



The Turtle Speaks

Gyah'-Wish Atak-ia

A Wyandotte Nation Publication

Volume 30, Issue 2

www.wyandotte-nation.org

May 2026



Town Hall Meetings

Meetings strengthen bonds with citizens on West Coast

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Gyah'-wish Atak-ia is published quarterly for Tribal Citizens by the Wyandotte Nation at its headquarters in Wyandotte, Okla.

The Wyandotte Nation
8 Turtle Drive
Wyandotte, OK 74370

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



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- Leaford Bearskin Memorial Preschool Pow-Wow
- Annual Easter Egg Hunt lasts mere minutes
- Superhero 5K & Strong Man/Woman Competition

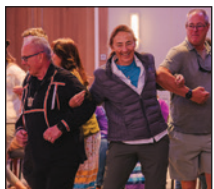
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Editor/Design: William Swaim



Tribal citizens in California take part in social dances at the recent Town Hall meetings

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.

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From the Chief

Billy Friend

A time for renewal, perspective and connection

I hope this quarter's Turtle Talk finds all of our Wyandotte people well and enjoying the arrival of spring. Here in Oklahoma, the season often comes with the threat and sometimes the reality of strong storms and severe weather. Yet it also brings a time of renewal, filled with vibrant colors, fresh growth, and new life. The world around us begins to awaken as plants and trees burst into bloom. Spring is a season of energy and possibility, inviting us to look ahead with open minds and grateful hearts for the many blessings we have received.

I want to take a moment to reflect on our recent Town Hall meetings held in Newport Beach and San Ramon, California. Each year, these gatherings continue to remind me just how important it is that we stay connected as a Nation no matter the distance that may separate us.

For more than a decade now, our Town Hall meetings have served as a vital bridge between our leadership and our citizens, especially those living outside of Oklahoma. These meetings are not just about sharing updates, they are about listening, learning, and strengthening the bonds that unite us as Wyandotte people. Being

'Your voice matters, and your involvement helps guide the future of the Wyandotte Nation.'

able to meet face-to-face, hear your thoughts, answer your questions, and share in meaningful conversations is something I value deeply.

Our time in California was truly special. We had the opportunity to visit with citizens of all ages, hear your perspectives, and discuss the programs, services, and future direction of our Nation. Just as importantly, these gatherings allow our citizens to reconnect with one another, share stories, and continue building the sense of community that defines who we are.

One of the most meaningful highlights of our time together was the participation in our tribal social dances. These moments are more than just a celebration they are a powerful expression of our culture, identity, and shared history. Seeing citizens of all ages come together to take part, whether dancing or supporting from the sidelines, is a

reminder of the pride we carry as Wyandotte people. These traditions connect generations and ensure that our culture continues to live and thrive.

I am incredibly proud of the continued engagement we see at these events. Your participation is what makes them successful. It is a testament to the strength of our Nation and the shared commitment we all have to preserving our heritage while moving forward together.

I also want to extend my sincere appreciation to our staff and team members who work tirelessly behind the scenes to organize and coordinate these meetings. Their dedication ensures that each event runs smoothly and that our citizens feel welcomed and valued.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to continuing these Town Hall meetings and expanding opportunities for engagement. Whether you attend in person or stay connected in other ways, your voice matters, and your involvement helps guide the future of the Wyandotte Nation.

Thank you to everyone who joined us in Newport Beach and San Ramon. I look forward to seeing many of you again at future gatherings.

From the Second Chief | Norman Hildebrand, Jr.

Tribe's projects make for bright future ahead

Kweh Omateru
 Hello my friends and fellow tribal citizens, spring is upon us with warm weather and of course the stormy season which is always fun. On the Wyandotte Reservation we have several construction projects that are moving along very nicely.

The housing project on Bear Road in Heritage Acres should be completed in about two months. The new gymnasium at Bearskin Fitness is

getting close to being closed in, if you're not familiar with that term the outer walls and roof are almost completed. They have started on the addition to the recycling center it looks like the steel frame is getting close to completion. On Turtle Hill all the infrastructure is finished and they should be starting construction on the duplexes soon. The expansion to the splash pad in Heritage Acres has started, that will be great not only

for the Wyandotte Nation but the whole community. The plans for our new Justice Center should just about be done, they working out a few details on that project. The new Culture Center is still in the planning stage, and the new casino and hotel in Park City, Ks. is progressing nicely. The



See **SECOND CHIEF**, Page 3

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.

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

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**

SECOND CHIEF

Continued from Page 2

future looks bright and strong for the Wyandotte Nation, it's citizens and the community.

Now for the last installment of the Wyandot Floats. As with anything, the monetary value of the allotments probably varied depending on where the land was located, who wanted to purchase the land and for what purpose. The closest we can come to a base figure was established in January 1857. David V. Clement, a white man, was married to Sophia Walker, daughter of William Walker, Jr. Despite their marriage, it is uncertain if he was ever formally adopted into the tribe as both Hiram M. Northrup and Abelard Guthrie had been. Clement had originally been debarred from treaty rolls, but he appealed his status to the tribal council. The council enrolled Clement, but as subdivision into the allotments had already begun, he was to be paid a cash equivalent from the contingency fund, and subsequently does not appear on the roll. Apparently the appraised value was \$279 per share.

Things seem to have proceeded at a leisurely pace, as it was not until a year later, on February 8, 1858, that commissioner John C. McCoy reported to the Wyandot Tribal Council that the commission's work was almost completed, but had run into a problem because of the com-

'A man either lives life as it happens to him, meets it head-on and licks it, or he turns his back on it and starts to wither away.' --Gene Roddenberry

missioner's refusal to treat widows as heads of household. Despite this snag, on February 16 the council signed a contract with the private surveying firm of Millar and Bro. (John H. and William Millar) to survey and mark the corners of each allotment. The Millars didn't get around to making their survey until August, and in the meantime the fight over the status of the widows dragged on. In June, and again in September, the new Commissioner of Indian Affairs had directed that Wyandot women who were widows as of the date of treaty ratification were to be treated as heads of household, but commissioners McCoy and Robinson stubbornly refused to change their position. On September 3, ten Wyandot widows including Lucy B. Armstrong, Hannah Armstrong and Matilda Hicks formally protested the handling of their and their children's allotments to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. By October, the tribal council was getting worried, as apparently the Bureau had refused to approve the commissioner's latest report. Finally, on November 11, 1858, the council ruled in the widow's favor, and three months later the final report and plat

of the allotments were issued.

That of course was not the end of it. The allotment schedule received minor modifications in a supplementary report submitted by the Wyandott Commissioners on March 7, 1859, was finally approved by the Secretary of the Interior on April 13, and a certified copy sent to the County Clerk of Wyandott County, Kansas Territory, on May 7. Despite all this, the government did not get around to beginning to issue patents of title to the Wyandott Allotments until January 19, 1860, and the last

patent was not issued until December 4, 1861, almost seven years after the treaty of 1855 was signed and ratified. By that time many of the allotments had changed hands several times.

