



The Turtle Speaks

Gyah'-Wish Atak-ia

A Wyandotte Nation Publication

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February 2026



Winter Gathering

**Bear the Cold
participants run
for good cause**

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- Councilperson..... Keith Gray
- Councilperson..... Vivian Fink
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Editor/Design: William Swaim



Winter Gathering: Runners get off to a hot start in the Bear the Cold 5K

PHOTO: JOSHUA GARCIA

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



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www.youtube.com/WyandotteNation



From the Chief

Billy Friend

Building on success as we head into new year

Happy New Year! We hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season surrounded by family, friends, and loved ones.

As we begin this new year, we are excited about the opportunities ahead and the continued journey of the Wyandotte Nation. While we look forward with optimism, we also take time to reflect on the meaningful progress we achieved together over the past year. United in our mission to strengthen sovereignty and improve the quality of life for our citizens, the Wyandotte Nation accomplished much in 2025.

Our diversified business enterprises and financial stewardship continued to position the Nation for long-term success. Through careful planning and responsible leadership, we have continued to build a strong and sustainable tribal economy. In 2025, we advanced major development initiatives, expanded existing business operations, and laid the groundwork for future investments that will benefit our citizens for generations to come.

Health and wellness remain a priority for the Wyandotte Nation. Through partnerships and continued support of health services and

'Together, we will write the next chapter of the Wyandotte Nation's story. A story defined by unity, service and progress!'

programs, we worked to ensure our citizens have access to quality care, preventative services, and resources that promote healthier families and communities.

Education and youth development continue to be central to our vision for the future. In the past year, we invested in and increased our scholarships, educational assistance, and workforce development opportunities to support Wyandotte students of all ages. We also continued to expand youth programming, leadership opportunities, and cultural education to help prepare the next generation of Wyandotte leaders.

Preserving and honoring our history and culture remains at the heart of who we are as Wyandotte people. In 2025, our Cultural Division continued their efforts

to protect our heritage, share our story, and celebrate our resilience as a Nation. Through our cultural programs, language preservation efforts, and community events, we strengthened our connection to our ancestors and to one another.

We also made important progress in programs and services that directly support our citizens. Housing assistance, elder services, family services and community support initiatives continued to expand, ensuring that our most vulnerable citizens receive the care and respect they deserve. Our elders remain the foundation of our Nation, and we remain committed to honoring their wisdom and service.

As we move into 2026, we do so with gratitude for what we have accomplished and confidence in what lies ahead. Together, we will continue building on the strong foundation we have created, guided by our values, our sovereignty, and our responsibility to future generations.

Together, we will write the next chapter of the Wyandotte Nation's story. A story defined by unity, service, and progress. We wish you and your families a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year.

From the Second Chief | Norman Hildebrand, Jr.

Continued growth betters Tribe, community

Kweh Omateru
Hello my friends, here we are in the middle of winter -- at least part of the time. The weather has been crazy here at the Wyandotte Nation. But that's Oklahoma for you, warm and beautiful one day and cold and miserable the next.

The nice weather has kept our contractors busy at work on our new gymnasium, the roads that border

Turtle Hill on the East and West have been paved and the new houses in Heritage Acres are going up at a good pace. We are looking forward to expanding the infrastructure North of Heritage Acres to build more duplexes, houses and hopefully a new maintenance barn. The addition to the recycling center should start in the next few weeks. The Wyandotte Nation continues to grow every year

for the betterment of the Nation and the community.

Now for the second installment of the Wyandotte Floats saga, I hope you enjoy this complex part of Wyandotte history:

The Wyandott Allotments were not,



See **SECOND CHIEF**, Page 3

SECOND CHIEF

Continued from Page 2

strictly grants. Rather they were the mechanism set up by which the Wyandotts were able to obtain individual legal title to the lands of the Wyandott Purchase, which they already owned as a tribe. The technical term for this was “severalty,” and the Wyandotts had been trying to get the government to agree to this, along with U.S. citizenship for tribal members, for some five years prior to the time the Treaty of 1855 was finally signed. (Their request of citizenship and severalty had been turned down at least twice by the U.S. Senate in 1850, and by President Fillmore in 1852.) Under Article 2 of the Treaty of 1855, the lands of the Wyandott Purchase were ceded to the U.S. Government, to be surveyed, divided into allotments, and patents of title to those allotments issued by the government to the individual members of the tribe. Note that this cession to the government was done strictly as a procedural matter, to insure the legal validity of the patents of title the Wyandotts received; the Wyandotts were not actually giving up anything to the government.

As called for in Article 3 of the treaty, three Wyandott Commissioners were appointed to oversee the division and assignment of allotments, two (John C. McCoy and Lot Coffman,

both with experience as surveyors) by the Wyandott Tribal Council, and one (Delaware Indian Agent Benjamin F. Robinson) by the government. All 39 square miles of the Wyandott Purchase were subsequently divided into allotments, and there were only four allotments which did not go to individual tribal members: two acres at the northeast corner of the present North 38th Street and Parallel Parkway went to the Wyandot’s Methodist Episcopal Church, two acres near the present North 10th Street and Walker Avenue went to the Wyandot’s Methodist Episcopal Church South, the four acre Wyandot National Ferry Tract on the west bank of the Kansas River just south of its confluence with the Missouri was to be sold to the highest bidder among the Wyandots (which turned out to be a consortium headed by Isaiah Walker) and the proceeds distributed to the tribal members as an annuity, and the Wyandot National Burying Ground (Huron Indian Cemetery) was to be permanently reserved for cemetery purposes.

As has been noted in the past, the cemetery and only the cemetery became and remained government property as a result of the treaty. The reason for this was that under Article 1 of the Treaty of 1855, the Wyandot Nation was dissolved; it ceased to exist as a recognized political entity, although the tribal council continued

to function up until 1862, by which time all of the allotment patents of title had been issued and most of the other provisions of the treaty fulfilled. As there was no longer a Wyandot Nation for the cemetery to belong to, it remained U.S. government property, reserved for the use of the Wyandots and their descendants.

The treaty roll, allotment schedule and plat of the allotments that were issued by the Wyandott Commissioners on February 22, 1859, listed the names and ages of 555 Wyandots who were legally resident on the Wyandott Purchase at the time of the treaty’s ratification, and therefore entitled to both allotments and monetary payments under terms of the treaty. The roll divided the Wyandots into a Competent Class (474 individuals), who were eligible for citizenship, an Incompetent Class (40 individuals), and an Orphan Class (41 minors). Those Wyandots who fell into the latter two classes had guardians appointed by the tribal council to look after their financial affairs, and their allotments were restricted from alienation, meaning they could be rented or leased but could not be sold. Regardless of class, all 555 Wyandots received allotments, and a full 414 became U.S. citizens – four-fifths of the tribe. Those Wyandots who were entitled to a Wyandot Float under the Treaty of 1842 and who were also listed on the 1855 treaty roll as being legally resident on the Wyandott Purchase and therefore entitled to an allotment received both. Conversely, some Wyandots who never removed to Kansas received floats but none received allotments, and all Wyandots resident in Kansas received allotments but most did not receive floats, as again, the two things were completely unrelated.

The Commissioner of Indian Affairs had initially stated that under his interpretation of the treaty, patents of title for the allotments should be issued to each individual Wyandot, including all minor children who would then need to have guardians appointed. The Wyandots objected, proposing instead that (with the exception of the minors in the Orphan Class) the patents of title should be issued to single adults and to heads of family, giving married men control over allotments of their wives and minor children. The Wyandot view prevailed, so that family allotments were lumped together. For example, a married man with a wife and four minor children received title to the

equivalent of six allotments, while a single man or woman received just one. In the case of widows with minor children, the three commissioners charged with laying out the allotments opposed widows being treated as heads of family, as commissioner John C. McCoy stated, “women are incompetent to manage their own affairs.” In this case the commissioners were eventually overruled by both the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and the Wyandot Tribal Council, allowing women who were widows at the time of the treaty’s ratification to be treated as heads of family having charge of their minor children – and their children’s allotments. As a result of this grouping of the allotments of family members together, although there were 555 Wyandots, there were only 285 allotments, and four of those were the exceptions to the individual allotments noted above.

