold standard" for child welfare. Wyandotte Nation social workers are involved with cases across the country to ensure that states are upholding the Act and providing active efforts to reunify children with their parents or other appropriate family members. If you have an enrolled Wyandotte child who is involved with a state child welfare system, make sure the state is aware the child is native and that they contact the Tribe in the appropriate manner.

Also, as many of you have probably already heard, the Wyandotte Nation's reservation status was recently recognized as never being disestablished. Due to this, we anticipate a greater need for foster homes. If you have ever considered opening your home for children in need please

reach out to Tara Gragg, ICW Supervisor, to discuss the process.

We've received great feedback regarding the Programs & Services Brochure. This an excellent resource to find all of the programs offered by the Nation. The plan is for the brochure to be mailed to all citizens annually on or near the beginning of our fiscal year, which is October 1st. Another great source of information is the Tribe's website, www.wyandotte-nation.org. Most applications can be found on the website for either direct apply online or to download/print. We also understand that not everyone is tech savvy, so we're always happy to mail applications as well. If you see a program that you have questions about or need additional information, feel free to reach out to the Family Services staff using the contact information listed at the end of this article.

As a reminder, Enrollment applications must either be hand delivered or postmarked by Aug. 15 to be considered for citizenship at the Annual Meeting. Applications must be submitted with an original state certified birth certificate. Hospital and county Health Department birth certificates are not acceptable for enrollment purposes. The Enrollment Committee recently updated the Enrollment Ordinance to keep up with the changing times. One of the changes is a requirement that birth certificates must list the tribal parents' full name before marriage/maiden name. Many states now offer short-form certificates that don't list all of the information necessary to trace lineage, so be sure to submit applications early so there is time to request the correct document and/

or amend certificates if required. Also, enrollment applications are updated each year, to be sure that you're using the current application, please contact the Enrollment Officer to verify. This application is not available on our website, but one can be mailed or emailed to you when requested.

The Tag and Tax office is excited to announce that beginning May 1, Veteran license plates will be available for Wyandotte Nation citizens. There are several requirements to receive this special plate so please contact the Tag Administrator, Tiffany Garner, for a full list of details.

Several of the grants housed in the Family Services Department have recently been moved into the Public Law 477 program. Programs that have been moved into 477 include Title IVB Child Welfare Services (CWS), Title IVB Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF), Low Income Heating Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Office of Violence Against Women-Grants to Tribal Governments, and Office of Victims of Crime-Tribal Victim Services Set-aside. By combining these grants into the 477 program, it will allow for participants to have access to a broader range of services to help them gain self-sustainability. Services will also be available in a one-stop-shop, meaning all services available through the program can be provided by any of the 477 case-workers. While we are new to the 477 program and still learning all of the processes, we look forward to working with our federal and tribal partners to facilitate services.

Continued on Page 9

## Tag Program

Our Tag program is experiencing some new and exciting updates! We are now offering UTV tags and Veteran Tags to our Citizens. In order to receive UTV tags, the vehicle must be street legal and housed in Oklahoma. In addition to the title, you will need to provide a notarized Domiciled Affidavit and an Affidavit for Street Legal UTV, and if it is a new purchase, you will also need a Bill of Sale. Please note these forms are available on our website. To receive Veteran tags, the Veteran must be a Citizen of the Wyandotte Nation. Here is a checklist of documentation required to receive Veteran tags.

- DD214
- Notarized Domiciled Affidavit
- Insurance
- Title
- Bill of Sale if new vehicle
- Handicapped form signed by Doctor if applicable

Please contact Tiffany Garner (918)678-6353 with any questions you have.



# TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

## Continued from Page 8

As always, we encourage tribal citizens to attend as many tribal events and functions as possible. They are a great opportunity to learn about your history, culture and language, as well as meet and build relationships with tribal citizens. Some of these events include: The Gathering of Little Turtles June 21-23, The Gathering Sept. 9-13, and the Pow-Wow Sept. 13-15. The Cultural Department and Cultural Advisory Board spend a great deal of time and effort into making each of these events memorable, entertaining and informative. Also, the Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, Sept. 14. Tribal citizens who attend the meeting will be required to show their tribal ID to receive the meeting stipend. If the tribal ID does not include a photo, a photo ID will need to be provided as well. Additional meeting details will be announced in the August newsletter.

As always, it is an honor and a privilege to serve the Wyandotte people. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions about any of our programs.

### Family Services Staff:

Contact email for Family Services: [wnfs@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:wnfs@wyandotte-nation.org)  
Director, Dana Butterfield 918-678-6319

ICW/APS Supervisor, Tara Gragg 918-678-6355

ICW Worker, Carmalita Ward, 918-678-6485

ICW/APS Worker, Kade Calloway

### Submitted by Kathy DeWeese, Housing Director

The Heritage Acres Housing Area provides rental units for elders and families. Family units consist of three bedroom homes and two bedroom duplexes. If you are interested in renting, the application is on the website or an application can be picked up at the office. Federal income guidelines apply and preference is given to Wyandotte Citizens.

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

## Housing

the housing office. Federal income guidelines apply.

A walking track is in the process of being constructed in the Heritage Acre Park. New equipment has also been added. There are two pavilions available for use. There is no charge to use. The Splashpad is scheduled to open the week of Memorial Day.

Wyandotte Housing Assistance Fund, which is part of the Consolidated Appropriation Act of 2021, is available to homeowners affected by COVID. If you are behind on your mortgage payments, or are in need of repairs to your home, and due to COVID, do not have the funding to make those repairs, please fill out and return the application for assistance which is found on the Wyandotte Nation website. Income guidelines do apply. The repairs to

homes can only be made within a 50-mile radius of the Wyandotte Nation. If you have questions regarding this process, please call or email our office.