Some of the Wyandots were cheated out of their allotments, some lost them in tax sales of questionable legality (under the treaty of 1855, the allotments were not supposed to be taxable until five years after Kansas statehood), some held on to their land, and some, including Silas Armstrong, Isaiah Walker, Irvin P. Long, Hiram M. Northrup and Mathias Splitlog, did quite well for themselves finan-

cially. It is worth noting that when the sale of the allotments of those Wyandots in the Incompetent and Orphan Classes was finally authorized in 1867, at least half the buyers were fellow Wyandots.

And as for the three sections of land in the northeast part of Kansas City, Kansas which were claimed in a lawsuit filed by the Wyandotte Tribe of Oklahoma in 2001 – the chain of title for each and every property in those three sections begins with the individual Wyandot who received his or her title to the property under the Wyandott Allotments, including such prominent figures as Lucy B. Armstrong (Allotment No. 11), Sophia Walker Clement (Allotment No. 47), Charles B. and Maria Walker Garrett (Allotment No. 161). The same is true for every property in the present Kansas City, Kansas that lies east of the Wyandott-Delaware Reserve Line (the present 72nd Street) and north of the Kansas River, in the 39-square-mile area of the former Wyandott Purchase.

Those were very troubling and turbulent times when this happened and to make things worse the Civil War started which delayed the Wyandotte Tribe moving to Oklahoma in the late 1850's and early 1860's. But the Wyandotte Tribe has always been a resilient people, we had to be to overcome all of the hardships our ancestors endured.

I am very proud to serve as Second Chief of the Wyandotte Nation.

Tribe signs gaming compact with state

Wyandotte Nation celebrates historic day after reaching agreement with State of Kansas

The Wyandotte Nation and the State of Kansas agreed to a new Tribal State Gaming Compact on Tuesday, March 31, allowing the Tribe's casinos to run Class III gaming in the state.

Wyandotte Nation Chief Billy Friend and Kansas Governor Laura Kelly signed the new compact.

"The Wyandotte Nation celebrates this historic day for our people," Chief Friend said. "We express deep gratitude to Governor Kelly and her staff, who met us government-to-government at the negotiation table, thereby completing the Nation's negotiation attempts dating back to 1992. The funds generated from Class III gaming under this Compact will be used to fund the Wyandotte Nation's government and the services we offer to our citizens and community."

"The histories of Kansas and the Wyandotte Nation are woven together, and we look forward to a healthy co-management relationship."

Governor Kelly said the historic signing of the Tribal State Compact Among the Wyandotte Nation and the State of Kansas is a crucial step toward solidifying the relationship between our two governments.

She said she was honored to be joined by Chief Friend and the Wyandotte Nation for this important advancement.

The new compact will also allow the Wyandotte Nation to look at sports betting for its casinos, the 7th Street Casino located in Kansas City, and the Crosswinds Casino located in Park City near Wichita.

The Tribe broke ground on an expansion project involving Cross-



winds Casino last June at the Park City location. At the heart of this expansion is an elegant Four Diamond, 15-story destination hotel with 238 rooms, including 32 luxurious suites.

Additional hotel amenities will include a pool with an outdoor bar and party area, a fitness center, private meeting rooms, and an 8500 sq. foot ballroom and pre-function space with a private bar that can host conferences, corporate events, weddings, private parties, and more.

Crosswinds Casino and Resort will also boast a dedicated high-limit room, an exclusive VIP lounge, a vibrant Tap House and sports bar concept with a large video wall, a food hall, a delightful coffee shop, a center bar, various lounges, a gift shop, and a comprehensive rewards center.

Crosswinds Casino Resort expansion will add 350 new team



members, bolstering the Wyandotte Nation's commitment to the community.

The anticipated completion date for the project is the summer of 2027.

Town Hall Meetings a chance to strengthen bonds

The Wyandotte Nation once again hit the road for its annual Town Hall Meetings, returning to northern and southern California this time around.

The Tribe hosted back-to-back Meetings in California on March 28 in Newport Beach and March 29 in San Ramon.

The meetings were a chance for Chief Billy Friend and Second Chief Norman Hildebrand, along with some department leaders in tow, to bring the Annual Meeting on the road. The Annual Meeting is held every September in Oklahoma, however, in 2013, Chief Friend established the first Town Hall Meetings with the hope of reaching more tribal citizens outside the tribal reservation as not all Wyandottes can make it back to Oklahoma for the Annual Meeting each year.

The idea of the Town Hall Meetings is to help keep tribal citizens informed of the everyday happenings of the Tribe, as well as provide Wyandottes with stronger bonds – a stronger bond to the Tribe and a better connection to others living in their area of the country. Seattle was also the site of the very first Town Hall, which started in 2013.

At these meetings, citizens are able to meet the Chief, Second Chief, and key Wyandotte Nation staff, hear the state of the Tribe, and make connections. In addition

to the hearing the same presentation giving at the Annual Meeting, tribal citizens also participated in a cultural presentation and took part in some social dancing before heading home.

The location of the next Town Hall will be Phoenix, Arizona, in October. More information on this will be provided in the future. Be watching social media and our website for more at a later date.

PHOTOS: WILLIAM SWAIM | WYANDOTTE NATION
(TOP RIGHT) Chief Billy Friend visits with tribal citizens during Saturday's Town Hall Meeting in Newport Beach. (BOTTOM LEFT) Tribal citizens take part in social dances at Sunday's San Ramon meeting. (BOTTOM RIGHT) Almost made it through Chief's presentation!



A show of strength and speed at Superhero 5K, Strong Man & Woman events

(LEFT) A show of strength lifting the atlas stone at the annual Strong Man / Woman competition during the final event Saturday, April 25.

(RIGHT) Yes, she did show strength and speed pushing her kiddos up the hill heading to the finish line at the Bearskin Healthcare & Wellness Center during the annual Superhero 5K Saturday. Proceeds from the event went to the Miami Animal Alliance.

PHOTOS: WILLIAM SWAIM | WYANDOTTE NATION



TRIBAL CITIZEN NEWS

2026 PROFORMANCE ATHLETICS

NIKE SCHEDULE



APRIL 17-19
SESSION ONE
PHOENIX, AZ

MAY 15-17
SESSION TWO
NEW ORLEANS, LA

JULY 10-13
SESSION THREE
LAS VEGAS, NV

JULY 24-27
NIKE NATIONALS
CHICAGO, IL

Wyandotte youth joins elite basketball league

Since picking up a basketball at 7 years old, Sophia Garofola has been putting in the work. Now sponsored by Nike and competing on the Elite Youth Basketball League circuit, she is only getting started.

Sophia is a proud citizen of the Wyandotte Nation and the daughter of Lore'K Elliott Garofola. Lore'K and Sophia trace to the Gyuami and Greyeyes families.

5'9" | All-Around
Class of 2031

Proformance | Nike EYBL Circuit
Rancho Cucamonga, CA



Dr. Derald C. Hurt

January 30, 1953 - October 15, 2025

It is with saddened hearts we announce the passing of Wyandotte tribal citizen Derald Hurt in October. Please keep the family in your thoughts and prayers:

Obituary

Derald Christopher Hurt, of Jay, Oklahoma departed this life on October 15, 2025, in Cleveland, OH at the age of 72.

Derald was born on January 30, 1953, alongside his twin brother Gerald to Glen and Nellie "Sue" (Cartwright) Hurt. He married Paula Sue Murphy on April 15, 1975, and they had two children, Angela and Aaron. They remained married until Paula preceded him in death on June 13, 2013.

