



BIXBY BREEZE

One of Six Greater Tulsa Reporter Newspapers

Oklahoma's Largest Monthly News Group

Volume 17

February 2020

www.gtrnews.com

IN THIS ISSUE:

VARIETY



Diverse Entertainment on Tulsa Stages
See Page 6

EDUCATION



Miss Helen's Private School Celebrates 65th Year
See Page 3

ON ARCHITECTURE



Meridia Building a Successful Remodel
See Page 17

SPORTS



Loren Montgomery Has Football's Golden Touch
See Page 14

Bixby Metro Chamber Unveils New Economic Development Endeavor

Bixby Development Foundation Focuses on Economic Success

By **ELIZABETH KING**
Elizabeth King Consulting

The Bixby Metro Chamber continues its 73-year tradition of stimulating growth and enhancing the quality of life in Bixby with the creation of the Bixby Development Foundation, a new 501(c)3 nonprofit organization focused on the long-term economic success of the community.

The Bixby Metro Chamber unveiled details about the Bixby Development Foundation at the annual Awards Gala on Jan. 25.

"The needs of business and our community are constantly evolving. The Bixby Metro Chamber has seen first-hand the rapid

change in how people start and build businesses, learn and innovate," said Krystal Crockett, Bixby Metro Chamber CEO. "By creating this foundation, we have built a strong framework to support the growth and future of our community and fill in the gaps in the event of business interruptions during disasters."

The Bixby Development Foundation's mission is to: create a culture in Bixby that attracts, recruits, and retains jobs for our community and provides resources for start-ups and small business development; aid businesses in the event of a disaster; and acquire a location that will serve as a co-working and incubator space, a center for educational partnerships, as well as a staging ground for disaster resiliency for local businesses in the event of a disaster.

Although initiated by the Bixby Metro Chamber, the Bixby Development Foundation is a separate entity with its own board of directors, strategic priorities and fundraising goals. Through a management agreement, the Bixby Chamber will serve as the program administrator and support the day-to-day operations of the Foundation.

It is to be a hub to connect incubator and co-working tenants with the resources to help them thrive, a launching pad to energize and inspire students to pursue their dreams, and a staging ground for disaster resiliency for local businesses impacted by disaster. This new space is coming in January 2021.

"The Chamber saw a need to have a central location in our community for people to come together, to have a place where businesses could begin and



NEW VENUE: Bixby Development Foundation as seen from the building renderings created by Beck Design.



Photo courtesy Don Kreutzweiser, Create1 Production

BIXBY LEADERS: From left, Krystal Crockett, Bixby Metro Chamber CEO; Elizabeth King, Bixby Metro Chamber 2019 Board Chair; and Justin Langston, Bixby Development Foundation Board Chair at the Annual Awards Gala. In the background are renderings of the Bixby Development Foundation. A photo of the entire Bixby Chamber Board of Directors is on page 12.

thrive, and a place where our City and first responders could gather in emergencies," Crockett continued.

"The Bixby Development Foundation believes that when the private, public, and educational sectors work together to develop our workforce, our community will be able to provide jobs and quality of life that strengthens our local economy," said Justin Langston, general manager of Two Men &

a Truck and Bixby Development Foundation board chair.

As the foundation embarks on its first year of operation, there are several educational opportunities and ways for the community get involved, including the economic update breakfast, business education series, Leadership Bixby program, foot-golf tournament and the community table dinner. For more information about these events, call 918-366-9445.

KUDOS of the MONTH: Rooster Days

The 2020 Rooster Days Festival is returning to Broken Arrow May 7-10, with a new fresh look and brand, developed by Relay Creative Group.

Rooster Days continues to hold the honor of being the longest running festival in Oklahoma. From its inception in 1931 until present day; community, commerce and fun define the event. The new brand communicates those qualities through the design of the logo and colors.

"We are honored to partner with the City of Broken Arrow and our presenting sponsor, TCU



ROOSTER DAYS
EST. 1931

Federal Credit Union, to continue the tradition of this festival that has such a rich history in our

community. Going into the 89th year, we couldn't be more excited to bring with us a fresh new look that we believe matches the heart of what Rooster Days is but reflects the changing of times," says President and CEO of the Broken Arrow Chamber and EDC Jennifer Conway.

Applications for 2020 for marketplace vendors, wine vendors, food vendors, entertainment, Miss Rooster Days, and the parade are now available at roosterdays.com.

The event will be held at Broken Arrow's Central Park, 1500 S. Main St., on May 7-10 with



WELCOMING GUESTS: Roscother rooster at the 2019 Rooster Days Festival.

carnival rides, food, live entertainment and the ever-expanding marketplace. Rooster Days is a great local tradition.

Tulsa's Children's Medical Charities Association Grants \$84,000 to Local Nonprofit Organizations

Children's Medical Charities Association, formerly Children's Medical Center Auxiliary, has awarded \$84,000 in Grants to 25 local non-profits benefiting children 18 years old or younger. The grants were presented to the recipients by Ken Busby, Executive Director and CEO of the Route 66 Alliance.

This total is generated from the 2019 sales from CMCA's resale shop, The Market at Pearl, located at 1020-F S. Rockford in The Pearl District. The shop, sponsored by Hillcrest Healthcare, is operated 100 percent by volunteers during the hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Any 501(C)(3) organization benefiting children 18 years and under may apply for a 2020 grant using the website cmcatulsa.org. Since the inception of the grant program in 2005, CMCA has awarded \$1.3 million to agencies "Helping Kids Get Better."

All donations are tax deductible and may be brought to the shop during business hours. For any additional information, call 918-779-6332.

Grant recipients are:

Community Action Project (CAP), Catholic Charities, City Year Tulsa, Community Food Bank, Counsel Recovery/CALM, Day Spring Villa, Emergency Infant Services, Hope's Crossing, Iron Gate, Little Light House, New Hope Okla., Oklahoma Heart Gallery, Parent & Child Center, Parkside, Pregnancy Resource Center, Reading Partners, Saint Catherine School, San Miguel School, Sistema Tulsa, Tulsa Ad-



HAPPY NON-PROFIT REPRESENTATIVES: Representatives from 25 local non-profit organizations are all smiles due to the benevolence of the Children's Medical Charities Association and the Market of Pearl Thrift Shop.

vocates for the Rights of Citizens (TARC), Tulsa Ballet, Tulsa Boys Home, Tulsa Community College, Tulsa Symphony and Youth Services

The CMCA dates back to 1926 when The Children's Medical Center first opened its doors. Since then the organization has acquired nonprofit status and has been serving the Tulsa community through grant funding.

Throughout the years CMCA has donated over \$1.1 million in grants to different non-profits who help serve children in the Greater Tulsa area. The Market at Pearl Thrift Shop supports CMCA. Profits from the store at 1020 S. Rockford Ave. funds the mission of the CMCA. The thrift store is run entirely by volunteers, and every dollar made is given to CMCA to help assist local children and families.

Along with the grant of \$84,000, CMCA has already given an additional \$5,000 to The Hospitality House of Tulsa. The Hospitality House provides meals, lodging and services to families who travel to Tulsa for medical attention.

"From the beginning, Children's Medical Charities Association has been focused on serving Tulsa's children. We are proud to be able to continue that support nearly a century later," said Board President, Michele Denton.

According to CMC's history written by Betty Lee Sadler, by 1958, the auxiliary had grown into one of the largest volunteer organizations in the Southwest. As the needs and numbers of children grew, auxiliary members marshaled their talents to create exemplary fundraising programs, helping to fill CMC's financial voids. The orthopedic appliance and trust



ONE OF 25: Ken Busby, executive director and CEO of the Route 66 Alliance, smiles as he watches the check presentation to Iron Gate of Tulsa. From left are Iron Gate's Director of Development Ashli Sims and Executive Director Carrie Veseley Henderson and CMCA's Michele Denton. Iron Gate has a mission to feed the hungry and homeless of Tulsa every day.

funds were either set up by or received sizeable donations from the auxiliary.

It financially supported similar CMC programs through small fundraisers ranging from the sale of cookbooks and the creation of a snack bar stocked with home-baked goods to large public events, such as the Tulsa Charity Horse Show.