The three Wyandot Commissioners were also charged with insuring that the allotments should be equal in value, and that where possible, each family’s allotment should include their existing residence. This latter condition proved to be almost impossible to comply with, as the Wyandot’s residences were not uniformly distributed throughout the area of the Wyandott Purchase. This meant that some Wyandot’s allotments included substantial improvements such as houses and barns, while others were largely undeveloped ground, and even undeveloped ground could vary greatly in value depending on whether or not it was suitable for farming. As a result, the size of the allotments varied substantially, even among single individuals. The smallest individual allotment was that of Tobitha N. Armstrong (Competent Class, Allotment No. 8), eldest daughter of Silas Armstrong, whose allotment was just 18.60 acres, while one of the largest, that of Harley Coon (Incompetent Class, Allotment No. 209), contained 120.00 acres. It is probably reasonable to assume that Miss Armstrong’s allotment (which she subsequently sold to the Wyandott City Company) contained some very substantial buildings, while Mr. Coon’s allotment in the area of the present 64th Street and State Avenue may have been largely undeveloped land.

I am going to stop here until the next edition of the Turtle Talk. It’s amazing what our ancestors had to endure during this time period.



April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. It’s a time to acknowledge the pervasive impact of sexual violence and to promote consent, respect, and support for survivors. More than half of American Indian and Alaska Native women—about 56 %—experience sexual violence in their lifetime, a rate significantly higher than many other groups.

PUBLIC NOTICE: NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING & ELECTION

On September 12, 2026, the Wyandotte Nation shall hold their Annual Meeting and Election at the Bearskin Healthcare and Wellness Center near Wyandotte, Oklahoma. The Election will begin at 9 a.m.

The purpose of the election is to elect the following positions:

- Second Chief
- Board of Director Member
- Grievance Committee Members

The term of each position is four years. Current members shall hold their office until successors are duly elected and given their oath of office.

The opening date to file for candidacy is May 15, 2026 with the closing date June 14, 2026 at 4:30 p.m. All qualified members of

the Wyandotte Nation who desire his or her name to be placed on the ballot as a candidate for Elective Office must file a "Declaration of Candidacy" in person with the Election Board Secretary or a designated representative at the Wyandotte Nation Administration Building located at 8 Turtle Drive, Wyandotte, Oklahoma. No person shall be a candidate for more than one office at any one time. All such filings of Declaration of Candidacy must be filed no sooner than May 15, 2026 and no later than June 14, 2026. No later than three days following the close of the filing period, the Election Board Secretary shall cause to be posted at the Tribal Complex a complete list of all candidates along with their

respective office of candidacy.

A filing fee of fifty dollars (\$50) shall be assessed for each candidate filing for Second Chief and Board of Directors. Ten dollars (\$10) will be assessed for Grievance Committee candidates. Each candidate for Elective Office shall be assessed these fees payable to the Wyandotte Nation by Certified Check, Cashier's Check, Personal Check or Money Order. These fees shall be used for election purposes. The filing fee shall be paid on the same date the prospective candidate submits his or her Declaration of Candidacy. Said filing fee is non-refundable.

tions shall be the Bearskin Healthcare and Wellness Center Classroom, Wyandotte, Oklahoma. The polling shall be opened from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. Any voter in line at the polling place but unable to cast a ballot before 11 a.m. will be allowed to finish voting. The polling place shall be staffed by at least two (2) polling officials designated by the Election Board.

Each voter will be required to present a photo ID and Tribal Membership Card. If the Tribal Membership Card has a photo on it, this will satisfy both of these requirements.

*– Zach Shockey, Chairperson
Wyandotte Nation Election
Board*

POLLING PLACE: The official polling place for all Tribal Elec-

2026 Town Hall Meetings set for March 28-29 in California

The Wyandotte Nation will be hosting back-to-back Town Hall Meetings in California on March 28 in Newport Beach and March 29 in San Ramon. Please see the postcards below for additional information on each meeting.

For Newport Beach, if you want to make room reservations, there is a Courtesy Block at the hotel. Check out our Facebook page or

the article on our website for the direct link to the Room Reservations. The cutoff date to make reservations is Feb. 27.

For San Ramon, if you want to make room reservations, there is a special group rate (\$139/night) at the San Ramon Marriott. Again, check out our Facebook page or the article on our website for the direct link to the Room Reservations for

the Marriott. The last day to book is Feb. 28.

In 2013, with the hope of reaching more tribal citizens outside the tribal reservation, Wyandotte Nation Chief Billy Friend established the first Town Hall Meetings.

The idea of the Town Hall Meetings was to bring the Annual Meeting to those who couldn't always make it back to Oklahoma

in September and help keep tribal citizens informed of the everyday happenings of the Tribe, as well as provide tribal citizens with better connections – a better connection to the Tribe and a better connection to other tribal citizens living in their area of the country.

Lunch will be provided. In addition, we will have a Cultural Presentation and Q&A session.

ATTENTION

The Wyandotte Nation will host a Town Hall meeting in Newport Beach, California for Wyandotte Nation Citizens on Saturday, March 28, 2026. Each adult (18 and over) enrolled Wyandotte Citizen who attends will receive \$100.00 to assist with the expenses associated with attending the meeting. Spouses and family are welcome and encouraged to attend. This meeting will allow Wyandotte Citizens to meet the Chief, Second Chief and staff members, to learn about the current status of the Tribe and to ask specific questions. Lunch will be provided after the meeting. There will also be a Q&A session and Cultural presentation held after the meeting. We look forward to seeing you there. There is a block of rooms set-up with a deadline of February 27th. If interested in staying on property check the Facebook announcement or call the number below.

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2026

9:00 AM REGISTRATION

10:00 AM MEETING

HYATT REGENCY NEWPORT BEACH WEST
4545 MACARTHUR BLVD
NEWPORT BEACH, CA 92660

rsup:

PLEASE RESPOND BY
FRIDAY, MARCH 13TH
TO DANA BUTTERFIELD
918.678.6319 OR
DBUTTERFIELD@WYANDOTTE-
NATION.ORG

TOWN HALL Meeting

ATTENTION

The Wyandotte Nation will host a Town Hall meeting in San Ramon, California for Wyandotte Nation Citizens on Sunday, March 29, 2026. Each adult (18 and over) enrolled Wyandotte Citizen who attends will receive \$100.00 to assist with the expenses associated with attending the meeting. Spouses and family are welcome and encouraged to attend. This meeting will allow Wyandotte Citizens to meet the Chief, Second Chief and staff members, to learn about the current status of the Tribe and to ask specific questions. Lunch will be provided before the meeting. There will also be a Q&A session and Cultural presentation held after the meeting. We look forward to seeing you there. There is a block of rooms set-up with a deadline of February 27th. If interested in staying on property check the Facebook announcement or call the number below.

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 2026

12:00 PM LUNCH - 1:00 PM MEETING

SAN RAMON MARRIOTT
2600 BISHOP DR
SAN RAMON, CA 94583

rsup:

PLEASE RESPOND BY
FRIDAY, MARCH 13TH
TO DANA BUTTERFIELD
918.678.6319 OR
DBUTTERFIELD@WYANDOTTE-
NATION.ORG

TOWN HALL Meeting

Winter Gathering



(PICTURED LEFT) Tribal citizen Keith Gray taught a fingerweaving class, where participants created woven keychains, during January's Winter Gathering. (ABOVE) Tribal citizen Lenzy Lankford-Herdocia facilitated a children's book-writing workshop. (BELOW) Runners braved the freezing temperatures for a good cause in the Bear the Cold 5K, raising more than \$3,000 for Teresa Wilson. We had record attendance for all the events.

Photos by Joshua Garcia



Elders Christmas Dinner

Our Elder Services team hosted their annual Christmas Dinner December 18 at the Artie Nesvold Elders Center. The Wyandotte HS Choir sang carols and even Santa showed up to pass out goodies before the meal.



Photos by William Swaim



Tribe's health benefit plan (HRA) management switched to Point C

The Wyandotte Nation's Supplemental Health Benefit Plan (Benny Cards) will now be managed by Point C. Effective January 1, 2026, Wyandotte Nation tribal citizens will be provided with a first-dollar supplemental benefit to be used for qualified medical, dental and vision expenses.

ditional \$1,000 for a max family benefit of \$2,500.

Tribal citizens should have received the new cards in the mail. Program dates are January 1 - December 31.

The Wyandotte Nation offers three easy options for tribal citizens to use Supplemental

Healthcare Benefit account to pay for healthcare expenses. The first option is a Benefit Card, a credit card that automatically deducts money from your Supplemental Healthcare Benefit account. The second option is reimbursement by check. The last option is reimbursement through

direct deposit. If you choose this option, Point C will automatically send the reimbursement directly to your bank account.