Derald was the first in his family to attend college. He attended the University of Oklahoma and Northeastern State University (NSU). He received his Master of Education in 1979 from NSU and later achieved a Doctorate and an Education Degree. He also took great pride in being a member of the Wyandotte Nation. Derald spent his career as a teacher and as an administrator in public schools with a focus on special education. Derald and Paula both taught in Oklahoma and Wyoming before settling in Burlington, KS., where they spent the majority of their education careers and raised their family. Upon retirement they settled in the Jay area of Grand Lake where Derald enjoyed working on projects, taking his boat out on the lake,



and visiting with family and friends. Derald will always be remembered as a kind brother, proud father, adoring Papa, loving husband, good neighbor, and friend.

In addition to his wife Paula, Derald was preceded in death by his parents Glen and Sue Hurt, his brother-in-law Thomas William Dowd III (Tom), his sister Glenda (Hurt) Dowd, and his nephew, Thomas William Dowd IV (Billy).

Left to mourn his passing is his twin brother Gerald Hurt of Colcord, OK; his two children Angela Hurt of Nashville, TN. and Aaron Hurt and wife Beth of Franklin, TN. His granddaughter's Aubrianna, Anastasia, Aeryn and Avalon Hurt; his niece Stacey (Dowd) Leatherwood, of Grove, OK; and many more relatives and friends.

A Celebration of Life Service was held at a later date.

Have News to share?

We would love to hear from you! Send your news to:
wswaim@wyandotte-nation.org

Wyandotte Nation Annual
Easter Egg Hunt

Gone in
180
seconds



It took just 3 minutes for kids under 12 to round up the 11,000 eggs scattered in the field next to River Bend Casino & Hotel at the annual Wyandotte Nation Easter Egg Hunt. The eggs were filled with candy, toys, tickets for prizes, and 1 special ticket turned in for a \$200 gift card.

Photos by
William Swaim



TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Human Resources

*Submitted by Deana Howard,
Human Resources Director*

The Wyandotte Nation Courts Department would like to welcome Corbey Wynn to the team as a new Juvenile Probation Officer. Corbey went through Law Enforcement



WYNN

Training and is in the Army National Guard. Some of his hobbies are reading, learning about God, 3D printing, hunting and fishing. Corbey enjoys spending time with his daughter and his family. We are excited to have him join our team and wish him the best of luck!



KERR

The Wyandotte Nation Accounting Department would like to welcome Callie Kerr to the team as a new Staff Accountant.

Callie studied Managerial Accounting at Northeastern State University and brings previous experience with her. Some of Callie's hobbies include reading, gaming and crocheting. In her spare time, she also likes to hang out with her family, having game nights and being outside. We are thrilled to have her join our team and wish her the best!

We welcome both of them to the Wyandotte Family!

Family Services

*Submitted by Dana Butterfield,
Family Services Director*

FAMILY SERVICES NEWS AND NOTES:

The Family Services staff have been busy in 2026 with events and programs!

We had a great turnout for our Annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 21st at the River Bend Hotel

and Casino. Kids ages 0 – 12 cleared nearly 11,000 eggs in just 3 minutes! Eggs were filled with toys, candy, prize tickets, cash and one special golden ticket in each age group for a \$200 Walmart gift card! The weather was perfect, and the Frozen Elephant was on-site serving free snow cones to everyone.

March 28th and 29th the Nation hosted Town Hall meetings in Newport Beach and San Ramon, California, with approximately 100 attendees at each event. Staff enjoying to meet tribal citizens who live away from the Tribal complex and to be able to share the status of the Nation and program information. Tribal citizens can also take this opportunity to update their personal information and apply for updated Citizenship cards. As of now, the plan is to host a fall 2026 Town Hall meeting in the Phoenix, Arizona, area and a meeting in the Dallas, Texas, area in the spring of 2027. If you live in these areas, be sure to watch the Tribe's social media and website for additional details. Postcards will also be mailed to those who live in Arizona and Texas.

Supplemental Health: As many of you are aware, the transition to the new company for the Supplemental Health Program (aka the Benny card) had a few challenges. Unfortunately, we weren't made aware that we were going to need to contract with a new company until late 2025 and it took longer than expected to get a contract in place with the new provider, Point C. That said, Point C has been a great partner so far, and we feel confident that moving forward things will continue to improve. One of the biggest issues during the transition was outdated addresses, we had more than 500 cards returned due to incorrect mailing information. This also produced distress as citizens had not received the notice via the newsletter and social media so they were unaware of the change in companies. To avoid delays in the future, please make sure your address is up to date. You can quickly update your information on the Tribe's website here: <https://wyandotte-nation.org/services/familyservices/programs/change-of-address/>. Citizens can also update

their information in person at the Family Service office or request a paper form.

Enrollment: Enrollment applications must be hand delivered or post marked by August 15th. For those of you who are racing to get applications in the mail last minute, please be sure you take it into the post office to receive the stamped post mark. The Post Office has recently changed their policy and mail dropped in receptacles don't necessarily get post marked the same day. Applications must be signed by the parent/legal guardian, notarized and be accompanied by an original state certified long form birth certificate. We strongly encourage you to submit applications as early as possible in case corrections are needed. If a completed application is received prior to a child's first birthday, they will receive a blanket with the tribal logo, a ribbon skirt/shirt and a \$100 Walmart gift card.

Dual Enrollment: As a reminder, the Wyandotte Nation has not allowed dual enrollment with another federally recognized tribe since the 1937 Constitution and reaffirmed with the 1999 Constitution. Wyandotte Nation citizens who are found to be dually enrolled will be given the opportunity to either relinquish their enrollment with the other federally recognized tribe or to relinquish from the Wyandotte Nation. Tribal

citizens will be notified in writing by certified mail with instructions and deadline. If no action is taken by the deadline, the case will be presented to Board of Directors for disenrollment.

LIHEAP: Summer LIHEAP will be available beginning July 1 and end on September 30. This federally funded, income based program, is administered through the Wyandotte Nation 477 Program. Income eligible Wyandotte Nation citizens who reside in the State of Oklahoma as well as within a 100-mile radius of the tribal headquarters can apply for the program through the Family Services office. Income is based on the applicants' state of residence.

Vehicle Tags: New plate designs are being rolled out and tribal citizens will receive the new plate upon renewal of their vehicle throughout the next year. If you would like to keep your current plate number, please call Tiffany at 918-678-6353 for assistance. As a reminder, The Tribe encourages all Tribal citizens who have their vehicles registered with the Tribe and travel on Oklahoma toll roads, to either obtain a PikePass or utilize the PlatePay system to pay their tolls. Currently, the Oklahoma Turnpike authority does not have access to addresses for

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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 ✱



TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

(FAMILY SERVICES)

Continued from Page 8

our citizens and is not able to send a statement. The responsibility is on the citizen to make sure payments are made when due.

Brochure: Everyone should have received a copy of the FY26 program services brochure. If you did not receive one, please contact the Family Services office and one can be mailed to you. The brochure includes a summary of all tribal programs and services. For more details and access to applications visit the Tribe's website.