The Community Center is available to rent, however, the dates are filling in fast. If you are interested in renting, please contact the office as soon as possible. The cost to rent is \$50. There is a \$25 deposit to hold the date. This will be returned if the area is clean and no damages to property.

### Department Staff:

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

918-678-6375  
Tag Administrator, Tiffany Garner,  
918-678-6353  
Family Services Specialist, Leeanna Radabaugh, 918-678-6329  
Enrollment Officer, Haylee Botts,  
918-678-6377

Contact email for FVPP:  
[fvpp@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:fvpp@wyandotte-nation.org)  
Toll Free number for FVPP:  
**877-276-0669**  
Program Manager, Chelsea King,

918-678-3257  
Lead Advocate, Gabby Ezell, 918-678-6402  
Admin Assistant/Family Services Front Desk, Hannah Rhodes, 918-678-6321  
Crime Victims' Advocates: Kristi Johnston, Becky Maples and Lacy Butler  
Supervised Visitation Specialist, Emily Cox, 918-678-6324  
DV/SA/Pandemic Support Advocate, Gabby Ezell, 918-678-6374

## Education

### Submitted by Cristi Hudson, Education Director

Kweh!

Nestled within the heart of our community, the Wyandotte Nation Historical Library stands as a beacon of knowledge, preserving our rich heritage and fostering a love for learning and reading among all generations. As the vibrant colors of spring grace our surroundings, the library invites tribal and community members to embrace this season of renewal and discovery by participating in new activities and opportunities.

Among these exciting offerings is the Story Book Walk. Located in beautiful Bear Park, this outdoor literary adventure features the captivating tale of "Water Protectors" by Carole Lindstrom, brought to life through the enchanting illustrations of Michaela Goade. The Story Book Walk not only offers a delightful experience for readers of all ages, but also serves as a celebration of

## Enrollment Application & Ordinance

The Enrollment Applications and Ordinance have been updated this year. Please be sure to have the correct application completed. Applications must be submitted along with an original state certified birth certificate (long form that includes the tribal parent's full name). The deadline to be considered for Enrollment is Aug. 15. Timing is essential for the Enrollment Application, please submit applications as soon as possible. This will allow for plenty of time for applications to be sent back to correct any errors and be resubmitted before Aug. 15. We have provided a checklist to help prevent applications from being sent back to you. Applications received prior to the child's first birthday will receive a \$100 Walmart gift card, a blanket embroidered with the Tribal Turtle and thanks to the Cultural Division, either a ribbon skirt or ribbon shirt. Applications can be requested by calling or emailing our Enrollment Officer.



Continued on Page 10

# TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

## Continued from Page 9

indigenous culture and environmental stewardship.

Through the moving storytelling of "Water Protectors", readers are transported into a world where the sacred bond between humanity and nature is honored and upheld. It's a tale that resonates deeply with our Tribe's values, inspiring us to cherish and protect our natural resources for future generations. The Story Book Walk will feature "Water Protectors" until May 19.

So, gather your loved ones, venture into the great outdoors, and embark on an unforgettable literary adventure with the Wyandotte Nation Historical Library's Story Book Walk. Together, let us honor our past, engage with our present, and pave the way for a brighter future filled with knowledge, unity, and appreciation for the world around us. This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services NAE-254945-OLS.

The unveiling of the OLA 2025 Sequoyah Book Award nominees is another highlight of the season. These nominees are carefully chosen by dedicated reading teams, consisting of members of the Oklahoma Library Association. Once selected, the nominated books are assigned to the appropriate Sequoyah Masterlist, categorized into Children's, Intermediate, and High School sections. Each nominated book represents the pinnacle of literary excellence, offering readers a diverse range of narratives to explore.

What sets the Sequoyah Book Awards apart is its democratic process. At the end of the year, students who have read or listened to at least three selections from their age appropriate masterlist will cast their votes, determining the ultimate winner in each category. This democratic approach not only fosters a love for reading, but also empowers our youth to engage actively in the literary community.

Excitingly, the Sequoyah masterlists are readily accessible on our Wyandotte Nation Historical Library website, ensuring that every member of our Tribe and community can explore these literary treasures. Moreover, all of the titles nominated are available for check out in the

library. For more information about the Sequoyah Book awards, you may inquire with the librarian via phone or email.

As we celebrate the joys of spring and the wonders of literature, let us seize the opportunity to embrace the magic of storytelling, community, and adventure at the Wyandotte Nation Historical Library. Whether it's exploring the pages of a book from the Sequoyah masterlists or embarking on a stroll through the Story Book Walk, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

Wyandotte Nation Historical Library hours are Monday through Thursday 8:am to 4:30pm and on Friday 8am to 3:30pm. New books and DVDs have recently been added to the shelves. In order to check out items from the library, you must be a registered library patron. If you are not currently a patron at the library, you may sign up by filling out the application on the website at [www.wyandotte-nation.org](http://www.wyandotte-nation.org), or you can sign up in person at the library. Wyandotte Nation library also offers virtual library access through Oklahoma Virtual Library. Through the Oklahoma Virtual Library, you will have access to many different eBooks, audiobooks, magazines, and videos. To access your virtual library account, visit [www.okvirtuallibrary.com](http://www.okvirtuallibrary.com). You may also download the "Libby" app to access the virtual library. For more information about the Wyandotte Nation Library or virtual access, you may contact the librarian via phone or email.

The 477 Program, also known as Workforce & Social Services Program, is a federally funded program that combines a variety of services to better meet the needs of our tribal community of those who reside within our 100-mile service area. To apply for the program, clients must complete the initial 477 Application for Services, provide proof of tribal membership, provide proof of residency, and provide Selective Service Registration Card (males only from 18 - 25). Other documentation may be required to coincide with the type of service requested.

Previously, the 477 Program offered services assisting with childcare subsidy, education, scholarships, workforce, & job training.