You can find guides on the website for more information regarding the program:

- The Brochure
- Mobile & Online Guide
- Direct Deposit Guide

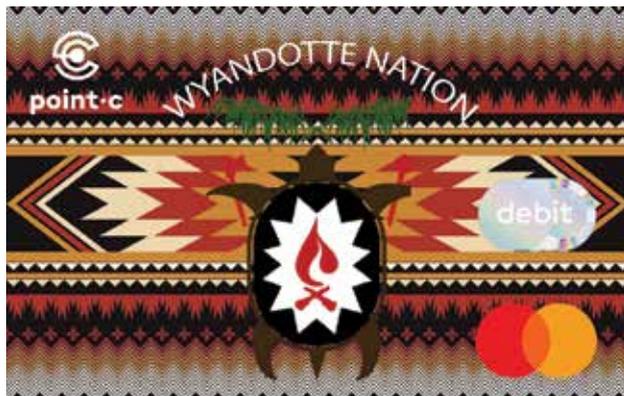
Please Note:

- You have until February 28th

to file a reimbursement claim for the previous year. This can be done through the website, app or by submitting a paper claim form (this form can be found on our website under the Family Services section. For 2025, it will be processed through the Tribe and not Luminare.

• If your card is used after January 1st, the expense will come out of your current year funding.

- You can check card balances 24/7 at 855-403-0343.
- Keep in mind you will NEVER use your SSN for this program; you will only use your Wyandotte Nation roll number.



With the Supplemental Healthcare Benefit account, tribal citizens can be reimbursed for out-of-pocket medical costs such as prescriptions, dental or vision expenses, as well as deductibles or co-insurance which are not covered by other healthcare plans. Tribal citizens 18 and over are eligible for a \$1,500 benefit for medical/health related expenses and tribal citizens who have enrolled Wyandotte Nation dependents will receive an ad-

NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

April is Child Abuse Awareness Month, a time to highlight the importance of protecting children and supporting families. Each year, approximately 1 in 7 children in the U.S. experiences abuse or neglect, often by someone they know and trust. The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) supports culturally informed child welfare practices to help keep Native children connected to their families and communities while working toward safety and healing for all families.

Wyandotte Nation Christmas Party



We held our annual Children's Christmas Party for tribal youth December 13 at the Bearskin Healthcare & Wellness Center. The kiddos had a chance to tell Santa what they wanted for Christmas, take a picture with him, receive a gift, enjoy goodies, and participate in arts and crafts. We hope everyone had a good time!



Photos by
William Swaim

TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Human Resources

*Submitted by Deana Howard,
Human Resources Director*

The Wyandotte Nation Tribal Heritage Department would like to welcome tribal citizen Torey Seigel to the team as the new Receptionist.



SEIGEL

Torey is currently pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Cybersecurity and Information Assurance in addition to a previous degree in Graphic Design with practical experience. Some of

her hobbies include baking, painting, crafting, and dancing. In her spare time, Torey enjoys spending time with her family and her dachshund. She enjoys meeting new people and experiencing new places!

Torey says she is proud to be a part of the Wyandotte Nation and looks forward to grow and learn within the culture.

Welcome aboard Torey!

The Wyandotte Nation Education department would like to welcome Aby Bryant to the team as a new Childcare Assistant, Emma McGowen as a new After School Childcare Assistant, tribal citizen



BRYANT

Harper Moore as a new After School Childcare Assistant, Grace Foster as a new Education Substitute, Kayle Lofland as a new After School Substitute, Lovella Blangger as a new Education Substitute, and Stephany Clogston as a new substitute for the Preschool.



MCGOWEN

Aby comes to us with six years' experience working with children. Working with kids is what led her to go to college for Elementary Educa-



MOORE



FOSTER

family.

Harper is currently a senior at Wyandotte High School where she is active on the Cheerleading team. Her hobbies include cheering, crafting, attending concerts, cooking and volunteering. In her spare time, she enjoys being with her family and friends.

Grace has an associate's degree in Nursing from NEO A&M College in Miami, OK. Grace enjoys reading in her spare time. She loves to spend with her family and friends. They enjoy going to the movies and to the park together.



LOFLAND



BLANGGER

tion. Aby enjoys reading, shopping, cooking and spending time with her friends and family.

Emma is a senior at Wyandotte High School where she plays softball and basketball. After high school she plans to attend Pittsburg State University to become an ultrasound tech. Emma's hobbies include riding four wheelers and shopping. In her spare time, she loves spending time with her friends and her

Kayle is a Wyandotte tribal citizen and is currently a junior at Fairland High School. Her hobbies include cheering on the team at school and spending time with her friends and family. After high school, she plans on going to college to become a CRNA.

Lovella is currently a junior at Wyandotte High School where she is a member of the high school band, NHS, and FCCLA. She enjoys painting and spending



CLOGSTON

In her spare time, Stephany enjoys spending time with her two sons and her fiancée Arthur. She is also a youth leader at Seneca Assembly of God where she loves to serve.

Welcome to the Wyandotte Nation Family Aby, Emma, Harper, Grace, Kayle, Lovella, and Stephany!

The Bearskin Healthcare and Wellness Center would like to welcome Kurt Zimmer as a new Physician in the clinic.

Doctor Zimmer is an Osteopathic Physician certified in Family Practice, Correctional Medicine, and Osteopathic Manipulation. He is a US Army Veteran where he was a flight surgeon. He brings to us 41 years' experience. When he has the time, he enjoys woodworking, construction and



ZIMMER

outdoor activities. Dr. Zimmer also has a farm where he and his wife manage about 65 head of registered Hereford cattle! We are thrilled to have Dr. Zimmer join our team at Bearskin and look forward to working with him!

Welcome to the Wyandotte Nation Family!



PEREZ

time with her friends and her dog Harper.

Stephany graduated from Seneca High School and went on to City Pointe Beauty Academy and obtained her Cosmetology License.

time, he enjoys fishing and spending time with his wife. We are excited to have him join our team and wish him the best!

The Wyandotte Nation Accounting Department would like to welcome

Carrie Lampe to the team as a new Staff Accountant.

Carrie is currently enrolled at Missouri Southern State University where she is completing her BSBA in Accounting. Some of her hobbies include gardening, hiking, kayaking, dancing and baking. In her spare time, Carrie enjoys spending time with her family and friends and also learning and studying history and cultures. She also enjoys cooking.

Welcome to the Wyandotte Nation Family!

The Wyandotte Nation Facilities Department would like to welcome Lisa Simpson and Terri Dearman as new Custodians.

Lisa has experience working in nursing homes as a housekeeper. Some of Lisa's hobbies are spending time with her family and taking her grandchildren on trips. She also loves watching her grandkids play sports.

Terri attended Galena High School and then attended NEO in Miami. Terri enjoys walking, reading and nature. In her spare time, she likes to be with her family serving the Lord.

We are grateful to have Terri and Lisa join us here at the Wyandotte Nation and wish them the best!

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LAMPE



SIMPSON



DEARMAN

TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Family Services

*Submitted by Dana Butterfield,
Family Services Director*

This winter has been typical Oklahoma, with temperatures ranging between extreme highs and lows. Instead of snow for Christmas we experienced temps in the upper 70's. However, the temperature for the Winter Gathering events in January dipped into the teens. That being said, no matter what time of year you visit Oklahoma, you should prepare for any type of weather.

Something that we want to make sure our citizens are aware of is the new postmark policy at the US Postal Service (USPS). Beginning December 24, 2025, the postmark will reflect when mail is first processed at an automated postal facility rather than the date it was dropped off in a mailbox or handed to a postal clerk. This change means that mail, even if deposited before the deadline, might receive a postmark date that is later than the actual mailing date. To ensure mail receives a same-day postmark, senders must request a manual (local) postmark at a USPS retail counter or use services like certified/registered mail or a certificate of mailing. We note this so you will be aware as we get close to the end of program deadlines. If you're rushing to meet a deadline, be sure to take the extra minute to get that postmark!

In December, the Tribe hosted the Annual Children's Christmas party with 224 children ages birth to 15 in attendance and 130 families were represented. Attendees enjoyed the traditional cookies, punch, crafts and a personalized gift from Santa. A "Candy" Bar was a new treat this year, which was a hit with both the kiddos and the adults! The party theme was "Nutcracker" and each child received a cute themed t-shirt. The party takes place each year on the 2nd Saturday in December, so be sure to mark your calendars now for next year! We appreciate all of the volunteers who helped make this event successful. We also want to say a special "thank you" to our gift wrappers, Michelle Hatfield, Janet Walker, Marissa Curtis and Tara Gragg.

Continued on Page 10



Wyandotte
Nation

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT!

Make sure that your address and tribal ID are up to date with the Enrollment Department!