Upcoming Events:

- May-Missing and Murdered Indigenous People Awareness Month
- * **May 5th-Wear Red Day!**
- May 8th-Women are Sacred Social Dance
- May 25th-Memorial Day service at the Wyandotte Cemetery-Honored veteran Bill Gyami Jr.
- June-Elder Abuse Awareness Month, Family Services and Victim Services staff will be hosting events the week of June 15th with the Elder Nutrition Program at the Artie

Nesvold Community Center.

- June 5th-Family Night: Honoring Men
- June 12th-13th- The Gathering of Little Turtles
- July 2nd-Fireworks at the Pow-Wow grounds

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
Director, Dana Butterfield 918-678-6319

Tag Administrator, Tiffany Garner, 918-678-6353

Family Services Specialist, Leeanna Radabaugh, 918-678-6329
Enrollment Officer, Haylee Botts, 918-678-6377

Family Services Front Desk, Kayla Ezell, 918-678-6321

Contact email for ICW: **wnicw@wyandotte-nation.org**

ICW/APS Supervisor, Tracy Coach 918-678-6355

ICW Worker, Carmalita Ward,

918-678-6485

ICW/APS Worker, Regina Palmer, 918-678-6375

Contact email for Victim Services:
477vs@wyandotte-nation.org
Toll Free number for FVPP: **877-276-0669**

Program Manager, Chelsea Morrison, 918-678-3257

Lead Advocate, Gabby Ezell, 918-678-6402

Crime Victims' Advocates: Kristi Johnston, Becky Maples, Hannah Rhodes, Alexia King and Lacy Butler

Supervised Visitation Specialist, Shaela Neal, 918-678-6324

installation of the permanent signage for the Story Book Walk at Bear Park is coming up soon. This is an exciting step forward in making the walking track an interactive literacy experience for all in our community. The permanent signage will allow visitors to enjoy stories while walking the trail year-round. This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) NAE-254-945-OLS, and we look forward to sharing more details as installation begins.

We are also happy to announce that the Sequoyah Reading Lists have officially been released. These titles are nominees selected for the Children's, Intermediate, and High School lists, and students across Oklahoma will vote to determine one winner from each category. The nominated books will soon be arriving at the library and will be available for checkout. We're excited to offer these selections and encourage readers of all ages to explore these nominees and take part in the excitement leading up to the final selections.

Planning is currently underway for summer activities with the Turtle Tot

Education

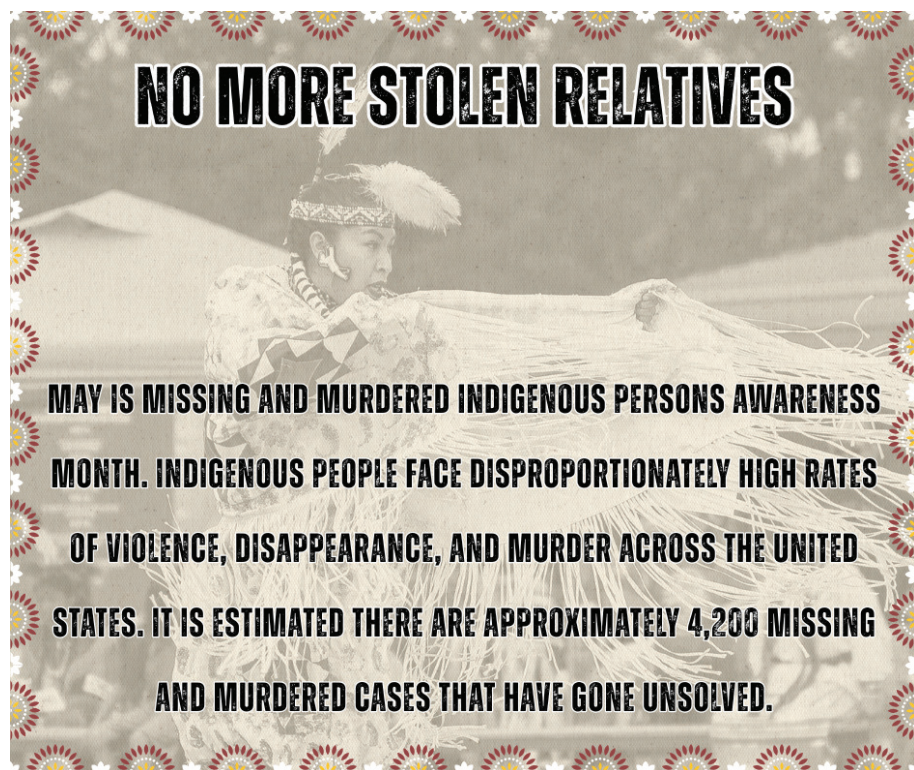
Submitted by **Cristi Hudson,**
Workforce Development Director

Kweh!

Wyandotte Nation Library

The Wyandotte Nation Historical Library is excited to share that

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NO MORE STOLEN RELATIVES

MAY IS MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS PERSONS AWARENESS MONTH. INDIGENOUS PEOPLE FACE DISPROPORTIONATELY HIGH RATES OF VIOLENCE, DISAPPEARANCE, AND MURDER ACROSS THE UNITED STATES. IT IS ESTIMATED THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 4,200 MISSING AND MURDERED CASES THAT HAVE GONE UNSOLVED.



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.

TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

(EDUCATION)

Continued from Page 9

Summer Program participants and youth. The upcoming programs will focus on engaging opportunities that combine reading, storytelling, creativity and hands-on learning. More details will be shared soon about the fun summer already on the horizon.

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 477 Program (Workforce & Social Services)

The 477 Program, also known as Workforce & Social Services, is a federally-funded program that combines multiple services to better serve tribal citizens within our 100-mile service area. The program continues to support families and promote long-term self-sufficiency.

Applicants must complete the 477 Application for Services. Participants do not have to be Wyandotte Nation citizens but must live within the service area and be members of a federally recognized tribe. Required documents include proof of tribal membership, proof of residency, and a Selective Service Registration Card (males ages 18–25).

Applications are available on the Wyandotte Nation website under the Services tab. For questions, contact (918) 678-3268 or wn477@wyandotte-nation.org. Additional documentation may be required depending on services requested.

The program provides scholarships, job training, and vocational support to help participants reach academic and employment goals. Approximately 25 participants are currently

receiving educational support, with staff continuing to process applications and distribute spring semester funding.

The Childcare Subsidy assists low-income families with childcare costs for children ages 0–12. The program currently supports approximately 130 children across the service area. March re-certifications have been completed, and services continue as normal.

This month, in collaboration with the Nine Northeastern Oklahoma Tribes CCDF, ICW, and Cultural programs, we hosted our annual Week of the Young Child event for area daycares and childcare providers who were invited to attend. This year's event included several new activities, such as two days of Cultural Enrichment featuring cultural games from different tribes, pinch pot making, and metal stamping. A Social Dance was also held, with nearly 50 dancers and singers representing many area tribes and teaching traditional dances. Additionally, two Safari Days were hosted at Creation Safari Wildlife Park.

Throughout the week, between 100–200 children participated each day. With the addition of new events like Cultural Enrichment, we look forward to expanding activities in future years and continuing this meaningful event with our area childcare providers.

Our program is also planning upcoming trainings for area childcare providers and will be collaborating with Northeast Tribal CCDF Programs to begin hosting training events later this month.