From 1954 to 1962, The Junior League of Tulsa and the Auxiliary co-sponsored the Tulsa Charity Horse Show. In 1963, the Auxiliary became the sole sponsor and ran it for at least another 35 years. The Horse Shows' proceeds given to CMC exceeded \$1.2 million.

In the 1970s, industrious members established an Arts and Crafts Show, the first major project done entirely by the auxiliary. The show, which later became a juried arts and crafts show, gained the

reputation of being one of the best in the region and flourished for at least 25 years. Nearly \$1 million was given to CMC from its proceeds.

In 1975, the auxiliary took on another major fundraiser – the Roy Clark Celebrity Golf Tournament. All eyes in Tulsa and nationally were on CMC. The celebrity tournament drew internationally acclaimed entertainers and sports figures and evolved into the Roy Clark Senior PGA Tournament Challenge. The golf tournaments lasted nine years, requiring an average of 5,000 volunteer hours per tournament and garnered more than \$800,000 for CMC.

To find out more information about the Children's Medical Charities Association and The Market at Pearl Thrift Shop, visit cmcatulsa.org.

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Contents
February 2020

CIVICS
As We Go Forward, Let's Look Back at 2019 4
From Tulsa's Mayor by G.T. Bynum
The Drug Problem: Replacing Jail with Rehabilitation 4
From Tulsa County by Commissioner Ron Peters
Stitt, Pinnell Unveil New Brand for State of Oklahoma 5

VARIETY
Diverse Entertainment on Tulsa Stages 6
Show Buzz by Nancy Hermann
So Many Events to Cover in a City Exploding With Live Music 7
Searching for the Sound by Bryan Cantrell

HEALTH & WELLNESS
Tulsa Retina Consultants Contributes to the Food Bank 8
Mother Donates Device to Give Families Time to Grieve 8
CTCA and Aetna Sign Agreement to Expand Care 9
BCBS Awards Grant to OSU Med for Addiction, Pain Mgt. 9

EDUCATION
Renovations Underway for Hardesty Center at TCC West 10
OSU-Tulsa Emphasizes Outreach with New Asst. V. P. 10
Tulsa Tech Training Leads to Out of This World Career 11
News from Tulsa Tech by Dr. Steve Tiger
Tulsa Tech Honors School Board Members 11

SPORTS
Local Sports 13
Loren Montgomery Has Football's Golden Touch 14
John Holcomb Named Oklahoma Sportscaster of the Year 15
TPS Inducts 13 Into 2020 Hall of Fame Class 15
Victory Christian's Ruth Udomouh Signs with OSU 15

FEATURES
Meridia Building: A Successful Massive Remodel 17
On Architecture by Roger Coffey
Bird & Bottle Coming on Two Years in Midtown Location 17
Local Dining by Blake Austyn

THE ECONOMY
Tulsa Regional Chamber Inaugurates Roger Ramseyer as Chair 18
Stava Building Receives Multiple Awards 19
Women are Playing Vital Roles in Energy 19
National Energy Talk by Mark Stansberry
Tulsa Regional Tourism Hires Sports Professionals 21
Business and People Notes 21

GTR CLASSIFIED ADS 20

COMMUNITY CALENDAR 23

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Miss Helen's Private School Celebrates 101st Day of School With a 101 Dalmatians Event

The School Is Celebrating Its 65th Year Of Education

Miss Helen's Private School was excited to celebrate this year's 101st day of school on Jan. 29. In honor of this auspicious day the students and staff dressed up as the dalmatians from the classic Disney movie "One Hundred and One Dalmatians," a 1961 American animated adventure film based on the 1956 novel The Hundred and One Dalmatians by Dodie Smith.

In celebration, the kindergarten through 5th grade students took to the Alsuma soccer field near 51st Street and Mingo Road in Tulsa, which is located behind the school, for a 100-yard dash.

Cruella de Vil, Jasper and Horace were there to try and catch as many puppies as they could. The preschool puppies were in the "pound" barking for their litter mates on the field. The question was, will Pongo and Perdita rescue their puppies? It was an exciting puppy chase.

Other activities for this day included a blanket drive for local animal shelters, a special "Puppy Chow" snack mix, a schoolwide "Bingo" sing-a-long, and lots of photo opportunities.

Now in its 65th year of education, Miss Helen's Private School has provided excellence in early childhood education since 1954. The school's goal is to provide a great learning institution where children can develop their reading, math, and social talents as well as improve communication skills and learning habits.

Today, Miss Helen's heritage lives on in the school's facility at 48th Street and Mingo Road. Miss Helen's offers programs in three areas: Preschool, Kindergarten, and Elementary Grades 1st through 5th.

For more information about Miss Helen's School, contact Jayme-Wingo Baker at director@misshelens.com or 918-622-2327 for additional information.



Courtesy photo
EDUCATIONAL FUN: Celebrating Miss Helen's School's 65th year of education and the 101 Dalmatians event in fun are, from left, Miss Helen's Director Jayme Wingo-Baker, Executive Director Lynda Wingo, Lead Kindergarten Teacher Stephanie Byrne, Director Christi Ray and Director Rhonda Reidy.

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Courtesy photo
PUPPY CHASE: Miss Helen's Preschool Teacher Tara Worley watches her students in the puppy chase during the 101 Dalmatians event.



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Distributech • Udovenko Family

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FEBRUARY 2020

Vol. 28, No. 2 (Union Boundary);
Vol. 24, No. 2 (Jenks District Gazette, Midtown Monitor);
Vol. 22, No. 2 (Owasso Rambler, Broken Arrow Express);
Vol. 17, No. 2 (Bixby Breeze)

COPY DROP-OFF: 5401 S. Sheridan Rd. • Suite 302 • Tulsa, OK 74133



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The Greater Tulsa Reporter Newspapers consist of the Union Boundary, the Jenks District Gazette, the Midtown Monitor, the Owasso Rambler, the Broken Arrow Express and the Bixby Breeze. The papers target news coverage to school district areas. The papers also have common pages of information of interest to all readers in the Greater Tulsa area.

The Union Boundary, the Jenks District Gazette, the Owasso Rambler, the Broken Arrow Express and the Bixby Breeze are distributed monthly to select homes in the Union, Jenks, Owasso, Broken Arrow and Bixby school districts. The Midtown Monitor is distributed to selected neighborhoods in the Tulsa school district. All six papers are distributed to news stands and other outlets in more than 700 locations throughout the Greater Tulsa area.

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CIVICS

As We Go Forward, Let's Look Back at 2019

2019 marked an incredible year for our city in the fields of economic and community development, public safety and Resilient Tulsa. Last year, we saw overwhelming investment and support across Tulsa with new companies adding jobs, expanding their facilities and breaking ground on visionary projects.

2019 was a year of firsts. Last year, we held Tulsa's first naturalization ceremony at City Hall, received our first Equality Indicators Report, launched Tulsa's first Bus Rapid Transit line and hired Tulsa's first Housing Policy Director – to name a few.

2019 was a year for investment. Investment in Tulsa was widely realized in 2019. WPX Energy announced and broke ground on its new \$110 million headquarters in downtown. Vast Bank completed its \$40 million headquarters. American Airlines announced it would add 565 new jobs at its north Tulsa hangar. And we formally broke ground on USA BMX's National Headquarters in the Greenwood District.

2019 was a year for safety. In 2019, we were able to hire 120 new officers and implement 75 community policing recommendations, including implicit bias training for all officers. Tulsa Municipal Lockup celebrated its first year in operation and the Tulsa Fire Department

received a Class 1 rating by the Insurance Service Office (ISO). Tulsa Sobering Center, our jail diversion program, also celebrated its first year in operation.

2019 was a year for reconciliation. In 2019, we initiated the 1921 Race Massacre investigation into possible mass graves. With the help of the Public Oversight Committee and the Oklahoma Archeological Survey, we were able to scan and complete the geophysical work at Oaklawn Cemetery and Newblock Park.

2019 was a year for resilience. Krystal Reyes, the City's Chief Resilience Officer was hired in 2019 to further our Resilient Tulsa Strategy. With her help, we held workshops for renters, tenants

and small businesses. We hosted our second annual 918 Day celebration, held an employment resource fair, and updated the City's website to include translations in multiple languages while adding a resource list to help those with

mental health needs and those involved in the justice system. The actions, initiatives and growth in 2019 can't be summed up in just a few words. That's why I invite you to read my full 2019 Annual Report at www.cityoftulsa.org/mayor.

and small businesses. We hosted our second annual 918 Day celebration, held an employment resource fair, and updated the City's website to include translations in multiple languages while adding a resource list to help those with

mental health needs and those involved in the justice system. The actions, initiatives and growth in 2019 can't be summed up in just a few words. That's why I invite you to read my full 2019 Annual Report at www.cityoftulsa.org/mayor.