Recently, additional services have been added under the 477 umbrella to include LIHEAP, family violence, and child welfare. By adding these programs with the existing 477 programs, Wyandotte Nation hopes to continue to foster environments for safe & stable families; create support of the economy through job creation & employment opportunities; increase access & availability of high quality childcare; provide continuity of childcare while enabling parents & families to seek gainful employment, career advancement, or educational goals; and offer opportunities for community members that will lead to self-sufficiency.

Childcare Assistance - the Childcare assistance or subsidy, is designed to assist low income families in paying for daycare. Eligible families are those who have children ages 0 through 12 years old, meet income criteria, and have provided initial documentation. Families pay a monthly copay to their childcare provider that is based on their income. At this time, subsidy is providing services for 125 children throughout various childcare providers in the service area.

Education, Employment, Training - the Education portion of 477 offers scholarships, workforce & job training assistance, & vocational training to help fund tribal students residing within our service area to reach their educational & employment goals. Through these services, Wyandotte Nation hopes to reduce joblessness within the communities we serve. Currently there are approximately 15 students that have received educational services through the 477 program.

LIHEAP - The LIHEAP portion of the 477 program offers utilities assistance with heating services during the winter months and cooling services during the summer months. Clients may also apply once per year for crisis assistance when there is immediate danger such as a shut-off notice for utilities or gas in either summer or winter, or also empty propane tank during the winter months. Since LIHEAP has been added to the 477 Program, 13 clients have received utility assistance.

With the May 1st deadline for new applicants fast approaching, the Wyandotte Nation Scholarship

Program is currently processing all the new applications. If you are currently on the scholarship program, please remember to send in your latest unofficial transcript that includes spring 2024 grades and fall 2024 schedule. An official transcript is required at the end of each academic year in order for us to process your next year's scholarship. To obtain an Undergraduate, Masters, or Vocational Scholarship application, they are available on our website, [www.wyandotte-nation.org](http://www.wyandotte-nation.org) or you can email your request or any questions that you may have to Evan Hotulke, our Education Specialist at [ehotulke@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:ehotulke@wyandotte-nation.org); or by calling his office at 918-678-6331.

If you are new to the scholarship program, we want to inform you of some guidelines that you are required to meet to maintain the scholarship:

- 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.

You may also contact Evan for a Wyandotte Nation Stole application. Stoles are available to college graduates that have participated in the Wyandotte Nation Scholarship Program. The stoles are also available to Wyandotte Nation tribal citizens who are graduating college but did not obtain a scholarship from Wyandotte Nation. You will be required to fill out the stole application, located on the website, and submit all documentation that is required to get a stole mailed to you. If you live local, you may pick up a stole at the Education Department once your application is approved and you have been notified.

- We are currently assisting 9 members in the WN Vocational Program.
- We have 150 participants in the WN Undergraduate Scholarship Program.
- We have 25 participants in the WN Masters Scholarship Program.

Continued on Page 11

# TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS



COURTESY PHOTOS

The Elder Services Department held its Easter Dinner with a bonnet contest.

## Elder Services

*Submitted by Brenda House, Elder Services Director*

Happy Spring all!

We headed to Will Rogers Downs in Claremore, Okla., to watch the Thoroughbred Races Monday, April 29. Everyone received \$5 free play at the casino. Transportation was provided. Those who attended, were able to purchase lunch at one of the delis in the casino.

Triad Eye Institute will provide a free Eye Screening Thursday, May 2, beginning at 10:30 am. in the conference/safe room.

Our Mother's Day Dinner will be Thursday, May 9. We will have brisket and all the sides.

The Northeast Oklahoma Caregiver Coalition will host a Country Music Dance featuring the Moccasin Bend Band and an Ice Cream Social Thursday, May 16, from 2-4 pm at the First Christian Church in Miami, Okla.

Senior Day is at the Buffalo Run Casino Tuesday, June 11 from 9 am to 2 pm. The theme will be Blue Hawaii.

Our Father's Day Dinner will be Thursday, June 13. We will have pot roast and all the sides.

We are planning a trip to Branson, Mo., in July. The date has not been set yet.

## CAREGIVER

Our Caregiver Support Group is the first Thursday of each month from 10:30 - 11:30 am in the conference/safe room. Lunch is provided in the Title VI dining room following the meeting. This group is for all current and former caregivers. It is also for grandparents raising grandchildren.

We are continuing to provide respite care vouchers for Caregivers to have a much-needed break.

## SENIOR TURTLES GIFT SHOP

The Senior Turtles Gift Shop is open. The hours are 10 am to 2 pm Monday-Friday.

If you would be interested in joining our Senior Turtles Gift Shop Group, please contact Brenda or anyone in the group.

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

## Elder Services Team:

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

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

**Seth Higginbotham, Robyn Beaty, Amanda Turner, Cortney Glass and Kelli Snell**, Food Service Team Members (918) 678-6328.

## Planning & Natural Resources

*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. For private well sampling appointments, contact Kathleen Welch or John Gerhard.

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.

## ENVIRONMENTAL

*Submitted by Kathleen Welch, Environmental Department Manager*  
**January**

At the start of the year, I had a question running through my mind, what changes will 2024 bring?

During the month of January John Gerhard performed our day to day activities without much change until the last of the month. On Jan. 26 was our Water Tech 1 personnel, Myron Shield's last day of employment. That added to our already busy schedule for John, Jon Quick and myself. During this month, staff performed two private well sampling tests, and our regular monthly sampling on eight area creeks and rivers within the Wyandotte Nation Reservation.