Ways to update your address:

- ➔ Phone
- ➔ Email
- ➔ Online Form

CONTACT NOW

- 📞 918-678-6377
- 🌐 wyandotte-nation.org
- ✉ hbotts@wyandotte-nation.org



Link to update address online: <https://wyandotte-nation.org/services/familyservices/>

TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS



(FAMILY SERVICES)

Continued from Page 9

2026 events:

- Easter Egg Hunt – Saturday, March 21 at River Bend Casino Hotel
- Family Fun Night – June 5
- Gathering of Little Turtles – June 12-14
- The Gathering – September 8 - 11
- Pow-Wow – September 11 – 13
- Annual Meeting – September 12, 10 am at the Bearskin Wellness Center Gymnasium

Town Hall

In March the Tribe will host two Town Hall meetings in California. Saturday, March 28th we will be in Newport Beach at the Hyatt Regency Newport Beach West. If you have attended the Southern CA meetings previously you may recognize this as the same location as 2016 and 2022. On Sunday, March 29th we will be at the San Ramon Marriott in San Ramon. Tribal citizens who reside

in the state of California will receive post card invitations with detailed information. However, any tribal citizen who would like to travel to the meeting is welcome to attend. If you are planning to attend either meeting, please **RSVP** to **dbutterfield@wyandotte-nation.org** by **Friday, March 13th**.

Supplemental Health Program

As you may recall, from the November newsletter the Tribe announced that a new company has been contracted to provide support for the Supplemental Health Program. New cards were mailed in December to addresses that were on file with the Enrollment office. Unfortunately, we have learned through this process that many of our tribal citizens have not kept their address up-to-date. As of mid-January, we have received nearly 350 returned cards, with additional returned cards coming in every day. If you have not

Continued on Page 11

We now offer Online Renewals!

Visit tags.wyandotte-nation.org or scan the QR Code below to renew your vehicle online. Please note there is a 3% convenience fee for all debit/credit card transactions online and in office.

✱ This link is NOT compatible with Safari ✱



SAVE THE DATE

EASTER EGG HUNT

MARCH 21, 2025

10:00 AM

River Bend Hotel



TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

(FAMILY SERVICES)

Continued from Page 10

received your new Health Benefit card yet, please contact the Enrollment office at wnfs@wyandotte-nation.org. If you need to update your address you can do so here on our website: <https://wyandotte-nation.org/services/familyservices/programs/change-of-address/>.

Point C is the new provider for this program and we are confident that they will be providing excellent service moving forward. Point C has provided each adult citizen with one card for program use. Otherwise, there are no changes to the program. Adult tribal citizens 18 and over receive \$1,500 per year and those who have enrolled dependent children who are under the age of 18 will receive an additional \$1,000 for a maximum account benefit of \$2,500. You can find a program brochure, mobile/online guide, direct deposit guide and reimbursement claim form on the Family Services page of the website. Some things to keep in mind regarding the program:

- The benefit is for enrolled Wyandotte Nation citizens only (spouses are not covered).
- The program is modeled on an FSA plan, so if you question if something is an eligible expense, you

can usually make that determination with a quick internet search.

- You have until February 28th to file claims for 2025 expenses*.
- The cards are for allowable medical expenses only and can be used only at providers with an approved IRS inventory control system, which generally means it's a medical facility or has a pharmacy.

*If you have claims for 2025 that you need to file for a reimbursement, you can find this form on the website titled "2025 Claim Form". Please keep in mind that expenses must have occurred between 01/01/2025 and 12/31/2025 and the claim form must be accompanied by a receipt for payment as well as a statement that shows date of service, type of service, amount billed and amount paid.

Services Brochure

By the time you receive this newsletter, you should have already received the new Services brochure. All Tribal services are included in this brochure, with a brief explanation of the program and contact information. If you did not receive a copy, you can contact us to have one sent. Or visit the website, and you can find the Program and Services Guide under the News & Events tab.

Tribal Enrollment

The deadline for applications to be considered for enrollment at the 2026 Annual Meeting is August 15th. Applications must be submitted along with an original state certified birth certificate (long form that includes the tribal parent's full name). Applications must be received in the office or postmarked by this date. Applications received prior to a 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.

LIHEAP Expanding

The LIHEAP program is now being processed through the 477 program and the service area has increased to Wyandotte Nation citizens residing in a 100-mile radius from the tribal headquarters as well as the entire state of Oklahoma. The Winter/heating program dates are December 1 – February 28, with crisis applications being accepted year-round. This is an income-based program and you can only receive assistance from one agency (tribal or state) during the fiscal year (October 1-September 30). Please contact the Family Services office if you would like more informa-

tion about this program.

For a complete list of Family Services programs, applications and information, please visit our website at www.wyandotte-nation.org or refer to the Services brochure.

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

Family Services:

wnfs@wyandotte-nation.org –
Front Desk, 918-678-6321

Director, Dana Butterfield, 918-678-6319;

Tag Administrator, Tiffany Garner, 918-678-6353

Family Services Specialist, Leeanne Radabaugh, 918-678-6329

Enrollment Officer, Haylee Botts, 918-678-6377

ICW Supervisor, Tracy Coach, 918-678-6355

Willow House:

477vs@wyandotte-nation.org –
Hotline number 877-276-0669

Front Desk, 918-678-6498

Program Manager Chelsea Morrison, 918-678-3257

Lead Advocate, Gabby Ezell, 918-678-6402

**Wyandotte Nation
Victim Services**
Confidential • Free • 24/7
Call 877-276-0669

WILLOW HOUSE
KYQTATETSEHS
people heal each other there

Wyandotte Nation offers a wide range of supportive services to native and non-native victims of crime within a 100 mile radius of tribal headquarters. Services include: advocacy, crisis intervention, groceries, clothing, emergency shelter, rental/utility assistance, legal expenses, court accompaniment, supervised visitation, and more.

real
LOVE
respects

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness about unhealthy and abusive behaviors in teen relationships. Nearly 1 in 3 adolescents in the U.S. experiences physical, sexual, emotional, or verbal abuse from a dating partner. Warning signs can include extreme jealousy, controlling behavior, constant texting or monitoring, isolation from friends or family, verbal put-downs, pressure around sex, or threats.

TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Education

*Submitted by Cristi Hudson,
Workforce Development Director*

Wyandotte Nation 477 Program (Workforce & Social Services)

The 477 Program or Workforce & Social Services Program, is a federally funded program that combines multiple services to better meet the needs of tribal citizens within our 100-mile service area. The program continues to provide vital services that strengthen families and support long-term self-sufficiency.

How to Apply:

To apply, clients must complete the initial 477 Application for Services. Participants do not have to be Wyandotte Nation citizens. Individuals may apply if they reside within the service area and are members of a federally recognized tribe. Applicants must also provide the following:

- Proof of tribal membership
- Proof of residency
- Selective Service Registration Card (for males ages 18 - 25).

Applications and forms are available on the Wyandotte Nation website under the Services tab by selecting 477 Program. Questions about services may also be directed to the team by calling (918) 678-3268, or by emailing the team at wn477@wyandotte-nation.org. Additional documentation may be required based on the type of service requested.

Education, Employment & Training - Education services through the 477 Program include scholarships, job training assistance, and vocational support for eligible tribal members within the service area. These services are designed to help participants reach their academic and employment goals while reducing joblessness in the community.

Approximately 25 participants are currently receiving educational support. Staff have been actively processing applications and ensuring students receive funds for their spring semester. As the year continues, the program anticipates ongoing application reviews and support for students pursuing education and training opportunities.

Childcare Subsidy - The Childcare Subsidy or Assistance portion of the 477 program assists low-income



families with the cost of childcare for children ages 0–12. Families must meet income guidelines and provide required documentation to qualify.

At this time, the program supports approximately 130 children enrolled with providers throughout our service area. Next month, staff will begin sending Recertification notices for those families scheduled to complete their recertification period in March.

Looking ahead, 477 staff are col-

laborating with the Wyandotte Nation Library and on-site Child Development Center to plan family engagement opportunities, including family nights and STEM-focused activities for families attending the Center.

Nation at their Tribal Council House, focused on preschool classes from the local tribal daycares. Approximately 115 children attended along with more than 40 dancers and singers representing all nine of the tribes located in the county. The event was a great success and planning is underway for a similar event later this spring or summer.

In April, staff are gearing up for our

annual event of Week of the Young Child, a week-long series of activities for local daycares and select lower elementary students. Sponsored by the Northeastern Oklahoma Tribal Childcare and ICW Programs, this year's activities will include a return to Creation Safari for Petting Zoo Days along with new activity options for our local students to explore and enjoy.