From Tulsa's Mayor



By G.T. BYNUM
Mayor of Tulsa



Courtesy photo

STATE OF THE CITY: Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum holds a 918 plaque from the Mayor's State of the City Address in November at the Cox Business Center. From left are 2020 Tulsa Regional Chamber Chair Roger Ramseyer, 2019 TRC Chair David Stratton, Tulsa County Commissioner Karen Keith, Mayor Bynum, Tulsa District 8 City Councilor Phil Lakin and Tulsa Regional Chamber CEO Mike Neal.

The Drug Problem: Replacing Jail with Rehabilitation

When the David L. Moss Justice Center (DLM) opened over 30 years ago, it was intended that this Tulsa County jail would hold those awaiting trial for committing violent crimes which Oklahoman's believed deserved punishment, not rehabilitation or treatment.

Since the DLM opened, the community's perspectives about incarceration have changed. Those involved in the criminal justice system have learned more about what contributes to criminal behavior and what purpose comes from incarcerating people in an attempt to change their behavior. There

has also been greater focus on the human and financial costs of incarcerating those charged with nonviolent crimes.

Crimes involving drugs has done the most to change the former per-

ception. Many of those charged with violent crimes, committed these offenses while under the influence of drugs. Many more are arrested for being in possession of illegal drugs.

DLM is not a treatment center. Catching and releasing those charged with a misdemeanor or drug offense does not address the root causes that made the use of drugs a controlling influence in the offender's life. DLM was not designed to be, nor should it be, used as a lock up for those charged with misdemeanor drug crimes. Yet jail statistics show that at least 50 inmates each month

are in the Medically Assisted Treatment Program for Drug Addiction (MAT).

The Tulsa Board of County Commissioners, the District Attorney's Office, the Sheriff's Office, the Tulsa

Police Department, OSU's Medical and Science Center, along with a group of incarceration reform leaders believe the legislature can help address this problem.

For the 2020 Legislative Session, Tulsa County has advanced SB 1660 sponsored by Broken Arrow Senator John Haste and Tulsa Representative Carol Bush. The objective of this legislation is very clear: improve public safety and public health by reducing the potential for criminal behavior by those struggling with drug addiction. This can be accomplished with interventions that link low level drug offenders with services offering evaluation, treatment, etc. This will not only reduce criminal behavior, it will also be less costly than repeatedly processing these individuals through the criminal justice system.

Substituting incarceration with rehabilitation is at the heart of SB 1660. If this legislation passes, it would begin with the Sheriff's Office and the District Attorney's Office agreeing on the policies and practices of this drug diversion program. But simply put, a person in possession of a controlled dangerous drug would be offered the opportunity by the law enforcement officer

to be taken to the OSU Medical and Sciences Center or any other approved center for substance abuse evaluation. If the offender agrees to be taken to the facility, no criminal charges will be filed. Since law enforcement officers are normally the first to encounter these individuals, they will be trained to recognize when the drug diversion opportunity is appropriate.

Diversion is a new approach

that seeks to accomplish the goals of reduced criminal behavior and improved public safety by connecting low level drug offenders with treatment and social services. This approach will cost less and be more successful at reducing future criminal behavior than routinely processing the offenders through the criminal justice system.

SB 1660 is the pathway toward achieving this worthy goal.

From Tulsa County



By COMMISSIONER
RON PETERS



GTR Media Group photo

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY PARADE: Tulsa's MLK Day Parade was another successful event this year. Each year over 100 entries participate with themed floats, music and marchers. The parade continues to grow and improve in quality and content in honor of Dr. King.

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Gov. Kevin Stitt and Lt. Gov. Matt Pinnell Unveil New Brand for State of Oklahoma

Gov. Kevin Stitt and Lt. Gov. Matt Pinnell unveiled a new brand for the State of Oklahoma during a program at the Oklahoma City Thunder Headquarters at Chesapeake Arena. “As Secretary of Tourism and Branding, Lt. Governor Pinnell has traveled to communities across Oklahoma and personally experienced everything our state has to offer,” said Stitt. “His enthusiasm and passion for our state and people is evident, and he charged full steam ahead to pull together creatives from all over the state to form and launch this new brand for Oklahoma. With it, we will work to breathe new life into tourism, job recruitment, investors, and much more.”

The brand is a result of nine months of work by a volunteer committee consisting of more than 140 creatives, called OklaX.

“Last summer I invited more than 200 of Oklahoma’s brightest and most creative designers, marketing experts, communications professionals, videographers and photographers to join me in creating a new brand for Oklahoma,” said Pinnell. “Their task was to develop a cohesive, new brand for Oklahoma that best represents our heritage and history, our booming industry, our beautiful one of a kind vistas, and most importantly, our greatest asset – our people. The vision behind this effort is to position Oklahoma as a top-tier destination for visitors, businesses, talent and citizens.”

Joining Stitt and Pinnell on stage was business and civic leader Steve Hendrickson, government affairs director for the Boeing



Company and a member of the board of directors for the Oklahoma Business Roundtable.

“As a representative in Oklahoma’s aerospace and aviation industry, I have experienced firsthand the challenges Oklahoma faces when representing our state as a top-tier destination for capital investment, expansion, relocation and recruitment of new employees,” Hendrickson said. “Together, as Oklahomans, we can reverse these perceptions of being “one of those states in the middle” and instead we will create an awareness that we are the very center of the United States.”

The unveiling of the brand was via a video created by the volunteer team. The logo design is inspired by Oklahoma’s heritage. The shapes and colors reflect the earth, sky, water, agriculture and forest. A white star in the middle of the brand is a powerful symbol

of America that was on the original flag of the state. The chevrons outlining the star acknowledge Oklahoma’s military. All the elements form a circle and direct energy inward, highlighting Oklahoma as a hub at the center of America.

The tagline “Imagine that” conveys the idea behind the Oklahoma brand: a state that surprised people by defying expectations, providing countless opportunities and inviting audiences to dream of their own personal potential.

“Based on key attributes uncovered and through a competitive audit, the OklaX team staked out an authentic emotional positioning of Oklahoma as a remarkably friendly place of people who embrace and support each other and newcomers, so everyone can thrive,” said Pinnell. “When it was all said and done, this team has donated countless valuable

hours of their time, talent, studios and even staff to lead us to this historic moment.”

The OklaX team was divided into smaller groups led by seven team captains: Brenda Jones Barwick, Public Relations; Jesse Boudiette, Marketing; Brian Byrnes, Implementation; Whitney Emerick, Verbal Identity; Mike Kouhler, Web Strategy; Dan Mar-

tel, Video and Audio Production and Sarah Sears, Visual Identity.

The office of the Lt. Gov. will oversee the new brand, in coordination with the Oklahoma Department of Commerce and the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department. A brand manager was recently hired to provide assistance and guidance for all state departments, agencies and commissions on ways to implement the brand, respond to questions, provide feedback and to share success stories about the brand.

“We are thrilled to add Amy Blackburn to our team as our brand manager,” said Pinnell. “She brings a wealth of experience in brand management and is also passionate about our state.”

Over the next few months, the brand rollout will continue as highway signs, tourism efforts, agency websites, programs and communications begin to implement the new brand.

“Today marks the beginning of a transformation,” said Pinnell. “The transformation of Oklahoma’s statewide, national and international image.”



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VARIETY

Diverse Entertainment on Tulsa Stages

The year is young. Are you having fun yet?

One theater that has been important to area entertainment is the venue now called Tulsa Theater. This is not to be confused with Theatre Tulsa, which is the longest-running theatre group in Tulsa. Rather, Tulsa Theater is what was known until recently as Brady Theater, or "The Old Lady on Brady," and previously as the Tulsa Convention Hall and Tulsa Municipal Theater. This venerated performance space has been a cornerstone for music, drama, dance and a variety of acts since 1914.