## February

February picked up where the previous month left off. John and

**Continued on Page 12**

## Continued from Page 10

We have been busy here at the Wyandotte Nation Child Development Center. We celebrated Easter with class parties along with egg hunts and a visit from the Easter Bunny. We also prepared for our Leaford Bearskin Memorial Preschool Pow-Wow as well as our End of Year Preschool Ceremony and Graduation Program. The Pow-Wow was Thursday, April 11. The students worked hard with our Cultural Department representatives, Josh Garcia and Chris Houk. The students learned 4 different pow-wow dances, a song in our Wyandotte Language, and they also learned how to count from 1-10 in the Wyandotte Language. We are excited that we have had the opportunity to help keep our culture alive and instill just a little bit of it in our precious children here at the Child Development Center. The End of Year Preschool Ceremony and Graduation will be held on Monday, May 6 at the Bearskin Healthcare and Wellness Center Gymnasium starting at 7. We will be celebrating

all of the academic accomplishments that our students have achieved this school year. The last day of school this year will be on Tuesday, May 14 with the first day of our Summer Program on Wednesday, May 15.

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

## Elder Services Menu

[www.wyandotte-nation.org/elderservices/elder-services-menu](http://www.wyandotte-nation.org/elderservices/elder-services-menu)

# TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

**Continued from Page 11**

I performed our monthly sampling sites on creeks and rivers, and also performing our quarterly nutrient sampling on three Lost Creek sites.

On Feb. 27th, John, Christen Lee and I held an education event with the Wyandotte Nation Turtle Tots Education Program. We visited the classes from ages 2 – 5-years-old, and talked to the students about the environment, and how the changing of seasons and temperatures affect the health of plants and water.

In the later part of 2023, we received word that Wyandotte Nation had been selected as a recipient, of a \$920,709 Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) Grant, to be used for an addition, and upgrades to the Lost Creek Recycle Center. On Feb. 27, representatives from EPA visited Wyandotte Nation and held a check presenting ceremony.

During this month we also held interviews for the Water Tech 1 position, and we are happy to announce we hired Ryan Haggard.

**March**

March started off with a bang and never let up. On March 6, John assisted the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma with a fish sampling collection event that took place on the Spring and Neosho Rivers.

On March 12, we hosted a Native American Water Management Association (NAWMA) training, for the renewal of Safe Drinking Water Class “D” Licenses. Employees from the Utilities, Environmental and Maintenance Departments participated in the class.

This was also Ryan’s first official day as a Wyandotte Nation em-



PHOTO: WILLIAM SWAIM | WYANDOTTE NATION

**The US Environmental Protection Agency’s Helena Healy presents the Wyandotte Nation with a large check to expand and improve the Lost Creek Recycling Center in Wyandotte, Okla. Pictured, from left: Wyandotte Nation Environmental Program Manager Kathy Welch, Second Chief Norman Hildebrand, EPA Region 6 Land, Chemicals and Redevelopment Division Acting Director Helena Healy, and Wyandotte Nation Planning & Natural Resources Director Christen Lee.**

ployee.

March 19, myself and Ryan Haggard attended a TECO (Tribal Environmental Coalition of Oklahoma) meeting in Stroud, Okla.

During this month we also performed two Environmental Inspections for the Housing Department.

The Lost Creek Recycle center has been busy and the amount of recyclable products being received daily has steadily increased with the warmer temps and spring in the air. At the center we receive #1 & 2 plastics, cardboard, shredded paper, newspaper, tin cans and aluminum cans. Below are our

monthly quarterly totals.

**SAVE the DATE:**

April 22 – 26th we will be having a Spring Tire Collection event.

**Other Environmental Duties:**

Each month, department staff performs monitoring and sampling on eight sites within the Wyandotte Nation Historic Jurisdictional area streams and water bodies. During this timeframe, staff also performed quarterly nutrient sampling on three lost creek sites, and e-coli sampling on all 8 sites.

Staff has attended several online

and in person meetings and trainings such as RTOC, NATURE, TECO, TCTC, TCTCIT, TSMD and others.

**Services Provided:**

- Private Well Drinking Water Sampling
- Private Home Owners Septic Assessments
- Lost Creek Recycle Center

**Notice:**

For private well sampling appointments, contact Kathleen Welch, John Gerhard or Ryan Haggard.

**PLANNING**

*Submitted by Debbie Dry, Grant Writer/BIA Self-Governance Coordinator*

The Grants Department has been busy researching, writing, and submitting applications to not only meet the Tribe’s mission but the short- and long-term goals as well. We recently received several grant awards that will allow the Tribe and its departments to serve Wyandotte citizens within our service area and beyond, when possible. Funding agencies include a variety of federal partners as well as money from the U.S. Department of Treasury.

There are currently grants submitted, awaiting approval.

**Projects:**

There are several projects at this time.

- The CR 638 Project is ending soon. The road was paved, and improvements were made to the drainage and the culvert at Hwy 60.
- CR 615 at Wyandotte Ridge is nearing completion on the Planning/Engineering phase. The project will go out for bid in May, and will include paving, widening and drainage work.

• The park at Turtle Hill Estates is almost finished. When completed, there will be a walking track, playground, and pickleball courts.

• Construction is underway on the walking track at Heritage Acres playground.



Solid Waste Collected from July thru September 2023	
Cardboard	19,271 lbs.
Plastic	1,155 lbs.
Aluminum	321 lbs.
Tin	543 lbs.
Newspaper	943 lbs.
Magazines	2,145 lbs.
Shredded Paper	2,102 lbs.
<b>Combined Total</b>	<b>26,480 lbs.</b>

Grants Awarded from January thru March 2024	
2023 Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG)	\$2,000,000

**Continued on Page 13**

# TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

## Important Numbers

### Family Services Enrollment

wnfs@wyandotte-nation.org  
 Dana Butterfield (918) 678-6319  
 Leeanna Radabaugh, (918) 678-6329  
 Haylee Botts, (918) 678-6377

### Tags

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

### Family Violence Prevention Program

fvpp@wyandotte-nation.org  
 Hotline: 877-276-0669  
 Chelsea King, (918) 678-3257

### Indian Child Welfare

Tara Gragg (918) 678-6355  
 tgragg@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

### Cultural Division

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

### Continued from Page 12

- The ICDBG-23 will be going to bid soon. This is the addition of a new gymnasium to be added next to the current. The gym will have a high school regulation basketball court, two (2) pickleball courts, and education classroom, and storage space.