Wyandotte Nation Child Development Center

The Wyandotte Nation Child Development Center is rooted in a clear purpose and vision centered on providing the highest quality of care in an inviting, welcoming environment where every child and family feels valued. We believe children learn best through play, socialization, and nurturing relationships, and our program is intentionally designed to support each child's total development while laying a strong foundation for school readiness. By forming meaningful partnerships with families, we are able to better understand and respond to the individual needs of each child, ensuring consistent and responsive care. Guided by the understanding that the first five years of life are critical for lifelong learning, we strive to enhance the quality of life for children and families of the Wyandotte Nation and all those we serve through impactful, developmentally appropriate programming that fosters curiosity, confidence, and a lifelong love of learning.

As a tribally licensed 4-Star Child Care Facility, the Wyandotte Nation Child Development Center offers a comprehensive range of programs to support children and families year-round in collaboration with the Wyandotte Public School System. Our services include a Preschool Program, Infant/Toddler Program, Before and After School Program, and a Summer Program, allowing us to meet the diverse needs of our community. The Preschool Program includes two classrooms serving children ages 3–4 and two Pre-K classrooms for children ages 4–5 who are preparing to transition successfully into kindergarten. Our Infant/Toddler Program consists of three classrooms for 2-year-olds, two classrooms for 1-year-olds, and two infant classrooms that provide

PHOTOS: WILLIAM SWAIM |
WYANDOTTE NATION

The Wyandotte Nation Preschool held its annual Christmas Program and Party Dec. 18. The kids performed songs and later received a gift from Santa Claus.

Community Outreach and Events - In November, Childcare staff worked with other area Tribal CCDF Programs and Cultural Programs to host a first-of-its-kind Children's Educational Stomp Dance. The event, hosted by the Miami

Continued on Page 13

TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

(EDUCATION)

Continued from Page 12

nurturing, developmentally appropriate care for our youngest learners. The Before and After School Program operates alongside the Preschool Program and serves students up to age 12 who attend Wyandotte Public Schools. During the school year, we serve approximately 200 children across our Infant/Toddler and Preschool programs, with an additional 70–80 students enrolled in the Before and After School Program. Our Summer Program further expands our capacity, typically serving 150–175 children ages 6 weeks to 12 years, ensuring continuity of care, enrichment, and engaging learning experiences throughout the summer months.

Preschool (3-5 years old)

We support our staff members with ongoing high-quality training, resources, and the flexibility to create unique learning environments where every child can thrive. To enhance learning opportunities, we offer KUMON math and STEM activities, providing engaging experiences that encourage curiosity and critical thinking. Throughout the school year, we host a variety of family events including Open House, Grandparent's Day, Family Night events, Halloween Carnival, Parent/Teacher Conferences, Family-Style Thanksgiving, and holiday programs and parties, fostering strong connections between home and school. Our students also benefit from community engagement, as we regularly welcome local workers and volunteers to help children learn about different members of our community.

In partnership with the Wyandotte Nation Cultural Department, we integrate Wyandotte language and traditions into our curriculum, including weekly language and cultural lessons as well as dance instruction, culminating in the Annual Leaford Bearskin Memorial Preschool Powwow each spring. The school year concludes with our Preschool Graduation Ceremony, where all students are celebrated and graduates wear caps and gowns as they transition to kindergarten. During our Summer Program, students enjoy a variety of fun and educational field trips to zoos, aquariums, parks, and splash pads, combining summer fun with structured learning to support continued

growth and development.

Infants and Toddlers (6 weeks- 2 years-old)

Our infant and toddler tribal program offers a nurturing, safe, and engaging environment where the youngest learners can thrive. With small class sizes and caring, highly trained staff, every child receives personalized attention that supports their growth, curiosity, and social-emotional development. The program blends play-based learning with cultural traditions, giving children a strong sense of community and identity from the very start. Bright, stimulating classrooms and thoughtfully designed outdoor spaces invite exploration and discovery, while family engagement is encouraged at every step. Our program demonstrates a strong commitment to quality, safety, and culturally grounded early learning, helping children flourish in their earliest years.

The 2025-2026 School year began August 12, 2025. We are accepting enrollment for our 2025-2026 Pre-K and Preschool classrooms as well as our 2-Year Old Toddler Program. Students should be age 4 on or before September 1, 2025 to be eligible for the Pre-K classrooms and age 3 on or before September 1, 2025 for the Preschool classrooms. To be eligible for our Toddler Program, students should be 2 years old on or before September 1, 2025. You can always submit an application for any age to be added to our waiting lists. Applications can be completed online at <https://wyandotte-nation.org/services/education/turtletots/>. Thank you for your interest in our facility.

Wyandotte Nation Library

Kweh! The Wyandotte Nation Historical Library has been off to a great start as we welcome the new year and look ahead to an exciting 2026! Our preschoolers and afterschool students from the Wyandotte Nation Child Development Center have jumped right back into library time.

One project our students are especially excited about is their animal habitat project. Preschool and afterschool kids have been working hard learning about and creating different animals and habitats, and they can't wait to show off their finished projects once everything comes together.

We are also thrilled to share that

our Story Book Walk at Bear Park will soon be receiving permanent signage. This is something we are very excited to offer our community, and we cannot wait to share more details soon as installation approaches. This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) NAE-254945-OLS.

Looking ahead, library staff are also looking forward to attending the Oklahoma Library Association Annual Conference this spring. We're excited to bring back new ideas, resources, and knowledge to continue growing our programs and services for the Wyandotte community.

As always, we invite you to stop by the library to explore our growing collection of books, DVDs, and resources. Don't forget! We also offer access to the Oklahoma Virtual Library, where you can enjoy eBooks, audiobooks, and more from the comfort of home.

Library hours are Monday-Thursday 8 am to 4:30 pm and Friday 8 am to 3:30 pm.

To register as a library patron or to learn more about virtual access, visit us in person or check out our website at www.wyandotte-nation.org.

For questions contact our librarian, Madeline Harnar, at mharnar@wyandotte-nation.org or call **918-678-6332**.

Wyandotte Nation Scholarships

The Wyandotte Nation Education Department has several scholarship programs for citizens to apply for to receive assistance for school or job training. These scholarships can be used to help with the costs of Concurrent, Bachelors, Masters, Doctoral, and Vocational opportunities.

The WN Education department is glad to inform our participants; the scholarship amount for full-time students has been increased to \$6,000 per semester. The increase will start for all participants enrolled for the spring term. We are currently working through all of the scholarships for our spring participants. If you have not done so already, please remember to submit your grades for the completed term, and you course schedule for the upcoming term.

The WN Scholarship Programs are available for tribal citizens pursuing a Bachelors or Master's Degree. These two program have been increasing in participants every year. The Under-

grad Scholarship Program assisted 200 WN citizens this past fall semester, and prepare to have more participants apply this year. The Master Program assisted 27 WN members with scholarships.

The WN Education Department is now offering scholarships for citizens who are pursuing a Doctorate. The online submission is not yet available on the tribal website, but members are more than welcome to reach out to the Education Specialist for any questions or the application.

The WN Vocational Program assists tribal citizens pursuing a more job related training or who are enrolled in an on the job training program. This past year we have assisted 20 citizens with Vocational Training and are working with 10 more to get them the training needed for their career paths.

The WN Scholarship program has scholarships available for tribal citizens in High School who are taking college courses. These scholarships helped eight tribal citizens cover some of the costs for enrolling into concurrent courses for this past school term. We currently have seven citizens accepted for this upcoming school term.

To submit for an Undergraduate, Masters or Concurrent Scholarship application, you can log onto the tribal website at <https://wyandotte-nation.org/services/education/scholarships/>. For any questions that you may have please contact Evan at ehotulke@wyandotte-nation.org; or by calling his office at **918-678-6331**.

Department Contacts:

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

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

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

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

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

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

TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Elders

Submitted by Brenda House, Elder Services Director

Greetings all,
I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Our Northeast Oklahoma Caregiver Coalition is in the process of planning all of our events for the coming year. Stay tuned!

Our Valentine Party/Dinner is Thursday, February 12, during the noon hour. Our menu is Pot Roast, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, Baby Carrots, Hot Roll and Strawberry Cream Cheese Dump Cake. We will have prizes for the 'Eldest Valentine,' the 'Couple married the Longest,' the 'Newly Weds' and the 'One that has been Married the Most Times (and is willing to admit it).'

Our Easter Dinner/Party is Thursday, April 2, during the noon hour. We will have an Easter egg hunt, prizes for the most eggs and the prize egg. We will also have an Easter Bonnet Contest for the ladies and a Men's Leg Contest.