Rachmaninoff, Fannie Bryce and Enrico Caruso all performed there. Caruso reportedly caught a cold when he came to Tulsa and later died of pleurisy. His ghost supposedly lurks in the rafters. Other notable stars who entertained at the venue include Ethel Barrymore, Olivia de Havilland, Helen Hayes, Tallulah Bankhead and Katherine Hepburn. Mae West acted five times at the theater in plays she wrote and produced.

Tulsa Convention Hall became Tulsa Municipal Theater in 1952 and was branded Brady Theater when the property was purchased from the City of Tulsa in the late 1970s. Since recently becoming Tulsa Theater, the building's familiar Brady Theater sign has been removed. But there is great news! The stylishly lettered "Tulsa" from the old Tulsa Municipal Theater days is extant and will once again grace the front of this true Tulsa icon.

Now that the name confusion has been cleared up, here's what we can look forward to seeing at Tulsa Theater and other venues in the upcoming weeks. Tulsa Theater hosts "Daniel Tiger Neighborhood Live!" on Feb. 12. Life lessons that touch on socio-emotional themes are augmented by music and engaging characters that will be familiar to preschool-aged children who follow the "Daniel Tiger" animated TV show. Its concept was created by Fred Rogers Productions.

The enduring fan-favorite William Shatner takes the Tulsa Theater stage following a screening of "The Wrath of Khan," Feb. 13

for some Trekkie fun. Country and gospel singer Josh Turner performs with opening act MamaDear on Feb. 21. MamaDear is a rising star on the country music scene.

Country singer Brantley Gilbert brings his Fire'T Up Tour, Feb. 22 to the BOK Center before "Trolls Live!" turns the arena into troll-central for five performances, Feb. 29 - March 1. "Trolls Live" is predominantly a children's show, but with enough flash and wizardry to entertain a much broader audience.

There's more country music at the Hard Rock Casino's Joint with Texas singer Casey Donahew's "One Light Town" tour (Feb. 29). Casey's racked up 18 chart-topping singles over the past 17 years. Get ready for two celebrated bands, Foreigner (Feb. 13) and Styx (Feb. 20) appearing at the River Spirit Casino. The next time I'm playing Trivia and a song from the 1970s is part of the quiz, my answer is going to be "Foreigner!" They are responsible for "Hot Blooded," "Cold as Ice," "I Want to Know What Love Is," "Feels Like the First Time" and "Waiting for a Girl Like You." Among Styx's biggest hits are "Lady" and "Come Sail Away."

The Broken Arrow PAC presents celebrated Broadway singer, actress and Oklahoma native Kelli O'Hara. Kelli attended Oklahoma City University and studied under the same voice teacher as Kristin Chenoweth. She'll be singing in the Kristin Chenoweth Theatre on Feb. 15. I've heard Kelli sing several times. Her performance in "The Light in the Piazza," was a launchpad, and I enjoyed seeing her on Broadway in "The Bridges of Madison County," along with her turn as Anna in the Tony Award-winning "The King and I."

Tulsa Ballet returns to the Tulsa Performing Arts Center with "Dorothy and the Prince of Oz," Feb. 13 - 16. The ballet's story is based loosely on the "Wizard of Oz" characters, complete with flying monkeys and other dazzlement. The ballet was choreographed by esteemed dancer Edwaard Liang.

Tulsa Project Theater presents "Godspell," Feb. 14 - 23 at the PAC, while Theatre Tulsa takes on

Show Buzz



By NANCY HERMANN



DOROTHY AND THE PRINCE OF OZ: Tulsa Ballet revisits the great city of Oz in this original ballet choreographed by Edwaard Liang Feb. 13-15.



THE FACE OF EMMETT TILL: Theatre North presents the true story of a young man murdered in Mississippi in the 1950s at the PAC March 1-8.



MADAMA BUTTERFLY: Soprano Maria Natales is the jilted geisha Cio-Cio San in Puccini's tragic love story Feb. 28 and March 1, presented by Tulsa Opera.



AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY: Theatre Tulsa presents the Tony Award winning play at the PAC Feb. 15 - 23.



DANIEL TIGER NEIGHBORHOOD LIVE! Tulsa Theater hosts characters from the Daniel Tiger animated TV show on Feb. 12.

oceans, but expectations. Maria Natale sings the role of geisha Cio-Cio San. Tenor Matthew White is her capricious lover, officer Pinkerton.

In August 1955, a black teenager from Chicago, was tortured and killed in Mississippi for allegedly whistling at a white woman. Remarkably, his mother held a funeral with an open casket to show the world the stark brutality of her son's murder. Her act and courage helped spur the Civil Rights movement. "The Face of Emmett Till," presented by Theatre North, plays at the PAC Mar. 1-8.

Also coming up in early March at the PAC is the crowd-pleasing Stomp, presented by Celebrity Attractions, Mar. 6-7 and the McGill/McHale Trio, Mar. 8, hosted by Chamber Music Tulsa.

Between scorching drama and "Trolls Live!" I deeply appreciate

the depth of entertainment choices we have locally. They all contribute to a diverse and rich cultural life I hope you will want to explore.

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So Many Events to Cover in a City Exploding With Live Music

Iconic entertainment magazine Rolling Stone is currently publishing a series of articles featuring a “look at eight cities where live music has exploded.” I don’t want to give too much away, but, spoiler alert: Tulsa is one of the eight cities.

It’s a great article in which Rolling Stone journalist Jonathan Bernstein captures the history, spirit of cooperation and diversity that characterize Tulsa-area music. I recommend checking it out on rollingstone.com. Although I didn’t learn anything I didn’t already know about Tulsa music, I did have two realizations while reading the article: 1) Jonathan Bernstein definitely reads Searching for the Sound, and 2) If Tulsa is one of eight cities where live music has exploded, I must have a lot to talk about in this column. Turns out, I was right. About the second one at least, so let’s get to it.

Searching for The Sound



By BRYAN CANTRELL

accepting entries. One winner will receive \$500 and the opportunity to join the lineup of Bob Childers’ Gypsy Café music festival on April 29.

The Jimmy LaFave Songwriting Contest highlights the spirit of mentorship and musical discovery that have become hallmarks of the Gypsy Café festival. Previous winners include Ken Pomeroy in 2018, and Dallas Parker, aka Faux Draco, last year.

In addition to the cash prize, another \$500 will be donated in the winner’s name to Red Dirt Relief Fund. I’ll have more on Red Dirt Relief Fund and the 9th Annual Gypsy Café in the

April installment of SFTS.

Linda Wolf Book Signing

One of the all-time great rock & roll tours is about to turn 50. It was March of 1970 when Joe Cocker recruited Leon Russell to put together a band and embark on the Mad Dogs and Englishmen tour. The 10-piece band with a 10-piece choir was short lived, but left an indelible mark on the rock & roll landscape, and gave Cocker his first hit with The Letter. The legendary collaboration is still with us in the form of both a live album and a film documentary.

Also capturing the historic event was Tour Photographer Linda Wolf, who recently released “Tribute: Cocker Power,” an archive of her time with the band during the tour. Released as a celebration of the 50-year anniversary of Mad Dogs and Englishmen, Wolf’s book is two volumes of visually stunning photographs, as well as stories and quotes from over one hundred musicians and crew members, including Leon Russell.

Wolf will be at Harwelden Mansion April 2 from 4:30 – 7:30 p.m. for a book signing experience. The event will include an exhibit of Wolf’s original tour photos, as well as live music, wine and hors d’oeuvres. For more information and tickets, visit thechurchstudio.com.