- The ICDBG-21 (Pow-Pow Grounds Project), is in the Engineering phase. Once everything is in place, construction will begin. This

project will add a bathroom, covered bleachers, spaces in vendor row, camping spots, lighting, paved parking, etc.

- The Police/Courts building is adding extra parking.

- The Education Department has extensive construction going on. An additional building will be added, the old Title VI building will be renovated, and parking on the East side has been added.

Department Contacts:	
Christen Lee (Planning & Natural Resources Director)	918-678-6341
Kathleen Welch (Env. Department Manager)	918-678-6335
Ryan Haggard (Env. Technician I)	918-678-6345
John Gerhard (Env. Technician II)	918-678-6396
Jon Quick (Recycling)	918-678-6352
Debbie Dry (Grant Writer/BIA /Self-Governance Coordinator)	918-678-6315

## Cultural Division

Submitted by Kim Garcia (Tetsi?tara?t), Cultural Preservation Officer (Inyomarihu?te? Ahęhtasta?)

Kweh!

If you've been following the Wyandotte Nation Cultural Center and Museum on Facebook or Instagram, you know that we've been very busy and the upcoming spring and summer are even busier! On May 4, we are hosting the "Honoring Women Social Dance". We will also be honoring all 2024 graduates

at this dance. That afternoon, we are hosting a shawl class and a medicine pouch class. Also in May we will be hosting Wyandotte Beading on May 14, Wa<sup>ndat</sup> Wednesday on May 15, May 24 is the Pow-Wow Golf Scramble, May 27 we will be honoring Wyandotte Veteran Glen Weaver at the Wyandotte Nation Cemetery for Memorial Day, and May 28 is Wyandotte History: Reading the Wampum with Lloyd Divine.

May 31, we will be leaving from Wyandotte to visit Upper Sandusky, Ohio to celebrate 200 years since the Mission Church was built. We will be making stops at various historic locations along

the way. On Sunday, we will have a church service, a catered lunch, and a social dance. If you'd like to meet us in Ohio, please let us know and we will get you more information about the trip.

**June** - In June, we will begin our Native Youth Nights – every Thursday from 4:30 to 6:30. If your youth is interested in spending time with other Natives and learning more about our culture, please make sure they attend. There is no age limit but we do ask that the youth are able to be respectful and take care of themselves (we will not be babysitting).

Continued on Page 14

## Directory of Wyandotte Names

Being gifted a traditional name in our Wandat language connects us with our ancestors and highlights our commitment to stand up for Wyandotte Nation. Wa<sup>ndat</sup> names are the property of the Nation and in contemporary times are bestowed by our Chief after a tribal citizen successfully completes the application process which has 3 parts: application form, references (3+), & attendance at a Wyandotte Basics class (offered on ZOOM, 2x a year). Following tradition, the recipient hears their name for the first time during the ceremony at the Pow Wow Grounds in September.

While you can start/submit an application at any time of the year, new applications are reviewed October – May. Summer is reserved for working on finding names for those who have completed the application process by May 31st.

Note: As this is an intense time-consuming process, meeting the May 31st deadline does not guarantee a name will be bestowed that same year. To begin the process, you can start online at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WNameApp>

If you have been gifted a traditional name in the past, please be sure to add it to our Directory at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WNames> so we can ensure 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!) Tižameh!

Please send name questions & inquiries to [bwright@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:bwright@wyandotte-nation.org).

# TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

## Continued from Page 13

At 6:30 on Thursdays, Sahotreduto?, the Wa<sup>a</sup>dat singers meet to practice our longhouse songs. Everyone is invited to our songs and dances. It's a fun time! June 8 we are hosting an invitational lacrosse tournament at the Wyandotte High School. We hope to get local people excited about lacrosse and hopefully encourage more youth to take on the sport. June 10-13, we are hosting a lacrosse camp for all youth 12 and older. On June 11, we have our Wyandotte Beading. June 19 is Wa<sup>a</sup>dat Wednesday. June 21-23 is Gathering of Little Turtles. June 25 is Wyandotte History: Reading the Wampum with Lloyd Divine. June 29, Nathan McAlister will be teaching a pottery class at the Cultural Center.