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

CAREGIVER

Our Caregiver Support Group is the first Thursday of each month from 10:30 - 11:30 am in the conference/safe room. Lunch provided 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 from 10 am - 2 pm Monday-Friday.

We also have a beading class every Wednesday morning starting at 9 am. Supplies are furnished. Participants make two like items, donate one to the gift shop, and keep one for themselves.

If anyone is interested in joining our Senior Gift Shop Group, please contact Brenda.

The number for the gift shop is 918-678-6491.

Department Staff:

Brenda House, Elder Services Director, 918- 678-6327.
Daniel Welch, Food Service Team Supervisor, 918-678-6390.

Seth Higginbotham, Amanda Turner, Kelli Snell, Susan Skaggs, Debbie Kleidon, and Cat Robles, Food Service Team Members 918-678-6328.

Menu, 918-678-6326.

Planning & Natural Resources

Compiled by Christen Lee, Environmental & Planning Director

Grants / Planning

During the final quarter of 2025, the Planning and Grants team focused on advancing several major infrastructure, housing, and justice-related projects.

An Indian Community Development Block Grant application, which will fund a new Maintenance Facility on the Heritage Acres Expansion site, was submitted to the U.S. Housing and Urban Development. If awarded, funds will support site preparation and construction of a centralized facility intended to improve long-term maintenance operations. At the same time, work continued to move forward with the development of the expansion site in the selection of an engineering firm to support the infrastructure plan-



ning and design.

Progress also continues on an awarded 2023 ICDBG with the recent groundbreaking for an expansion of the Bearskin Wellness Center. This project includes construction of a new multi-purpose facility designed to expand recreation, wellness, and youth programming opportunities for the Wyandotte Nation community. Planned improvements include an additional gymnasium, pickleball courts, and space to support afterschool and summer programs and ADA-accessible restrooms. With completion planned for this summer, the

Housing

Submitted by Valari Richards, Housing Director

Construction is progressing well on the new housing addition units on Bear Road. The new units will include (1) two-bedroom duplex, (3) three-bedroom single family rentals, and (3) four-bedroom single family rentals. Construction will be completed in 2026.

We are in the planning stages for a new addition to the existing splashpad in Bear Park in the Heritage Acres Housing Addition. The addition will contain some new water features and create additional space for play. We are hoping to begin construction of the addition this year.

The Heritage Acres Community Center is available to rent for weekend events. The dates fill up quickly, so please contact the office as soon as possible to check on dates if you are interested. There is a \$25 deposit required to reserve the date, which is returned after rental if the facility is left clean and free of damage.

The rental cost is \$50 for tribal members and employees, and \$75 for non-tribal members.

The Housing Department has the following programs to assist our tribal citizens: Rental/Homeownership housing units; Well & Septic Assistance; College Rental Assistance; Down Payment Assistance; and the Housing Assistance Fund. If you are interested in any Housing Programs or have any questions, please contact our office by phone at (918) 678-6336 or (918) 678-6339, or via e-mail at vrichards@wyandotte-nation.org. Some applications are available on the Wyandotte Nation website as well.

Department Staff:

Valari Richards, Housing Director
Jocelyn Metcalf, Housing Specialist
Levi Griffin/Paul Parker, Project Coordinators
Randy Qualls/Drew Lankford, Residential Maintenance Technicians

expansion will help address space limitations and growing demand for wellness, recreational, and community activities.

An Indian Housing Block Grant application package was also worked on and is expected to be submitted in the first quarter of 2026. Funding under this program will further support future construction of housing units at the Heritage Acres Expansion site.

In the area of justice and victim's services, planning activities advanced across multiple programs. The Legal Services for Crime Victims awarded moved into its formal planning phase, including participation in required federal orientation. Preliminary work also began on the second year of the Nation's current

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TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

(PLANNING)

Continued from Page 14

Family Violence Prevention and Services Act award, which supports a wide-range of services provided by the Victim Services Department.

The Tribe's Justice Strategic Plan continue to move through federal review with the Bureau of Justice Assistance, with discussions resuming following the recent federal shutdown. Once finalized, the plan will help guide justice-related programming and support future grant opportunities.

Additional activities throughout the quarter include coordinating with Tribal Courts to identify priorities and potential funding opportunities for the coming year.

Looking ahead to early 2026, planning efforts will focus on housing and infrastructure projects while exploring additional opportunities to strengthen services and enhance quality of life for tribal citizens and the community.

Environmental

The Environmental Department finished the final quarter of 2025 strong providing essential services focused on protecting public health and supporting environmental quality for tribal citizens and the surrounding community.

Environmental staff continued to offer private well drinking water sampling for households located within 25 miles of the Wyandotte Nation. Through this service, water samples are collected and tested at an EPA-certified laboratory for potential contaminants, including coliform bacteria, E. coli, heavy metals, and nitrates / nitrites. These services help ensure safe drinking water and provide peace of mind for residents who rely on private wells.



The department also continued its Septic Assessment Program, which offers free evaluations for private homeowners. Through this program, Environmental staff work alongside a state-certified contractor to assess whether septic systems are functioning properly and identify potential concerns before they become larger issues.

Recycling services also remain a priority. The Lost Creek Recycling Center, located west of the Bearskin Health and Wellness Center, continues to provide 24/7 drop-off access for recyclable materials, including plastics, aluminum and tin cans, cardboard, and paper products. Planning is also underway for a Tire Collection Event, scheduled for April 20-24, 2026, at the Lost Creek Recycle Center.

The Wyandotte Nation was previously awarded a Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling Grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection

Agency to expand the Lost Creek Recycling Center. Grant funding will support major facility upgrades and site improvements designed to increase recycling capacity, improve ef-

iciency, and better serve the growing needs of the community. The Tribe has selected both an architectural and engineering firm and a construction contractor for the project, and on-site construction is anticipated to begin in the first half of 2026.

Looking ahead into 2026, the Environmental Department will continue providing water quality testing, septic assessments, and recycling services while supporting broader efforts to protect natural resources and enhance the health and quality of life of tribal citizens and the community.

Plastic Recycling Code Guide

Did you know the plastics in many household items are placed in different categories based on the type of material they are made from and how they can be recycled? The chart below helps explain plastic recycling numbers (#1-#7) found on many of those household items. Understanding these symbols can help our community know what materials are accepted at the Lost Creek Recycling Center and make informed recycling choices.

	NUMBER 1 • PETE or PET (polyethylene terephthalate) IS USED IN: microwavable food trays; salad dressing, soft drink, water, and juice bottles STATUS: hard to clean; absorbs bacteria and flavors; avoid reusing IS RECYCLED TO MAKE: carpet, furniture, new containers, Polar fleece
	NUMBER 2 • HDPE (high-density polyethylene) IS USED IN: household cleaner and shampoo bottles, milk jugs, yogurt tubs STATUS: transmits no known chemicals into food IS RECYCLED TO MAKE: detergent bottles, fencing, floor tiles, pens
	NUMBER 3 • V or PVC (vinyl) IS USED IN: cooking oil bottles, clear food packaging, mouthwash, bottles STATUS: is believed to contain phthalates that interfere with hormonal development; avoid IS RECYCLED TO MAKE: cables, mud flaps, paneling, roadway gutters
	NUMBER 4 • LDPE (low-density polyethylene) IS USED IN: bread and shopping bags, carpet, clothing, furniture STATUS: transmits no known chemicals into food IS RECYCLED TO MAKE: envelopes, floor tiles, lumber, trash-can liners
	NUMBER 5 • PP (polypropylene) IS USED IN: ketchup bottles, medicine and syrup bottles, drinking straws STATUS: transmits no known chemicals into food IS RECYCLED TO MAKE: battery cables, brooms, ice scrapers, rakes
	NUMBER 6 • PS (polystyrene) IS USED IN: disposable cups and plates, egg cartons, take-out containers STATUS: is believed to leach styrene, a possible human carcinogen, into food; avoid IS RECYCLED TO MAKE: foam packaging, insulation, light switchplates, rulers
	NUMBER 7 • Other (miscellaneous) IS USED IN: 3- and 5-gallon water jugs, nylon, some food containers STATUS: contains bisphenol A, which has been linked to heart disease and obesity; avoid IS RECYCLED TO MAKE: custom-made products

Planning Department Contacts:

Christen Lee (Planning & Natural Resources Director)	918-678-6341
Debbie Dry (Grant Writer/BIA /Self-Governance Coordinator)	918-678-6315
David Groves (Grant Writer)	918-678-6309