R.I.P. Jim Paul Blair

I must end this month’s column on a sad note, as I’ve just received

Tulsa Music Awards

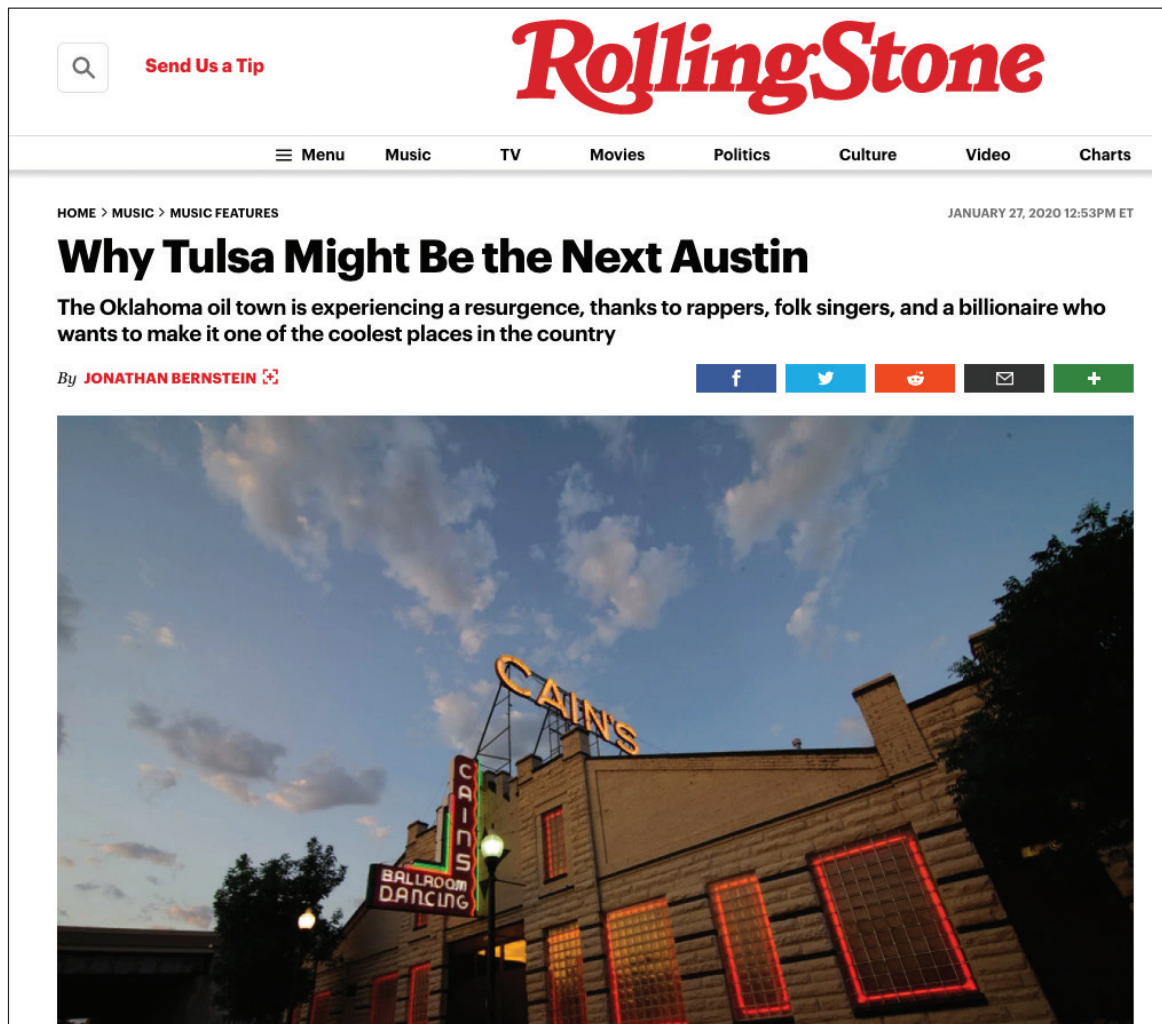
Another indication that Tulsa music is blowing up is the number of nominees for the Third Annual Oilfire Tulsa Music Awards. Album of the Year, one of 30 categories, had more than 50 nominations, as did Single of the Year. New Artist and Breakout Artist of the Year both had dozens of nominations, a sign that Tulsa music’s stock is still rising.

As impressive as the list of nominees is, it can be a bit overwhelming when trying to cast a vote. Fortunately, each category has been narrowed down to a more manageable five finalists. Vote during the month of March at tulsamusicawards.com to recognize your favorite band, songwriter, venue (large, medium and small), concert, DJ, music video and more of 2019.

Jimmy LaFave Songwriting Contest

If you just went and checked tulsamusicawards.com and were disappointed to not see your name among the list of nominations, here’s an opportunity to change that for next year.

The Jimmy LaFave Songwriting Contest, free and open to unsigned Oklahoma songwriters, is currently



MUSIC MECCA: Tulsa’s music scene is garnering national attention.

news of Muskogee musician/entertainer Jim Paul Blair’s passing.

Blair was a pillar in the music community. A former executive director for the Oklahoma Music Hall of Fame, he also served on the board of directors for Oklahoma International Bluegrass Festival, Red Dirt Relief Fund and Muskogee Medical Center Authority.

The son of a Grand Ole Opry performer and Texas Playboys member, Blair spent all 58 of his years emersed in music.

He was a multi-instrumentalist with a knack for portraying Hank Williams in his tribute band Harkerin 4 Hank, and Buddy Holly in the Muskogee Little Theatre productions of “The Buddy Holly Story.” His talent and generosity will be missed by the entire Oklahoma music community.

I met Blair a few years ago at the Oklahoma Music Hall of Fame in Muskogee. He was helpful and generous with his time and seemed to be so full of life. It’s hard to be-

lieve he’s no longer with us. With Searching for the Sound, my goal is to spread the joy of Tulsa music and deliver something uplifting and inspiring to the reader. Occasionally, however, it’s necessary to diverge from the joyful news, as it is imperative that we honor people like Jim Blair who are responsible for building and maintaining the robust music scene that we all enjoy. It’s because of people like Blair that we don’t have to leave our home town to keep searching, keep listening.

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HEALTH & WELLNESS

Tulsa Retina Consultants Contributes to the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma on Behalf of Friends, Colleagues, Referring Physicians

Tulsa Retina Consultants recently announced the donation of \$5,000 to the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma on behalf of its friends, colleagues and referring physicians. The donation is being made as a thank you to the organization's partners for their dedication in 2019.

"Tulsa Retina Consultants is proud to support the important mission of the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma," Lars Freisberg, MD at Tulsa Retina, said. "We strongly believe in giving back to our community but especially to this organization that serves an important need in eastern Oklahoma."

"The example being set by Tul-

sa Retina Consultants by donating this gift to the Food Bank inspires us and we hope many others will follow suit," said Greg Raskin, communications manager for the Food Bank. "This demonstrates how you can let people know how special they are to you and your organization while strengthening our community. Simple acts like this help fulfill the message of the holidays. On behalf of the people who will receive this gift, but may not know how it came to them, thank you."

Tulsa Retina Consultants has six doctors and more than 50 employees at offices in Tulsa, Bartlesville, Grove, Muskogee and Stillwater.



BENEVOLENT GIFT: Present at the check presentation are, from left, Tom Finley, M.D. and Lars Freisberg, M.D., and from the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma, Director of Philanthropy Rochelle Dowdell and Communications Manager Greg Raskin.

Owasso Mother Donates Device to Give Families More Time to Grieve After Stillbirth or Infant Loss

In 2019, Kendra and Kevin Brown, of Owasso, were excited to welcome their firstborn child to their family. Unfortunately, their world came crashing down when they learned their son, Dylan, had passed away in utero. Kendra delivered Dylan at St. John Tulsa in April 2019. Although delivering a stillborn child was incredibly difficult, Kendra and Keven had access to a special cooling bassinet to use with Dylan. This bassinet, called a Cuddle Cot or Caring Cradle, gives families more time to say goodbye to their infant after a stillbirth or infant loss. The Caring Cradle she got to use with Dylan was donated to St. John Tulsa by the Jaxon Kade Foundation.

Often after a stillbirth or infant loss, parents only get a

few hours to say goodbye to their infant before the baby's body begins to change due to composition. This happens very quickly in an infant. During the few hours they get, the mother is still recovering from childbirth, making this precious time very difficult physically. A Caring Cradle or Cuddle Cot allows the infant to stay in-room with the parents as long as they would like, for the mother's entire hospital stay if she wishes. This allows time for families to take photographs, invite family members to visit, make memorial tokens such as footprints and handprints, and make funeral preparations without being rushed. These units currently cost \$3,000-\$5,000, and hospitals usually do not have the budget to purchase these units

themselves. Recently, these devices have gotten media attention by their feature on the major network show New Amsterdam.

Kendra saw the nameplate featuring The Jaxon Kade Foundation on the side of her Caring Cradle, contacted the foundation for support, and made several connections with foundation members. In October 2019, Kendra decided to raise funds to place another Cuddle Cot in memory of her son, Dylan. Kendra's fundraiser was very successful and she raised over \$6,000 in a matter of weeks, most of which over social media on Facebook.