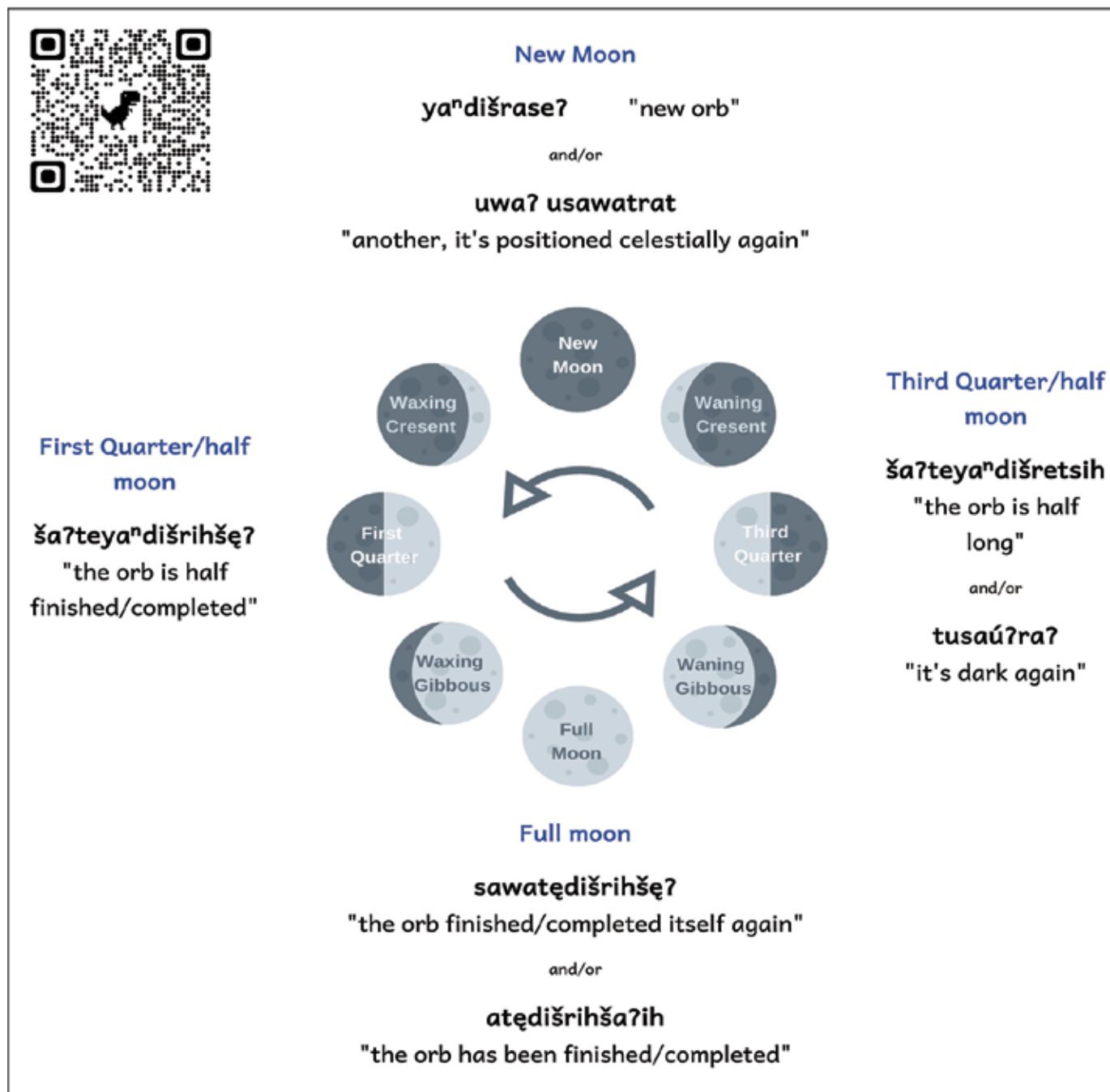
**July** - On July 2, we will be hosting fireworks. Wyandotte Beading will be July 9. We will have an Uskwe?tra? class on July 17. Wa<sup>a</sup>dat Wednesday is July 17 and Wyandotte History: Reading the Wampum is July 30. Every Thursday we will have Native Youth Night and then Wa<sup>a</sup>dat Songs from 4:30 to 8:30. The end of July, we will be taking the interns to southern Ohio to visit the Hopewell Mounds as well as other historic sites along the way.

### Future events to keep in mind:

Aug. 10	Basic Moccasin Class
Aug. 24	Deadline to Submit Artwork into the Artisan Showcase
Sept. 9	Kayak Trip
Sept. 10-13	Gathering (we will be starting in the morning on the 10th)
Sept. 11	Artisan Showcase
Sept. 13-15	Wyandotte Pow-Wow
Sept. 14	Annual Meeting
Sept. 30	Orange Shirt Day
Oct. 12	Basic Moccasin Class
November	Native American Heritage Month

Please visit [linktr.ee/wncm](http://linktr.ee/wncm) for all of our classes and events. We'd love to see you participating!

## Moon Phases ... a beginning!



For educational use only. Wyandotte Nation Cultural Center & Museum, 2024. Language assistance from Dr. Craig Kopriss.

## Wyandotte Book Club!

The Cultural Center hosts an online book club using ZOOM every quarter. We read new and classic works by indigenous authors. We encourage anyone who is interested to sign up and attend our sessions – whether you finished the book or not! The focus is on how the book impacts us as Wyandot(te)s & relatives so our discussions are amazing. Every selection will be available in paperback and audiobook and you are invited to choose which format works best for you.

### 2024 Book Selections:

Feb 29, 2024 – Night of the Living Rez by Morgan Talty (short stories)  
May 8, 2024 – As Long As Grass Grows by Dina Gilio-Whitaker  
Aug 6, 2024 – Warrior Girl Unearthed by Angeline Boulley  
Nov 6, 2024 – My Heart is a Chainsaw by Stephen Graham Jones

Note: Session dates & times may change; be sure to register to receive any future updates.

To register for Book Club (if you never have before) and receive the zoom link, please go to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WyandotteBookClub>.

If you'd like to suggest future titles, 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, please let us know at [bwright@wyandotte-nation.org](mailto:bwright@wyandotte-nation.org).

# TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

## Healthcare & Wellness

*Submitted by Kelly Friend, Health Services Director*

### Understanding Purchased / Referred Care

Purchased Referred Care (PRC) is the Health Service referral care program that pays for health services that are not directly provided at Bearskin Healthcare (BHC). Your provider may place a referral to a local specialist when services are not available at BHC. The provider referral is not an authorization for payment, but a referral for medical services. Before a Referral Authorization Order is issued, PRC is required to screen all patients for the following: Residency, Alternate Resources, and Indian Health Services eligibility.

- PRC is Not an Entitlement, or a guarantee of payment.
- PRC is not an Insurance program.
- PRC is the “Payer of Last Resort” per Federal Regulations (42CFR36.61).