Wyandotte Nation Education Department

The Wyandotte Nation Education Department is currently working through new applications for the Scholarship Programs for the upcoming school year. If you are thinking of registering, please do so before the June 1st deadline. Any applications for our scholarship program submitted after this time will not be accepted.

In the next few weeks, we will be working through registration for all of our current participants and getting

them ready for the next school year. If you are a current participant and have not done so already, please remember to submit your grades for the completed term, and your course schedule for the upcoming fall term.

The Wyandotte Nation Education Department has several scholarship programs for tribal 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 Training opportunities.

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 Undergrad Scholarship Program assisted 200+ WN citizens this past school year, and prepare to have more participants apply this year. The Master Program assisted 30 WN citizens with scholarships.

The WN Education Department is now offering scholarships for tribal citizens who are pursuing a Doctorate. The online submission is not yet available on the tribal website, but Wyandottes 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 more job related training or who are enrolled in an on the job training program. This past year we have assisted 20 Wyandottes 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 Wyandottes 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.

Wyandotte Nation Child Development Center *From Pajamas to Pow-Wows: Turtle Tots Turns Spring into a Season of Wonder*

At Turtle Tots, spring isn't just a season—it's a full-on celebration of curiosity, connection, and childhood magic. This year, our youngest learners are diving into experiences that blend literacy, culture, and hands-on discovery in ways that are as meaningful as they are memorable.

The season kicked off with a joyful burst of imagination during Dr. Seuss Week. Classrooms came alive with color, creativity, and a delightful mix of pajamas, wild socks, and giggles. But behind every silly hat and rhyming book was something powerful: intentional, research-based literacy instruction. Our teachers know that when learning feels like play, it sticks—and our students are building strong reading foundations one giggle at a time.

That same intentionality carries into everything we do. During parent-teacher conferences, families and educators partnered together—celebrating progress, setting goals, and ensuring each child's journey is supported with care and purpose. At Turtle Tots, we don't just teach children—we build relationships that help them thrive.

And because learning doesn't pause when school is out, neither do we. Our full-day childcare during breaks provides families with consistency and peace of mind, while children continue to explore, create, and grow in a safe, engaging environment. (Translation: the fun keeps going—and so does the learning!)

This spring has also brought learning to life in exciting new ways. A visit from REC Electric Cooperative sparked curiosity as children explored the basics of electricity—lighting up not just bulbs, but young minds. Picture Day captured those milestone smiles (and a few “say cheese!” moments we'll treasure forever), reminding us that these early years are filled

TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

(EDUCATION)

Continued from Page 10

with moments worth celebrating.

Looking ahead, the excitement only grows. From cultural experiences to a lively social dance and an adventurous safari field trip, our students will step beyond the classroom and into the wider world—making connections that deepen their understanding and spark lasting curiosity.

One of the most anticipated highlights of the season is our Preschool Pow-Wow—a beautiful celebration of culture, community, and shared traditions. This special event brings families together in meaningful ways, honoring heritage while creating lasting connections. It's more than an event; it's an experience that reflects who we are and what we value.

We'll wrap up this incredible year with a heartfelt graduation and end-of-year program, celebrating the growth of our students as they step confidently into their next chapter. Independence, resilience, and a love of learning—these are the milestones we're most proud of.

At Turtle Tots, our mission is simple but powerful: to create a place where children feel safe, connected, and excited to learn each day. And if this spring is any indication, that mission isn't just being met—it's coming to life in the most joyful, inspiring ways imaginable.

Department Contacts:

Cristi Hudson – Workforce Development 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

Elders

Submitted by Brenda House, Elder Services Director

Greetings all,

Our Mother's Day Dinner is May 7. Our menu is pot roast, mashed potatoes, gravy, baby carrots, hot roll, salad bar and strawberry cream cheese dump cake.

Our Elders Senior Day will be June 17 from 9 am to 1 pm. at the Buffalo Run Casino. There will be many booths, games, prizes for attendees 55 and older and the amazing Duke Mason will be providing the music. Lunch will be served to all of the participants.

Our Father's Day Dinner is June 18. Our menu is brisket, baked beans, baked potato, hot roll, salad bar and caramel apple cake.

Bearskin Health and Wellness Center will be providing Health Screenings the third Thursday of each month at 10:30 am at the Artie Nesvold Elders Center.

We have Foot Care the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month in the safe room. A signup sheet is available in the dining room for reservations.

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.

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

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

We 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.



We held their Easter Party and handed out a few awards for Easter Bonnets and Men's Sexy Leg Contest. Pictured top, from left: Betty Forcum, Donna Rentfrow, Kathy Brown, and Shirley Carpenter. For the Men's Leg Contest, from left: Ronald Addison, Second Chief Norman Hildebrand, and Don Hail. Congratulations!

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

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.

TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

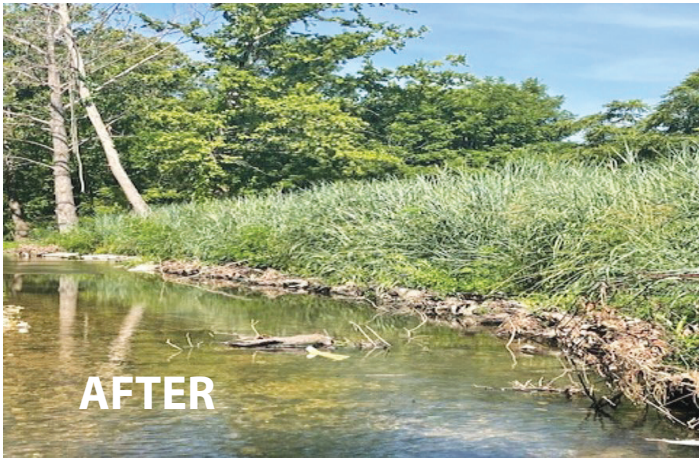
Planning & Natural Resources

Compiled by Christen Lee, Environmental & Planning Director

Environment

The Wyandotte Nation continues to make steady progress across a range of environmental, infrastructure, and community development initiatives, with several projects advancing during the first quarter of 2026.

One of the most visible efforts is the completion of the Sycamore Creek Stream Bank Restoration Project, located at the southern end of the powwow grounds. Funded through NRDAR, the project was designed to stabilize the creek bank and prevent further erosion. Construction began in May 2024 and was completed recently, with Envi-



Lost Creek Recycling Center Expansion



ronmental Department staff continuing to monitor the site to ensure long-term success.

At the Lost Creek Recycle Center, expansion efforts are now underway. Crews have completed early construction phases, including ground-work, waterline installation, footings, and the concrete pad. Despite the ongoing work, the center remains fully operations. Recycling bins have been temporarily located to the facility's loading dock, along community members to continue using the site without interruption.

The recycle center continues to see strong usage from the community. Between January 1 and March 31, 2026, more than 25,000 pounds of recyclable materials were collected, including over 20,000 pounds of cardboard, 1,055 pounds of plastic, 686 pounds of aluminum, 673 pounds of tin, and 2,462 pounds of shredded paper. These efforts reflect a continued commitment to responsible management.

services have active in lic health. quarter, En-Technicians private well for bacteria, nitrate levels important with young dition, two assessments March, with

both systems identified as failing and schedule for replacement in the coming weeks. Residents within 25 miles of the Wyandotte Nation who are interested in having their well tested are encouraged to contact John Gerhard or Ryan Haggard with the Environmental Department.