Kendra's donation will purchase two Cuddle Cots, and she has chosen Bailey Medical Center in Owasso and St. John's Medical Center in Owasso as the recipients of her cradles. These cradles were delivered to the hospitals in a dedication ceremony on Friday, Jan. 10 at Bailey Medical Center and 2:30 p.m. at St. John's Owasso.

About The Jaxon Kade Foundation

The Jaxon Kade Foundation is a nonprofit organization benefiting families facing pregnancy and infant loss. Our current focus is fundraising for



CUDDLE COT FOR SAYING GOODBYE: After the loss of her son, Dylan, Owasso mother Kendra Brown donates two Cuddle Cots to two Owasso hospitals, Bailey Medical Center and St. John Owasso, facilitated by The Jaxon Kade Foundation. These cooling bassinets allow parents to get extra time to say goodbye to their infant. From left are Brittany Martin, Jaxon Kade Foundation; Kendra Brown; Cattie MacDonald, Jaxon Kade Foundation; and Julia Johnson, Bailey Medical Center.

and purchasing Cuddle Cots and Caring Cradles for Oklahoma hospitals. To date, The Jaxon Kade Foundation has donated 18 cooling bassinets to Oklahoma hospitals. Each year in October, we host the state's only exclusively 4x4 auto

show, The 4x4 Show, as the largest fundraiser of the year. This show combines President Brittany Martin's passions of offroading and pregnancy and infant loss advocacy, all to honor her son Jaxon who was stillborn in 2014.

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CANCER CARE MINISTRY TRAINING AT CTCA: *Cancer Treatment Centers of America (CTCA) Tulsa offered its "Our Journey of Hope" program to provide training in cancer care ministry for pastors and church leaders from around the Tulsa area and region Jan. 16. Training for this national CTCA program was at CTCA's Tulsa hospital with opening remarks from national OJOH program leader Percy McCray, testimonials and training sessions. Focus topics included "The value of cancer care ministry," "The spiritual, emotional and social effects of cancer," and "A clinical overview, general types of cancer and treatment."*

CTCA and Aetna Sign Agreement to Expand Care

Cancer Treatment Centers of America (CTCA) Tulsa has signed an agreement with Aetna, making it a contracted oncology care provider. Since Feb. 1, many Aetna commercial members can select CTCA Tulsa as an in-network facility for their cancer care.

"Our new agreement with Aetna in Tulsa reflects CTCA's dedication to provide greater patient access to our exceptional physicians, high-quality services and value-based, patient-centered cancer care," says CTCA President and CEO Pat A. Basu, MD, MBA. "We thank Aetna for this partnership, and we look forward to growing our relationship nationwide."

This agreement adds to contracts already in place at CTCA Tulsa with Cigna and HealthChoice and allows CTCA to expand its footprint of in-network care delivery to patients and families in need of expert cancer care.

"Patients want and deserve choice and options in health care, and certainly when making decisions about cancer care," says Dana Haynie, President, CTCA Tulsa. "The addition of Aetna as a contracted insurance provider will allow Aetna enrollees access to the high-quality clinical care and patient empowerment that are the very hallmarks of CTCA."

BCBS Awards Grant to OSU Med for Addiction, Pain Mgt.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma (BCBSOK) has awarded a community health investment grant of \$250,000 to Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences' Addiction Medicine Specialty Clinic to address the public health concerns of addiction and mental health in Oklahoma by improving access to behavioral health care.

The OSU Addiction Medicine Specialty Clinic is a Tulsa-based outpatient clinic offering comprehensive treatment including individualized, evidence-based substance use disorder treatment, medication-assisted treatment and mental health services. The clinic is a member of the Hazelden Betty Ford Patient Care Network. The support from BCBSOK will be used to research the effectiveness of telemedicine services for treating addiction.

"We admire Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma's leadership in expanding access to addiction treatment services. This major investment will allow us to reach more Oklahomans who are struggling with addiction and who would benefit immensely from the expertise at OSU Medicine. We appreciate our continued partnership with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma," said Dr. Kayse Shrum, president of OSU Center for Health Sciences and dean of the OSU College of Osteopathic Medicine."

Supporting in and partnering with like-minded organizations like OSU Center for Health Sciences on community health initiatives builds on BCBSOK's legacy of supporting local communities and helping families and individuals thrive. Through these efforts, BCBSOK aims to help improve the lives of people in Oklahoma's communities by removing barriers and addressing social factors that affect their health and well-being.

"We are investing in solutions to reduce cost of care and improve health outcomes in Oklahoma," said Joseph R. Cunningham, M.D., president of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma. "We have been providing health insurance in Oklahoma for nearly 80 years and its part of our mission to help our members as well as our communities. It aligns with our purpose: To Do Everything In Our Power To Stand With Our Members In Sickness And In Health"

The Addiction Medicine Specialty Clinic is part of the National Center for Wellness & Recovery (NCWR) at OSU Medicine. The NCWR provides comprehensive care for those suffering from addiction while advancing treatment through education, research and policy. For more information about the OSU Addiction Medicine Specialty Clinic, call 918-561-1890.

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EDUCATION

Renovations Underway at TCC West Campus For the New Hardesty Student Success Center

Construction is underway on the new Hardesty Student Success Center at the Tulsa Community College West Campus. The new facility, once completed inside the Information Commons Building, will revolutionize the student experience, officials say.

The new Student Success Center provides integrated student support services with a one-stop philosophy designed to remove barriers from application to college through graduation. The facility was funded with a \$1 million gift from the Hardesty Family Foundation as part of the \$20 million Clearing the Pathway: The Campaign for Completion.

"It takes leaders in our community willing to invest in our students for us all to move the needle on

college completion. Investments like this one can and will have a transformative effect on our students," said TCC President and CEO Leigh B. Goodson, Ph.D.

Goodson, TCC Regent Chair Sam Combs and Hardesty Family Foundation representatives took part in breaking down a ceremonial wall to symbolize removing barriers.

"TCC plays a major role in training and educating our community. If we expect the Tulsa area to continue to grow, we need to ensure we have a properly educated workforce," said Michelle Hardesty, Hardesty Family Foundation Executive Director. "This is about leveraging what we have to improve our community and we are thrilled to partner with TCC."

The college opened the first

Student Success Center at the Southeast Campus in August 2019 with the help of the Vision Tulsa package approved by voters. The remaining three are funded by private dollars raised through TCC's \$20 million Clearing the Pathway: The Campaign for Completion, one of the most successful community college fundraising campaigns in the nation. The Campaign for Completion is designed to remove financial, navigational and physical barriers to a student's success and graduation.

"We have invested those private dollars in ways that most directly benefit our students – to ensure they graduate and move into the workforce or transfer to a four-year university," Goodson said. "We can't do this alone and the



GTR Media Group photo

CLEARING THE PATHWAY: Happy to get construction underway at the TCC West Campus are, from left, Leigh Goodson, TCC President & CEO; Sam Combs, TCC Regent Chair; Dana Wilkes, Hardesty Family Foundation Program Manager; Michelle Hardesty, Hardesty Family Foundation Executive Director; and Amie Trammell, TCC student.

community is extremely generous in their engagement and financial support for reimagining higher education."

The Hardesty Student Success Center on the TCC West Campus is expected to be completed by August.

OSU-Tulsa Emphasizes Outreach with New Asst. V. P.

OSU-Tulsa has named Emonica "Nekki" Reagan-Neeley as the new assistant vice president for community engagement and student service to highlight the importance of relationship building between the university and its neighbors. Reagan-Neeley has been working on campus for a total of 27 years, and has spent much of that time as the face of OSU-Tulsa's outreach efforts.

Reagan-Neeley grew up in north Tulsa, went to Booker T. Washington High School and is familiar with families and faces across Greenwood.

According to Reagan-Neeley, it's important for the university to

consider the history, along with the cultural and socio-economic realities of today. "Community outreach allows us to assess, address and create opportunities for continuous learning and growth," she says.

OSU-Tulsa President Pamela Fry made service to the community one of her top priorities since taking office and knew Reagan-Neeley was an obvious fit for this role.