Wyandotte Nation Environmental Department			
Kathleen Welch	Environmental Department Manager	Contact for private well sampling or septic assessments	918-678-6335
John Gerhard	Environmental Technician II	Contact for private well sampling or septic assessments	918-678-6396
Ryan Haggard	Environmental Technician I	Contact for private well sampling	918-678-6345

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

477 Victim Services

wn477@wyandotte-nation.org

Hotline: 877-276-0669

Chelsea King, (918) 678-3257

Indian Child Welfare

Tracy Coach (918) 678-6355

tcoach@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

Valari Richards (918) 678-6339

vrichards@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

Nakia Elsloo (918) 678-3228

nelsloo@wyandotte-nation.org

Dental / Vision

Ashley Snider, (918) 678-3222

asnider@wyandotte-nation.org

Pharmacy (call-in only)

(918) 678-3244

Fitness Center

Sharon Bartley (918) 678-3231

sbartley@wyandotte-nation.org

Contract Health

Janet Webb (918) 678-3227

jwebb@wyandotte-nation.org

Diabetes Clinic

Donna Spaulding (918) 678-3258

dspaulding@wyandotte-nation.org



WYANDOTTE
Nation

Everyone should be receiving their Program & Services Guide in the mail soon if you haven't already. All Tribal Services are included in this brochure. If you do not receive a copy, you can contact Family Services to have one sent. Or visit our website to download the PDF version there (under News & Events).

PROGRAM & SERVICES

GUIDE

2025 - 2026



“

Preserving the
Future of Our Past

www.wyandotte-nation.org

8 Turtle Drive
Wyandotte, OK 74370

Phone: (918) 678-2297 or (800) 256-2539

Fax: (918) 676-7022

Email: info@wyandotte-nation.org

TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Healthcare & Wellness

Submitted by Kelly Friend, Director of Health Services

Are you a resident within the Bearskin Healthcare Service Delivery Area? To ensure you are prepared, please note the following details:

Patients living within the Purchased/Referred Care (PRC) Service Delivery area

Wyandotte or Eastern Shawnee Tribal Citizens who reside in the following counties: Ottawa, Craig, Mayes, Wagoner, Delaware, Rogers, Okmulgee, Nowata, Tulsa, Creek, Okfuskee and Washington

- Patient must be an active patient, with a visit once every 3 years.
- Patient must complete an Alternate Resource Form (ARF).
- Patient must have current Oklahoma Driver's License or Oklahoma Identification on file.
- Patient must have Tribal Membership Card on file.
- Patient must have insurance or Soonercare denial on file, and Affordable Care Act proof of eligibility.
- Patient must sign a rules agreement (every 3 years).

- Must meet residency requirements – utility bill in patients 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), land tax statement, recent school records, mortgage statement
 - o For individuals that do not have 2 of the above documents and reside with other individuals – notarized affidavit verifying residence will be accepted.

DENTAL

- Patient must meet the above requirements.
- Appointment must be authorized prior to visit (Please allow 2 weeks minimum).
- Must use provider within insurance network or contracted with Bearskin Healthcare



AUDIOLOGY

- Appointment must be authorized prior to visit (Please allow 2 weeks' minimum)

OPTOMETRY

- Must be seen by provider at Bearskin Healthcare once every three years to be eligible
- Must be authorized prior to visit
- Must use provider within insurance network or contracted with Bearskin Healthcare
- \$250 for single vision – includes one exam and one pair or glasses OR contacts
- \$300 for multi-focal vision – includes one exam and one pair or glasses OR contacts

Patients living outside the Purchased/Referred Care (PRC) Service Delivery area

ADULT DENTAL

- Must be seen by provider at Bearskin Healthcare once every three years to be eligible
- Must be authorized prior to visit
- up to \$750 per year, excludes orthodontics and whitening
- As funding allows

ADULT EMERGENCY DENTAL

- Must be seen by provider at Bearskin Healthcare once every three years to be eligible
- Must be authorized prior to visit
- Services must be provided by a provider within insurance network or by a Bearskin Contracted provider
- Up to \$1000 per year
- Services provided – limited x-ray, limited exam, extractions, recementing of crowns, partials and/or dentures, wisdom teeth removal
- As funding allows

OPTOMETRY

- Must be seen by provider at Bearskin Healthcare once every three years to be eligible
- Must be authorized prior to visit
- Must use provider within insurance network or contracted with Bearskin Healthcare
- \$250 for single vision – includes one exam and one pair or glasses OR contacts
- \$300 for multi-focal vision – includes one exam and one pair or glasses OR contacts
- As funding allows

 To schedule a Medicare Wellness Exam Contact:
Bearskin Healthcare and Wellness Center, 1 Turtle Drive
Wyandotte, OK 74370
918-678-2282

Have News to share? We would love to hear from you! If you have news, accomplishments, or anything else you would like to include in upcoming newsletters. Send it (you can include photos) to: wswaim@wyandotte-nation.org

CULTURAL DIVISION

A season of celebration, learning, and community

Submitted by Kim Garcia (Tetsi?tara?t), Cultural Preservation Officer (Inyomarihú?te? Ahęhtasta?), Wyandotte Nation Cultural Center & Museum

Kweh!

It's been another wonderful quarter at the Cultural Division, filled with meaningful programming, strong participation, and opportunities to gather as Wyandotte people.

November was dedicated to celebrating Native American Heritage Month. Throughout the month, we shared daily Wyandotte Facts of the Day and Wa'dat words across our social media platforms. In addition, our team presented at numerous schools and organizations, reaching more than **2,000 participants** — a powerful way to educate and share our culture with a wide audience.

December gave us time to regroup and prepare for the year ahead. We focused on scheduling and planning, and we're excited to say that many great things are in store for the coming months.

January marked the return of our



Annual Winter Gathering, and it was a tremendous success with record attendance across all events.

- Chris Houk led hands-on instruction in fire building and hominy preparation, which was later enjoyed in our meals.
- Tribal citizen Lenzy Lankford-Herdocia facilitated a children's book-writing workshop.
- Tribal citizen and Board Member Keith Gray taught a fingerweaving class, where participants created woven keychains.
- Tribal citizen Caleb Garcia offered a beadwork class focused on two-



needle bead embroidery.

In the afternoon, we gathered for wintertime storytelling—an especially meaningful experience filled with traditional stories shared by many voices. After a traditional dinner, we closed the evening with a social and stomp dance.

On Sunday, we hosted our **2nd Annual Bear the Cold 5K**, welcoming more than **100 runners and walkers** on a very frigid morning. Thanks to this incredible turnout, we raised over **\$3,000 for Teresa Wilson**. Following the race, Beci Wright led a traditional food preparation class, and we held a



craft circle where participants worked on their own projects.

The entire weekend was a special opportunity to slow down, connect, and spend time together as Wyandotte family. It was especially meaningful that all classes were taught exclusively by Wyandotte citizens. I am incredibly proud of the Wyandottes who are stepping forward to learn, lead, and teach one another. We were also honored to have several neighboring tribes participate, helping us continue to build strong and lasting relationships

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FEBRUARY

- Daily Sap Collecting - 9 am (In-Person)
- 5, 12, 19, 26 Wa'dat Songs - 6 pm (In-Person)
- 10 Wyandotte Beading - 6 pm (Zoom/In-person)
- Wyandotte Book Club - Noon, 7:30 pm (Zoom)
- 14 Valentine's Day
- 16 President's Day - Closed
- 18 Wa'dat Wednesday - Noon, 8 pm (Zoom)
- 24 Wyandotte History: Reading the Wampum - 8 pm (Zoom)

NATIVE Love



MARCH

- TBA Sap Boil
- 5, 12, 19, 26 Wa'dat Songs - 6 pm (In-Person)
- 10 Wyandotte Beading - 6 pm (Zoom/In-Person)
- 16-20 Spring Workshop - (In-Person)
- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 18 Wa'dat Wednesday - Noon, 8 pm (Zoom)
- 21 Wyandotte Nation Easter Egg Hunt - 10 am
- 28-29 Lacrosse Games - Noon
- 28 New Port, CA Town Hall Meeting (In-Person)
- 29 San Ramon, CA Town Hall Meeting (In-Person)
- 31 Wyandotte History: Reading the Wampum - 8 pm (Zoom)



CULTURAL DIVISION

(CULTURAL)

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through shared learning.

Looking ahead, the Cultural Division is excited to begin planning for **larger facilities**. If you have ideas or suggestions, we would love to hear from you.