Looking ahead, the Wyandotte Nation will host its 16th Annual Environmental Festival on Thursday, May 7, at Twin Bridges Park Pavilion #3. The event will run from 9 am to 2:30 pm and will feature a variety of booths from tribal, federal, and local organizations, offering educational and interactive opportunities for attendees of all ages.

partment has continued advancing key projects that support housing, public safety, education, and long-term community development.

A major focus has been housing expansion. An application was submitted through the Indian Housing Block Grant program to support the construction of 11 duplexes – totaling 22 housing units – at the Heritage Acres Expansion Site. Supporting infrastructure planning is also moving forward, with infrastructure funding support provided through a previously awarded Indian Community Development Block Grant.

Public safety and justice initiatives also saw meaningful progress during the first quarter of 2026. The Wyandotte Nation received \$237,104

Planning & Grants

In addition to environmental efforts, the Planning and Grants De-

Continued on Page 13

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

TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

(PLANNING)

Continued from Page 12

in Tribal Justice Support funding through the Bureau of Indian Affairs. These funds will support court personnel, equipment, and training needs. In addition, the Wyandotte Nation's Tribal Justice Strategic Plan was approved by the Department of Justice, positioning the Tribe for priority funding consideration in future funding opportunities.

The Wyandotte Nation also continues efforts to strengthen education and youth development through library services. An application for support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services was submitted in February for the "Stories Forward" initiative, which will provide students with opportunities to build communication skills through storytelling, media creation, and engagement with community history.

Across all these efforts, the Wyandotte Nation continues to make strategic investments in its people, infrastructure, and natural resources – ensuring that progress today supports a stronger and more sustainable future for generations to come.

Splashpad Expansion



Housing

*Submitted by Valari Richards,
Housing Director*

The Splashpad expansion has begun at Bear Park in the Heritage

Acres Housing Addition. Construction is expected to be completed in May 2026. The addition will add several new water features to the existing splashpad. Opening for the splashpad is still expected for the end of May (weather permitting).

College Rental Assistance: This program is available to help qualifying college students (nationwide) with rental/dorm assistance during the school year. To qualify, applicants must currently be on a tribal scholarship through the Education Department, residing in dorm rooms or a rental unit, and must submit all required paperwork. The assistance for this program is limited to the first (25) qualifying applicants on a first-come, first-serve basis. Applications for the upcoming school year will be available on the website beginning July 1, 2026. Deadlines for submitting the applications will be listed on the application form.

Sanitation Facilities: We currently have some funding available to provide well, septic, or rural water connection services for our tribal citizens. Through IHS, we are able

to provide services in the following counties in Oklahoma: Craig; Creek; Delaware; Mayes; Nowata; Okfuskee; Okmulgee; Ottawa; Rogers; Tulsa; Wagoner; and Washington. We do also have limited funding to assist tribal citizens living in MO, KS, and AR with sanitation facility services if the residence is within a 50-mile radius of the Tribal Headquarters. This program is not income based, and is available as a one-time service for tribal citizens residing within the service area. Applications are available on the website.

If you are interested in or have questions about any of the programs listed above or on our website, please contact our office by phone at (918) 678-6336 or (918) 678-6339, or via email at vrichards@wyandotte-nation.org.

Department Staff:

Valari Richards, Housing Director
Jocelyn Metcalf, Housing Specialist
Levi Griffin/Paul Parker, Project Coordinators

Randy Qualls/Drew Lankford, Residential Maintenance Technicians

Save the Date! Environmental Festival

May 7 | 9 am - 2:30 pm

The Wyandotte Nation will host its 16th Annual Environmental Festival on Thursday, May 7, 2026 from 9 am to 2:30 pm at Twin Bridges State Park. This year's event will once again welcome Wyandotte students and community partners for a day of hands-on learning and environmental education. In 2025, the festival hosted over 450 students, along with multiple booths and volunteers who helped make the event a success.

Please note the location change this year from Heritage Acres Park to Twin Bridges State Park.

Have News to share?

**We would love to hear from you! Send your news to:
wswaim@wyandotte-nation.org**

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

TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Healthcare & Wellness

Submitted by Kelly Friend, Director of Health Services

Caring for Our Community: Strengthening Health, Connection, and Wellness

At the heart of the Wyandotte Nation is a deep and enduring commitment to care for one another. This guiding principle, rooted in generations of tradition and community, continues to shape who we are and how we serve.

Today, that commitment is reflected in the work across our health services, programs, and partnerships. With compassion and purpose, we strive to meet the evolving needs of our citizens while honoring the values that define us. Through these efforts, we remain dedicated to strengthening the health, connection, and overall well-being of our community, both now and for generations to come.

At Bearskin Healthcare & Wellness Center, our mission goes beyond providing clinical care. We are focused on delivering compassionate, culturally responsive services that reflect the strength and resilience of our people. From preventive screenings and chronic disease management to behavioral health support and wellness programming, our team is dedicated to improving the overall health and well-being of every individual we serve.

We are proud to serve not only Wyandotte Nation citizens, but the entire community. Providing access to quality care for all strengthens the health of our region and reflects our shared commitment to caring for one another.

We are proud to offer a dedicated diabetic clinic that provides comprehensive support for those managing diabetes. Services include access to a registered dietician, foot care, and ongoing education to help patients better understand and manage their condition. Through this program, we aim to empower individuals with the tools and knowledge needed to live healthier, more active lives.

As we look ahead to this year's Gathering, we encourage all citizens to take advantage of this time together by prioritizing your health. Be sure to schedule your annual



New gymnasium under construction.

visits during the week of the Gathering to establish care or continue as an active patient. Staying engaged in your healthcare is one of the most important steps you can take toward long-term wellness for yourself, your family, and our community.

We are also excited to announce that our new gymnasium is expected to be completed and turned over in early August. This addition will provide expanded opportunities for fitness, community events, and wellness programming. It represents a significant investment in the health and vitality of our Nation and will serve as a space where our community can come together in meaningful and active ways.

As part of our commitment to supporting healthy lifestyles, all Wyandotte Nation citizens receive a free gym membership. In addition, Wyandotte elders' spouses are also eligible for a free membership. We encourage our community to take full advantage of this benefit and make health and wellness a shared priority.

We also want to be transparent with our community regarding behavioral health services. At this time, direct behavioral health services are limited as we actively recruit a Licensed Clinical Social Worker

(LCSW) or Licensed Clinical Worker (LCW) to expand access and better meet the needs of our patients. In the meantime, our team continues to assist with coordination of care and referrals to ensure individuals receive the support they need.

Mark your calendars for our annual Health Fair on October 30. This event continues to grow each year and offers valuable health screenings, educational resources, and opportunities to connect with programs and partners dedicated to your well-being. With the addition of our new gym space, this year's Health Fair will be bigger and better than ever.

Health and wellness are crucial to the strength of our community. When we invest in our health, we invest in our future. Through continued collaboration, expanded services, and strong community engagement, we remain committed to supporting every citizen on their wellness journey.

We are grateful for the trust our community places in us and for the dedication of our staff and partners who make this work possible every day. Together, we will continue to honor our traditions, support one another, and move forward with purpose.