"We need to be a positive force in the community," Fry said. "Nekki embodies that value. I can't think of a more natural champion for both the university and our neighbors than her."

Reagan-Neeley has represented the university for years on boards

like the Greenwood Cultural Center and the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration Society.

As an assistant vice president, Reagan-Neeley wants to develop more impactful projects like the recent Ellis Walker Woods Memorial for the university. One of the first moves Reagan-Neeley plans to make in her new position is to form a community action team to plan activities to give back to Greenwood and what it represents.

"The community is going to see more of us," she said. "Whether that's north, east, south or west, they have to know we are here. We are neighbors and we want to be a part of the growth process."



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OSU TULSA

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Dreaming big and helping students gain the skills needed to get there is at the heart of Tulsa Tech's mission.

Each school year we see new faces walking through our doors, ready to learn a skill to set them up for a lifetime of success. Our alumni are no different, but for Tarell Nunley, his success is truly taking him out of this world.

"I have always looked to the sky and wondered what is out there," Nunley said. "Knowing I am working on that path is a great reward."

Nunley is a graduate of the aviation maintenance program on the Riverside Campus. After years of working with local aircraft companies, he is now part of a groundbreaking company, Infinite Composites Technologies (ICT).

"When I got hired, my operations and technical experience with the engineer documents fit their needs," Nunley commented. "As the facility manager, it was my job to get everything up to aerospace standards."

The small shop tucked away in an industrial court in south Tulsa looks ordinary from the outside. However, on the inside it is anything but ordinary. The company is one of only approximately 350 small businesses nationwide to get a large NASA grant, and only the

10th company in Oklahoma's history to secure the award.

"We are trying to develop a first all-composite cryogenic pressure vessel," Nunley boasted. "NASA gave us a contract to send up some materials to test the effects of galactic cosmic rays."

The study means bottles made right here in Tulsa will travel to the International Space Station for testing. Nunley and the team at ICT want to see how the harsh environment in space impacts their product.

With fewer than a dozen employees, it's an all hands on deck operation, and Nunley says it was his Tulsa Tech training that helped set him on this path.

"The biggest thing I liked about Tulsa Tech was that it was all hands-on," Nunley said. "When I compare Tulsa Tech to other schools with the same program, it is night and day. Not only can you build an engine, you can test it at Tech."

The 2018 report by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics shows jobs in aviation maintenance are growing. That means over the next decade graduates will be able to fill thousands of new jobs. The same report also states that employers want candidates with the technical training and certificates that students earn while attending Tulsa Tech.

Nunley tells a story of knowing

News From Tulsa Tech



By DR. STEVE TIGER
Superintendent



TO INFINITY AND BEYOND: Tulsa Tech alum Tarell Nunley holds a composite bottle as Infinite Composites Technologies of Tulsa prepares to test its product against galactic cosmic rays.

everything he had worked for was worth it.

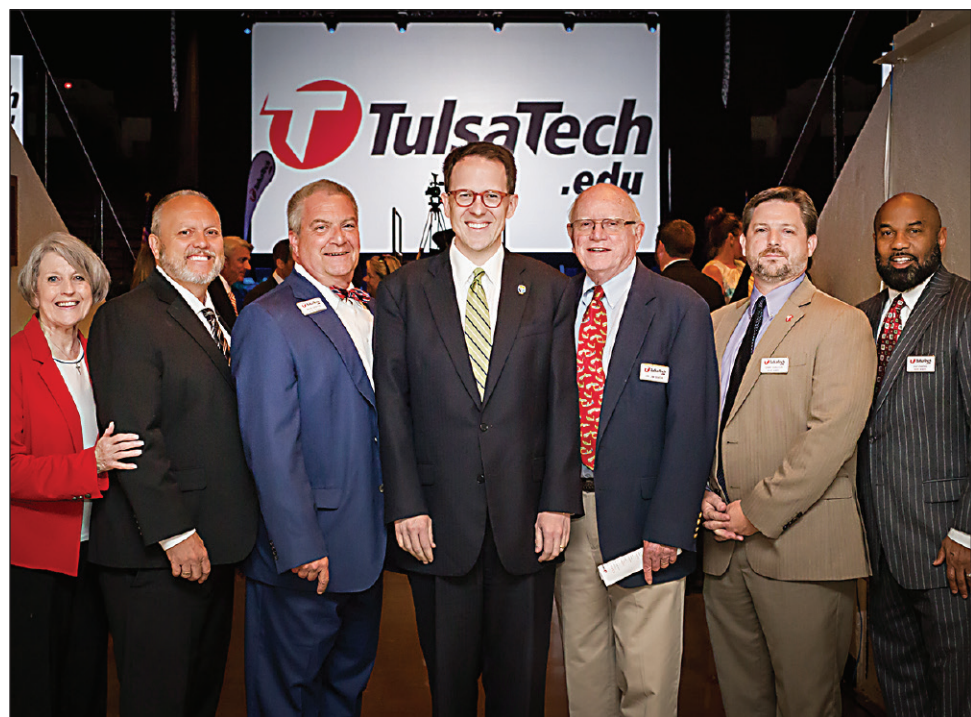
"My FAA certification test to get my A&P license was easy," Nunley said. "The way the program is set up, I just aced it. Passing that test right before I walked for graduation was the moment I realized

that Tulsa Tech was the best decision I have ever made."

Nunley says he is not done striving to be better, he is now working on getting a doctorate in chemistry and says one day he hopes to join the supplies he helped to build and explore the vast reaches of space.

If you're currently looking for exciting classes for high school and adult students, quality corporate training, or a challenging new career, Tulsa Tech invites you to visit today. For more information, call 918-828-5000 or visit us online at tulsatech.edu.

TULSA TECH HONORS SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS



January is annually School Board Recognition Month and an opportunity for local schools and communities to honor Oklahoma's more than 2,700 elected school board members for their dedication to children and schools. From left, with Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum in center, are Sharon Whelpley, Rick Kibbe, Mark Griffin, Dr. Jim Baker, Danny Hancock and Rev. Ray Owens, Ph.D. Not pictured is David Charney.

"Providing our community with exceptional career and technical education opportunities is one of the most important investments we can make," said Dr. Steve Tiger, CEO and Superintendent of Tulsa Tech. "We're very proud of our district's

accomplishments, and School Board Recognition Month is a time to say thank you to our elected board members for their passion, commitment and support of our mission, "educating people for success in the workplace."

At Tulsa Tech, school board members develop policies and make tough decisions on complex educational and social issues impacting the district, leading business partners, community leaders and other constituents. They bear responsibility for nearly 6,000 full-time students, over 12,000 part-time evening and weekend students, over 750 corporate training clients, and over 600 employees across six campuses.

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BIXBY NEWS

Bixby Metro Chamber Announces Outstanding Community Leaders and 2020 Board of Directors

For 73 years, the Bixby Metro Chamber has provided leadership in improving the business environment by offering a wide variety of programs and services to add value for members and spear-

head initiatives that help grow the Bixby community.

On Jan. 25, The Bixby Metro Chamber announced the 2020 board of directors and recognized outstanding community leaders at the Annual Chamber Awards Gala presented by Two Men & A Truck at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino.

The 2020 Board of Directors are: Chair – John Karr, AFLAC & 1907 Barbecue; Vice Chair – Justin Langston, Two Men & A Truck; Vice Chair – Jamie Miller, J. Miller Law Firm; Treasurer – Nick Hoffmann, Hoffmann Wealth Management; Secretary – Dr. Brandon Wilbanks, Wilbanks Chiropractic; Immediate Past Chair – Elizabeth King, Elizabeth King Consulting

Directors: Robin Decatur, Farmers Insurance; Bennett Geister, Hillcrest Hospital South; Laurie Hendrickson, BTC Broadband; Jason Koebele, Daily Family YMCA; Chuck Mitchell, Oklahoma Gas & Electric; Chris Phillips, Oklahoma Natural Gas; and Kristi Spaethe, The People Perspective.

Leadership Bixby Interns: Sierra Lancaster, TTCU Federal Credit Union; Tara Phillips, Fieldhouse Gear.