Purchased Referred Care (PRC) each year is funded by US Congressional Appropriations that is handed down to Tribes by the Indian Health Services. Since funds are limited, not all referrals can be covered by Purchased Referred Care, there are mandatory federal guidelines that must be followed and enforced.

#### Call Us

The most important thing for you to

know about Purchased Referred Care is that you should call us before you receive services. We can help you to determine if you are eligible for services and guide you through the referral process so that your medical care will be paid for by Purchased Referred Care. When you call, you can find out if you are eligible and if the services you need are covered. Don't wait until it's too late. All services REQUIRE prior authorization before obtaining services or a 72 hour notification following self-referred care (emergent care).

- 918.678.3227 PRC Specialist
- 918.678.3228 BHC Front Desk

(PRC does not have after hours telephone coverage, please leave a voice mail message and we will return your call the next business day.)

#### Eligibility

Purchased Referred Care funds are provided to eligible beneficiaries that reside in the BHC Purchased Referred Care Delivery Area (PRC-DA). Eligibility for services are limited to those individuals who are enrolled members of the Wyandotte Nation or Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma; reside within one of the twelve counties (Ottawa, Craig, Mayes, Wagoner, Delaware, Rogers, Okmulgee, Nowata, Tulsa, Creek, Okfuskee, Washington) which comprise the PRC-DA.

Non-Native pregnant women with an eligible Wyandotte or Eastern Shawnee child with a signed Affidavit of Paternity will be covered through post-partum (6 weeks).

Students who are temporarily absent from his/her CHSDA during full-time

attendance of boarding school, college, vocational, technical, and other academic education. The coverage ceases 180 days after completing the study.

A person who is temporarily absent from his/her CHSDA due to travel, employment, etc. eligibility ceases after 180 days.

Children placed in foster care outside of the CHSDA by court order.

Documents required to be presented for service include:

- Signed Rules Agreement (Every 3 Years)
- Alternate Resource Form (Every calendar year)
- Valid Oklahoma Driver's License or Oklahoma State issued Identification Card
- Tribal Membership Card
- Residency Requirements - (Two forms required and updated every 3 years):
  - o Utility Bill in patient's name with physical address – lease agreement, gas, electric, internet, cable.
  - o If only one utility bill, the following documents will be acceptable as the second document - Previous years taxes (front page verifying state filed) Land Tax statement, Recent School Records, Mortgage payment
- For individuals that do not have 2 of the above documents in their name and reside with other individuals:
  - Notarized affidavit verifying residence

#### Alternate Resources

*What are “Alternate Resources”?*

An alternate resource is a payment source other than BHC Purchased Referred Care that helps pay for your health care.

Common examples include:

- Medicaid – Soonercare
- Medicare
- Veterans Administration
- Workers Compensation
- Motor Vehicle Insurance
- State or other local health care programs

Bring in your current insurance card, dental card, optometry card, soonercare card or Medicare card.

Funding reimbursed from these programs supplements Indian Health Services funds. These funds help us better meet your health care needs in the greater Wyandotte and Eastern Shawnee communities.

#### *Will BHC Purchased Referred Care funds always pay for services received or requested?*

No. PRC funds will not automatically pay for your care received at a non-BHC or Indian Health Service (HIS) facility. Federal regulations make PRC a “Payer of Last Resort”. Therefore, you must apply for alternate resources – such as Medicaid, Soonercare or healthcare exchange for which you may be eligible. If you refuse or fail to make a “good faith” effort to apply for alternate resources, PRC is required to deny your request for payment.

**Continued on Page 16**

## Language Notes

**BY BECI WRIGHT**  
WYANDOTTE NATION

Kweh qmatəru? ! (Hello, friends!)

Our language, Wa<sup>ˈ</sup>dat, is part of the Iroquoian language family. It has been sleeping but we are working diligently to wake it up!

We use ya<sup>ˈ</sup>díšra? (celestial orb) to talk about both our elder brother the sun, and our grandmother the moon. Usually your listener can tell which one from the context of your discussion. But if you want to be certain, add our word for ‘day’ or ‘night’ to make it specific:

meṭé?yeh ya<sup>ˈ</sup>díšra? sun (day orb)  
wəhsqé?yeh ya<sup>ˈ</sup>díšra? moon (night orb)

Join us every third Wednesday of the month at Wandat Wednesdays (online using ZOOM) to practice together. Our topics range from body parts to seasonal activities to learners' requests. In April, we examined words recorded in the 1880's for phases of the moon. Those are listed in this edition's graphic (image from google.). Notice how descriptive our language is!

Pronunciation Hints: ʔ 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. The small v-shape above an s (š)

signals the “sh” sound; above a z (ž) it signals the “jh” sound. And the little accent tells you where to put the stress.

#### *Interested in learning our language?*

Many language classes fill up before we can advertise them in Turtle Speaks. If you would like to be notified of future offerings when they first become available, please add your name to our mailing list and take a few minutes to tell us your learning preferences at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LangInterest> – Tižameh!

Our next offering for beginning Wa<sup>ˈ</sup>dat is planned to begin soon after the Gathering & Pow Wow in September so be sure to sign up above to be notified!

Remember: there is always Wa<sup>ˈ</sup>dat Wednesdays! This informal, stand-alone vocabulary class happens the third Wednesday of every month, and is online using ZOOM. One session is at NOON Central Time and the other at 8 PM CT. To sign up, go to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WandatWed> to receive the zoom link and reminders.

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)

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

# TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Continued from Page 15

## **Do I have to apply for Alternate Resources?**

Yes. Federal regulations require that you apply for alternate resources for which you may be eligible. By applying for alternate resources you are also helping to make sure there are federal funds available to meet the needs of all BHC beneficiaries. BHC Purchased Referred Care will “deny” payment until you have applied for alternate resources and your application is either accepted or denied.