TRIBAL DEPARTMENT REPORTS

(HEALTHCARE & WELLNESS)

Continued from Page 14

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

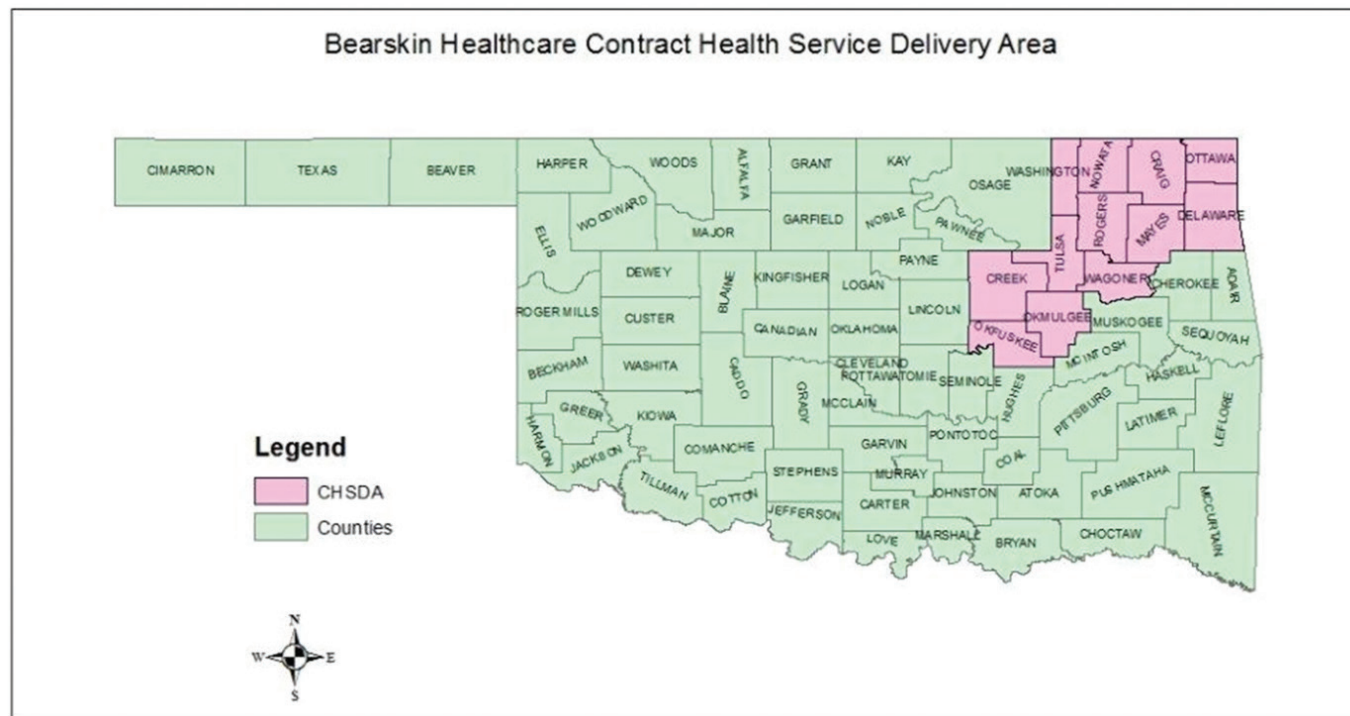
- Appointment must be authorized prior to visit (Please allow 2 weeks' minimum)

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

Bearskin Healthcare Contract Health Service Delivery Area



(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, re-cementing 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

CULTURAL DIVISION

Various crafts highlight 2nd annual Spring Workshop

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

Kweh!

We are so excited to welcome spring here at the Wyandotte Nation Cultural Center and Museum (WNCCM)! We hosted our 2nd annual Spring Workshop in March and we learned so much from each other and had a great time in community. Wyandotte Citizen Nathan McAlister taught pottery and participants made several items out of clay. Award-winning artist Monica Raphael taught us how to do quill-work on birch bark. I taught raised beadwork and we began working on a beaded box. Chris Houk taught how to make brooches. If you're a hands-on learner and enjoy crafting, I highly encourage you to participate in the Spring Workshop.

For our monthly beading class, we began working on the annual Community Art Project – this year's theme is Pollinator Garden. All beaders in the community are encouraged to bead



something from a pollinator garden – flowers, bees, butterflies, humming-birds, and anything else you find in the garden. This exhibit will be on display during the Wyandotte Artisan Showcase in September. Beaders can submit entries until September 1. Beadwork will be returned after the show. I would love to see a huge representation of Wyandotte beaders.

Also in March, Josh and I attended the Town Hall Meetings. We enjoyed catching up with friends and making new ones. I hope you were encouraged to participate more in the Tribe.

We continue hosting field trips, doing



presentations all over Indian Country, and beyond. In May, WNCCM will be presenting in Ohio for American 250. We are also working with allies for continued education and partnerships all over the country. We are excited for many things coming up!

Upcoming Events (can also be seen at linktr.ee/wncm):

May 8 Honoring Women Social Dance Dinner at 5:30 pm – Dance to Follow (We will also be honoring graduates)

May 25 Memorial Day – Honoring William Gyami at the Wyandotte



Cemetery at 10 am

June 1-4 Lacrosse Camp

June 5 Family Night - Honoring Men (inflatables, axe-throwing, food, and more!)

June 6 Lacrosse Tournament

June 12-14 The Gathering of Little Turtles

July 2 Wyandotte Fireworks

August 22 Deadlines for Wyandotte Fashion Show and Wyandotte Artisan Showcase

September 7-11 Gathering

September 11-13 Wyandotte

Continued on Page 17

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 Waᑎdat Songs - 6 pm (In-Person)
- 8 Honoring Women Social Dance - 5:30 pm
- 12 Wyandotte Beading - 6 pm (Zoom/In-Person)
- 20 Waᑎdat 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

JUNE

- 1-4 Lacrosse Camp - 9 am (In-Person)
- 4, 11, 18, 25 Waᑎdat Songs - 6:30 pm (In-Person)
- 5 Family Night - 5 pm
- 6 Lacrosse Tournament
- 9 Wyandotte Beading - 6 pm (Zoom/In-Person)
- 12-14 Gathering of Little Turtles
- 17 Waᑎdat Wednesday - Noon, 8 pm
- 21 Father's Day
- 30 Wyandotte History: Reading the Wampum - 8 pm (Zoom)



CULTURAL DIVISION

(CULTURAL)

Continued from Page 16



Nation Pow-Wow

Every Thursday evening: Waⁿdat Songs

2nd Tuesday of the month: Beading Class

2nd Thursday of the month: Research Reading Group

3rd Wednesday of the month: Waⁿdat Wednesday

Quarterly: Wyandotte Book Club

All of our events are posted on social media and on the website. If you'd like to be involved as a volunteer for any of the events or would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact us at WNCCM.

Kweh awéti? ! (Greetings, all!)

To celebrate Native American Heritage Month (NAHM) in November, we shared a Waⁿdat word or phrase every day on Facebook. The theme was **ekwahšrōgya?** we all make, with phrases related to tanning hides, bead and quill work, basketmaking, and useful phrases for these cultural activities. The audio and calendar view of each NAHM phrase is now available on www.wandot.org/NAHM - Just click on the **Audio 2025** button! You can find past years' offerings, too.