Our events for the year are now scheduled and can be found at linktr.ee/wncm. Our next major event is the **Spring Workshop, March 16–20**, featuring:

- Pottery with Nathan McAlister
- Quillwork on birch bark with Monica Jo Raphael
- Brooch-making with Chris Houk
- Raised beading with Kim Garcia

This workshop will be a wonderful time of learning and community. Registration will be opening soon, so please be on the lookout.

As always, we appreciate all Wyandotte citizens and encourage participation in any way you are able. If there are specific classes or crafts you'd like to learn, please let us know—we are always happy to seek out teachers.

Stay warm this winter, and remember to pause telling our traditional stories when the snakes come out—signaling that winter has come to an end.

Waⁿdat Wednesdays + Immersion-style Sessions

Join us every third Wednesday of the month at Wandat Wednesdays (online using ZOOM) to practice together. It's a yawahstih (great) way to build up vocabulary without having to worry about grammar. Waⁿdat Wednesdays are designed to be “stand-alone” sessions so you can attend when it is convenient for you. Waⁿdat Wednesdays are hosted on the 3rd Wednesday each month at 12 noon & 8 pm Central.

Since October of 2025, we have expanded Waⁿdat Wednesdays into our new immersion-style sessions offered 3 times weekly—facilitated by Darcy Allred and Alex Badley. The language handout delivered in each Waⁿdat Wednesday will now act as a reference guide (with about 20 words) for that month's weekly immersion sessions. The last two months we focused on a two-part topic of food, drinking and eating. This has been an incredibly fun topic, and incredibly useful for everyday speaking purposes!

This month, our immersion-style participants are learning vocab related to yažu? animals, around the same

Language Notes

time as the Cultural Division's yearly Qmakyehstih Yuhšréⁿdeh (Winter Gathering). Qmakyehstih Yuhšréⁿdeh includes Waⁿdat storytelling, especially stories with animal relatives, which must only be told during winter season. Our Ancestors traditionally waited until after the first hard freeze to tell stories that included animals to ensure they were out of earshot so as not to offend them. The Waⁿdat Language Program seeks to uphold this important cultural protocol by dedicating winter months for learning our animal terms. On the next page, we've included an illustration by Kari:žeras (Emily “Ruthy”) Logan in celebration of our winter traditions.

What is an “immersion-style” language session?

Immersion-style language learning is a back-to-basics approach—learning like children! This means learning a language through immersive listening, imitation, and repetition only in Waⁿdat. No spelling or English translations, in other words staying in the language. The goal of this immer-

sion-style approach is to become more confident in speaking Waⁿdat enough to carry on a short conversation by the end of each monthly topic. Sessions are 1-hour, consisting of three 10-minute “mini-immersion” sets with 5-minute breaks. Participants meet once a week over 3-4 weeks and are expected to participate every week to help with retention.

Regular and new Waⁿdat Wednesday participants are enthusiastically encouraged to join immersion sessions! Refer to the monthly calendar below to browse our language learning topics through spring 2026 as well as the session meeting days and times.

Please reach out to Darcy Allred, wandatlanguage@wyandotte-nation.org if you'd like to join these sessions or have any questions about immersion-style programming.

Waⁿdat Wednesday & Immersion-style Monthly Topics

**Topics and monthly schedule subject to change*

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APRIL

- 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 Waⁿdat Songs - 6 pm (In-Person)
- 3 Good Friday - Closed
- 5 Easter
- 14 Wyandotte Beading - 6 pm (Zoom/In-Person)
- 15 Waⁿdat Wednesday - Noon, 8 pm (Zoom)
- 18 Three Sister Garden Prep - 1 pm
- 28 Wyandotte History: Reading the Wampum - 8 pm (Zoom)
- 30 Wyandotte Basics - 7 pm (Zoom)

MAY

- 2 Elm Bark Basket - 9 am (In-Person)
- 3 Wyandotte Basics - 7 pm (Zoom)
- 6 Wyandotte Book Club - Noon, 7:30 pm (Zoom)
- 7, 14, 21, 28 Waⁿdat Songs - 6 pm (In-Person)
- 8 Honoring Women Social Dance - 5:30 pm
- 12 Wyandotte Beading - 6 pm (Zoom/In-Person)
- 20 Waⁿdat Wednesday - Noon, 8 pm
- 25 Honor a Veteran - Wyandotte Cemetery - 10 am
- 26 Wyandotte History: Reading the Wampum - 8 pm (Zoom)

Wyandotte Nation 477 Program Victim Crisis Line 877-276-0669

Missing and Murdered Indigenous People Awareness Month

CULTURAL DIVISION

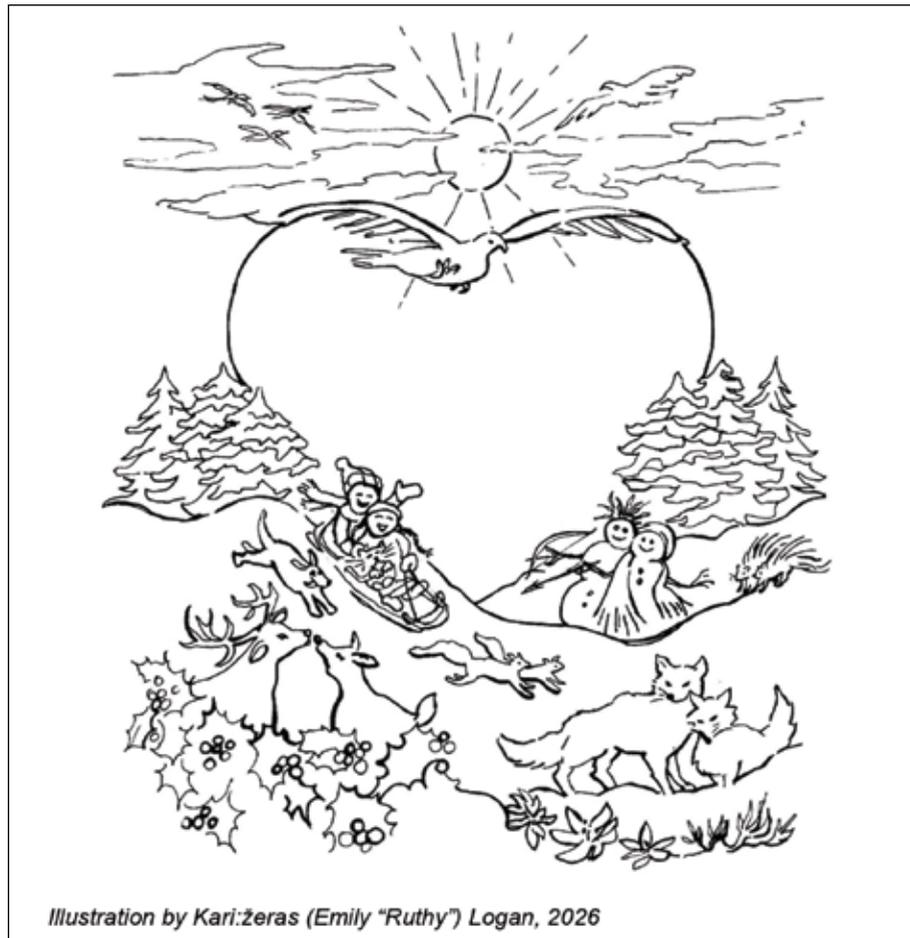


Illustration by Kari:zeras (Emily "Ruthy") Logan, 2026

Month	Wa ⁿ dat Wed. Date	Topic
January 2026	January 21 st	Animals
February 2026	February 18 th	Numbers + counting
March 2026	March 18 th	Kinship
April 2026	April 15 th	Plants
May 2026	May 20 th	Weather & seasons
June 2026	TBD	TBD

(LANGUAGE NOTES)
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Meeting Days & Times

Sunday

10 – 11 am PT , 12 – 1 pm CT, 1 – 2 pm ET

Tuesday A

9 – 10 am PT, 11 am – 12 pm CT, 12 – 1 pm ET

Tuesday B

4 – 5 pm PT, 6 – 7 pm CT, 7 – 8 pm ET

Interested in learning our language?

We began another beginner class in October 2025. If you would like to be notified when registration becomes available in 2026, 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!

Be sure to send any comments or suggestions, especially those on your language & culture wish list, to: wandatlanguage@wyandotte-nation.org

Language support courtesy of our Wyandotte Nation Linguist, Dr. Craig Koprís. All mistakes are our own. – Beci & Darcy

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. Waⁿdat 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: information 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. The application process for 2026 is now open!

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 entire 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 for 2026, 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.

2026 Spring Workshop
March 16-20

Pottery
Brooches
Stomp Dance
Raised Beadwork
Birch Bark Quillwork

Wyandotte Nation Cultural Division

linktr.ee/wncdm