## **Emergency Care**

Emergency care is defined in the Purchased Referred Care Funds and Emergency Room Care Policy as “medical conditions for which immediate medical attention is necessary to prevent death or serious impairment of the health of an individual.

If Claremore Indian Hospital is available to provide the needed care, BHC Purchased Referred Care will not pay for services rendered at other facilities unless it meets a true emergency, as defined above. Remember that Bearskin Healthcare is open 5 days a week till 4:30 pm. If BHC staff determine that you need specialized or hospital care, they will immediately refer you to Claremore Indian Hospital or the provider that meets your needs medically.

Non-emergency services include, but are not limited to:

- Prescription drug refills
- Upper respiratory infections
- Minor cuts and bruises
- Dental encounters –not deemed emergent by the on-call dentist
- Urinary Tract Infections
- Vomiting
- Colds
- Ear infections
- Minor rashes
- Sinus infections
- Medical Clearance
- Seen during Clinic hours

## **Referrals**

### **Will Purchased Referred Care pay for referrals made by non-BHC providers?**

No. BHC Purchased Referred Care will not pay for services if a referral for service is not made by a BHC provider prior to you receiving care.

### **Does Purchased Referred (PRC) Care pay for ambulance service?**

Yes. BHC Purchased Referred Care will pay for state-certified ambulance services that are medically necessary.

The Purchased Referred Care Review Committee will review each case for medical appropriateness.

### **Why did my bill go to Collections?**

Did you receive a Medical Bill from the Hospital or Clinic that you went to? PRC does not always know that you received a bill. You must call or bring your bill into PRC.

### **Why do I have to apply for Medicaid?**

Federal Regulations require that all our patients are screened for benefits. If you qualify for other resources you will be asked to apply.

### **What if I don't apply for Alternate Resources like Medicaid?**

If you don't apply for resources you will need to pay for your healthcare bills outside of Bearskin Healthcare.

### **Why did my insurance pay before BHC did?**

Purchased Referred Care is a “Payer of Last Resort” after all other insurances and health coverage such as (Medicaid/DKC, Medicare and private insurances). This is a Federal Regulation.

### **Why am I getting so many bills and statements?**

Open and respond to any requests for information! If you don't respond to your insurance request for additional information right away, your insurance will deny for timely filing and you will be responsible for those charges.

## **Medical Bills**

### **I received a Medical Bill, what do I do?**

Anytime you receive Medical Bills,

it is always important that you bring your Medical Bills into PRC. If you are not able to bring your bills into PRC, please call PRC or you may fax your bills to PRC. The PRC staff can help you understand why you received a bill.

### **Who do I Contact at PRC?**

Please call the PRC Team at the following extensions:

- 918.678.3227
- 918.678.3226

## **Denials & Appeals**

### **Can I appeal a denial of payment?**

Yes. When BHC Purchased Referred Care denies your request for payment, you will be notified in writing of the reason for the denial. You will also be notified of your right to appeal. The denial letter will clearly state the process you should follow if you wish to appeal. Denial of payment or an appeal will in no way affect the medical care provided by BHC Health Services to you and your family members.

### **What is the appeal process?**

If a person is denied PRC, or when a medical provider may reasonably think that PRC is a party to payment, the patient must be notified in writing of the denial with a statement containing all the reasons for the denial. A person denied PRC may request a reconsideration of the denial. Below is an excerpt regarding appeals from 42 CFR; this excerpt will provide information on the appeals process.

From the Federal Register, Thursday, October 28, 1999. Part VIII, Department of Health and Human Services. 42 CFR Parts 136 - Indian Health, Subpart C - Contract Health Services:

§ 136.25 Reconsideration and appeals.

a. Any person to whom Purchased/ Referred Care services are denied shall be notified of the denial in writing together with a statement of the reason for the denial. The notice shall advise the applicant for Purchased/Referred Care services that within 30 days from the receipt of the notice the applicant:

1. May obtain a reconsideration by the Bearskin Healthcare and Wellness Center Director of the original denial if the applicant submits additional supporting information not previously submitted; or

b. If the original decision is affirmed on reconsideration, the applicant shall be so notified in writing and advised that an appeal may be taken to the Purchased/ Referred Care Appeals Committee within 30 days of receipt of the notice of the reconsidered decision. The appeal shall be in writing and shall set forth the grounds supporting the appeal.

c. If the original or reconsidered decision is affirmed on appeal by the director, the applicant shall be so notified in writing and advised that a further appeal may be taken to the Purchased/Referred Care Appellate Administrator, within 30 days of receipt of the notice. The appeal shall be in writing and shall set the grounds supporting the appeal. The decision of the Appellate Administrator, shall constitute final administrative action.

To schedule a Medicare Wellness Exam Contact:

**Bearskin Healthcare and Wellness Center, 1 Turtle Drive  
Wyandotte, OK 74370  
918-678-2282**



**MAY 4, 2024**  
**BEARSKIN FITNESS CENTER**  
**FOR STRONG MEN AND WOMEN**  
**2024 STRONGMAN**

**WEIGH IN-9AM(CLOTHES YOU WILL BE COMPETING IN)**  
**EVENT START TIME: 10:00AM**

**HEAVYWEIGHT MEN: 200 & UP**  
**LIGHTWEIGHT MEN: 199 & BELOW**

**HEAVYWEIGHT WOMEN: 150 & UP**  
**LIGHT WEIGHT WOMEN: 149 & BELOW**

**EVENTS: FIRE TRUCK PULL**  
**LOG PRESS**  
**KEG CARRY**  
**EVENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

**MUST BE 18 YEARS**  
**PRE-REGISTRATION- \$35/WALK UP \$50**  
**MAX OF 5 PARTICIPATES PER DIVISION**

**PRE-REGISTRATION ON OR BEFORE APRIL 19TH.**

**CASH PRIZES!**  
**FREE T-SHIRT!**