Waⁿdat Wednesdays + Immersion-style Sessions

Join us every third Wednesday of the month at **Wandot Wednesdays** (on-line 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

Language Notes

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 **atižu?** animals, numbers and counting, and currently we are learning **unq:ma?** family terms. We have two remaining topics, plants and weather. Our language program's first cycle of immersion-style programming will conclude in June and resume after September Gathering.

What is an "immersion-style" language session?

Immersion-style language learning is a back-to-basics approach—learning like kids! 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 immersion-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 foster retention.

Regular and new Waⁿdat Wednesday participants are enthusiastically encouraged to join immersion sessions! Please reach out to Darcy Allred, wandatlanguag@wyandotte-nation.org if you'd like to join these sessions or have any questions about immersion-style programming.

Waⁿdat Announcements:

- **May 4th**, Tribal linguist, Craig Koprís and Waⁿdat language program coordinator, Darcy Allred, will give a talk, "How Do You Pass the Torch While You're Still Lighting It?" at the Discoveries and Insights in Skills Training in Intergenerational Language Sustainability (DISTILS) Conference & Workshop. Program

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JULY

- 2 Wyandotte Fireworks
- 3 Fourth of July Observed - Closed
- 9, 16, 23 Waⁿdat Songs - 6:30 pm (In-Person)
- 11 Pottery Class (Pt. 1) - 9 am (In-Person)
- 14 Wyandotte Beading - 6 pm (In-Person/ Zoom)
- 15 Waⁿdat Wednesday - Noon, 8 pm (Zoom)
- 18 Pottery Class (Pt. 2) - 9 am (In-Person)
- 27-31 Intern Trip
- 28 Wyandotte History: Reading the Wampum - 8 pm (Zoom)

AUGUST

- 6, 13, 20, 27 Waⁿdat Songs - 6:30 pm (In-Person)
- 10 Wyandotte Book Club - Noon, 7:30 pm (Zoom)
- 11 Wyandotte Beading - 6 pm (In-Person/ Zoom)
- 15 Advanced Moccasin Class - 9 am (In-Person)
- 19 Waⁿdat Wednesday - Noon, 8 pm (Zoom)
- 21 Artisan/Fashion Showcase Deadline - Noon
- 25 Wyandotte History: Reading the Wampum - 8 pm (Zoom)

CULTURAL DIVISION

(LANGUAGE NOTES)

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information found here: <https://www.instils.org/distils/>

- **May 20th**, Waⁿdat Wednesday, at 12 noon & 8 pm central via Zoom, Theme: Weather & Seasons
- **June – August**, waye^te?yeh it is summer language sessions
 - o Review and speaking practice open to current Waⁿdat program students. Weekly meeting times TBA

Interested in learning our language?

We offer new cycles of Waⁿdat language learning sessions each fall season. 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> – Tižamēh!

Be sure to send any comments or suggestions, especially those on your language & culture wish list, to: wandatlanguag@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 applica-

tion process for **2026** closes this month but we are accepting applications for **2027!**

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 2027, 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](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!) Tižamēh!

Please send name questions & inquiries to bwright@wyandotte-nation.org.

2026 Wyandotte Book Club

February 9th

May 6th

August 10th

November 4th

THE INDIAN CARD
WHO GETS TO BE NATIVE IN AMERICA
CARRIE LOWRY SCHUETTELZ

The Road Back to Sweetgrass
A Novel
LINDA LeGARDE GROVER

THE SEVEN GENERATIONS AND THE SEVEN GRANDFATHER TEACHINGS
BY JAMES YUKELICH KAAEGAABAW

NEVER WHISTLE AT NIGHT
AN INDIGENOUS DARK FICTION ANTHOLOGY
Edited by Shane Hawk and Theodore C. Van Aist Jr.

Wyandotte Nation Cultural Center and Museum

Scan the QR for more information or to register.



Chief Leaford Bearskin Memorial Preschool Pow-Wow



PHOTOS: WILLIAM SWAIM | WYANDOTTE NATION

Our Preschool hosted its annual Chief Leaford Bearskin Memorial Pow-Wow recently at the Wyandotte HS gymnasium. The kiddos sang the Numbers and Tizameh songs in Wyandotte, and participated in Round, Snake, and Buffalo dances before joining family members for an Intertribal dance.

**Menomē?tatuyēhtih
Women are Sacred**

May 8th

**Social and
Stomp Dance**

**Dinner at 5:30 PM
Dances at 6:30 PM**

Bearskin Gymnasium

**Honoring Women
and 2026 Graduates
(High School and College)**



Gyami to be honored veteran during Memorial Day ceremony

William H Gyami, Jr was born in 1921, the son of William Harrison Gyami, Sr., who was one of the last full-blooded Wyandotte. Bill Gyami graduated in 1939 from The Wyandotte Consolidated High School with 36 other students, including his lifelong friend and fellow veteran Leaford Bearskin.

During World War II, First Lt Gyami was a fighting member of the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the famous 82nd Airborne Division. Lt. Gyami had taken part in three major campaigns, one of which is Operation Market Garden before being captured during the battle of the (Belgium) Bulge. In the March 1945 Miami News Record newspaper, the following was posted: "Mr. and Mrs. Will Gyami have received word that their son, Lt. Will Gyami Jr, a paratrooper who had previously been reported as missing, is now a German prisoner". As a German prisoner of war, Lt. Gyami was forced to march from December 28 to February 20 to reach a prison camp. In this camp, the prisoners were fed grass soup, a loaf of bread made

from sawdust and coffee made from acorns. A loaf of sawdust bread was to feed 10 men. This meal was served once every 24 hours.

Lt. Gyami managed to escape from the prison once, but was recaptured and was a prisoner of war for 125 days before Allied forces and American troops arrived and freed the prisoners.

After World War II, the 26-year-old Lt Gyami enlisted for a six-year hitch in the Army Infantry Brigade. This was reported in The Miami News Record newspaper by U.S. Army M/Sgt Leland Bearskin, officer in charge of the local Army recruiting station.

Gyami retired from our country's military as a Major. During his military career he served in World War II and Korean war. He was awarded the following:

- Three major Battle Stars
- The Combat Infantryman's Badge
- The European and American Theater Ribbons
- Three Presidential Citations
- The Purple Heart
- The Bronze Star

Call for Art

Wyandotte and Other Native Artists

2026 Theme: Wyandotte Battles and Treaties

Wyandotte artists are invited to submit artwork inspired by this year's theme: **Wyandotte Battles and Treaties.**

As an artist, how would you interpret and represent this important part of our history?

Possible inspirations might include:

- **Wampum belts**
- **Traditional weapons**
- **Paintings depicting specific battles**
- **Treaty representations**
- **Symbolic or contemporary interpretations**
- **And more**

We welcome diverse perspectives and creative approaches that honor, explore, and reflect upon Wyandotte history.

Selected artwork will be displayed in our museum, either on loan for one year or considered for purchase.

Submission Deadline: July 1, 2026

Please note: This call for art is separate from the Wyandotte Artisan Showcase. We look forward to seeing how our artists bring this theme to life.

For additional information, contact Kim Garcia at kgarcia@wyandotte-nation.org