Courtesy Elizabeth King Consulting

2020 BIXBY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2019 Chamber Awards Winners: Small Business of the Year – Treys Bar & Grill; Large Business of the Year - BTC Broadband; Women Owned Business of the Year – Jamie Miller, J. Miller Law Firm; Entrepreneur of the Year – John Karr & Justin Carroll, 1907 Barbecue; Volunteer of the Year – Justin Langston, Two Men & A Truck; Educator of the Year - Jennifer Phenicie, Bixby Public Schools; Citizen of the Year – Missy Brumley, Bixby Outreach

Center; Chair Award – David Miller, Titan Alarms

Event Sponsors included: Presenting sponsor, Two Men & A Truck; Host sponsor, Hard Rock Hotel & Casino; Premier sponsors, Mabrey Bank and Tulsa Tech; Table sponsors, Arvest Bank, Barracuda Staffing & Consulting, Bixby Public Schools, BTC Broadband, Chinowth & Cohen Realtors, Country Financial – Todd Chapman & Ronnie Lutz, Doc’s Country Mart, Edward Jones – Melissa

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BIXBY SPORTS

Junior Point Guard Kate Bradley is a Force For Young Bixby Spartans Basketball Team

Bixby Girls Enter February with 11-6 Record

By **MIKE MOGUIN**
GTR Sports Writer

Since the age of three, Kate Bradley has been dribbling a basketball. Now she is among the leading scorers for Bixby.

The 5-8 junior point guard comes from a family with roots in the game.

“My grandparents were involved in basketball,” Bradley said. “My grandpa, Russell Bradley, who is 100, played basketball at OSU and coached at Muskogee High School. So he has always been involved with basketball. There’s a lot of inspiration that comes from this.”

Bradley’s parents took both Kate and her brother toward the basketball room when they were young, she said, and they were into other athletic activities too.

“My family is very surrounded by sports,” Bradley said with laughter. “My parents have always taken me to games, they’re always watching it on TV, basically, my whole life.”

Bradley says she’s a very competitive person and that is what she likes about the game.

“I like the competition and dedication it takes,” she said. “It just fuels me and I like coming in every day and having something to strive for.”

Other sports Bradley is involved

with at Bixby are softball and track. She credits the latter as a boost to her basketball skills.

“Track is very much speed and it carries over into basketball quick-ness-wise because you’re moving up and down the court quickly and side to side.”

After a 22-point explosion in a 61-45 win at Bartlesville on Jan. 28, Bradley was averaging 9.5 points, 4.4 rebounds and 3.5 assists per game. She gave credit to her team.

“It really helps when my team might have a good post inside, who knows how to get the ball and kick it back out whenever there was help,” she said. “I had girls who could drive, pull my defender off, leaving me wide open. Having that support with people who can score on their own opens up things for me. So its all like working together and that’s how I get my shots off and finish.”

The Lady Spartans were 11-6 and ranked 11th in the Class 6A girls poll after beating Sand Springs on Jan. 31. The win was their seventh straight after losses to Top 20 teams early in the season.

“I think it was honestly just us getting off to a rough start, because if you look at the teams that we played, we played high competition at the beginning and we are a very young team,” Bradley said. “So coming into that and finding

our groove, gaining more confidence and you can see it carry over into every game. We’re getting better. It was just experience under our own belt.”

Among the losses were games against fellow 6A foes Union, Sapulpa and Booker T. Washington.

“I think one of our main problems in those games was we were panicking and losing focus in the second half,” she said. “Because in most of those games, you look back and we had the lead before losing it in about the third quarter to minor errors, turnovers and just not thinking. We have cut down on our mistakes, sharpened up and gotten a lot better.”

“I think playing Union, Sapulpa and Booker T. again will be our biggest challenges (Bixby gets those three again this month at home). Our goal is to get to state. We have some tough teams in our area and it is going to be difficult coming up,” Bradley said.

With another year left, Bradley looks forward to leading the team next season as well.

“The thing that is really beneficial for me, because this is a young team, we have these girls who are incredible and will come back with a year under their belt. As a senior next year, I’ll continue to be their leader and help them work toward a state championship as the goal,” she said.



KATE BRADLEY

MIKE MOGUIN for Bixby Breeze



Amy Meisner was diagnosed with MS in 1997. For someone who has always danced, MS would seem like the end. But for Amy, it means the start of a new chapter. She’ll never leave the floor, still dances from her wheelchair, and is a great choreographer. Embracing Amy’s undying passion, the National MS Society teamed up with LaTonya Swann to create an entirely new and inspired dance experience through virtual reality. See their experience and find out how you can share yours at WeAreStrongerThanMS.org.

Together We Are Stronger.



SPORTS

Loren Montgomery Has Football's Golden Touch

Bixby Coach Has Led Spartans to Five State Titles in Six Years

By **TERRELL LESTER**
Editor at Large

For years, generations really, Bixby has been celebrated as "The Garden Spot of Oklahoma," a nod to its rich agrarian heritage.

From produce to sod, Bixby exports the better part of itself to the anticipating multitudes.

As the community along the banks of the Arkansas River has grown in size and numbers, so, too, has the list of its chief exports.

Today, thanks to oversee Loren Montgomery, Bixby is better known for its football production than its sod farms.

Over the last six years, Montgomery's high school football teams have won five state championships in Class 6A-II.

Gold balls are growing on trees. Bixby is The Garden Spot of Football.

Visitors once flocked to Bixby in search of tomatoes and cantaloupes. Now, college recruiters flock to Bixby in search of linebackers and wide receivers.

For a century, the fertile soil of the river valley has been hallowed ground for Bixby farming families.

For the last decade, the synthetic turf of Spartan Stadium has been sacred sod for Montgomery devotees.

Since the December coronation of Bixby's undefeated football team, the city has reveled in the

glorification of its two brightest lights. Montgomery has been saluted as unanimous Coach of the Year in Oklahoma football, as determined by the state's two largest newspapers. Wide receiver Brennan Presley has received a scholarship to play at Oklahoma State University and has been crowned Gatorade Football Player of the Year.

These are heady times in Bixby, due in no small part to Loren Montgomery.

He has built a championship football program, a downright dominant football program, in much the image of Jenks, where he drew his first coaching breath.

Certainly, the last six seasons have been Jenks-worthy. Since the OSSAA in 2014 divided Class 6A football teams, creating Class 6A-I and Class 6A-II by enrollment numbers, Bixby has been a superpower.

In 2014 and 2018, Bixby completed 12-1 seasons with celebrations. The 2019 team finished 13-0.

Bixby is riding a 25-game winning streak.

Teams in 2015 and 2016 survived some obstacles along the way and managed to take home gold balls with 9-4 and 10-3 records.

Even with an 8-5 record in 2017, the Bixby brand still managed to shine, reaching the championship game.

In that six-season run, Montgomery's teams were 64-14.

To find Montgomery at this gold-plated level of his profession might be a surprise to many. Indeed, it is a surprise to Montgomery himself.

Unlike the majority of coaches on a hall of fame trajectory, Montgomery did not dream of being a head coach. Or even being a coach at all.

He was an offensive lineman playing at an all-star level at Sand Springs, under Hall of Fame Coach L.D. Bains. He received a scholarship to Northeastern State University.

Still, Montgomery did not consider coaching. He did, however, major in education, partly due to his mother being a career educator. His future, he believed, was in the field of special education.

By the time his eligibility was running out at NSU during his senior year of 2000, Montgomery began to consider coaching.

He planned to teach in the Tulsa area, close to his parents' home in Sand Springs. If he were to coach, he reasoned, he should locate at a school with a successful football program.

For his teaching internship, he landed at Jenks.

Jenks just happened to have that "successful football program."

Fresh off the college campus, Montgomery did not know the Jenks football coach, Allan Trim-



Courtesy photo

CHAMPIONSHIP SMILE: Loren Montgomery has the golden touch when it comes to Bixby football.

ble. Really didn't know much about applying for a coaching spot. But Montgomery had perseverance.

He tried to reach Trimble by telephone. To no avail.

He left messages. Several. Trimble did not return a call.

Reaching Trimble, meeting with Trimble, became a challenge for Montgomery. He wanted a spot on the Trimble team.

"I was going to have him tell me

no before I moved on to the next (job)," Montgomery said.

"I didn't know any better."

He gave it one last try. He drove from Tahlequah to Jenks, unannounced, on the chance of meeting Trimble in his office.

"I just sat outside his office for more than 30 minutes till he showed up," Montgomery said.

Jenks and Trimble had already won four consecutive state cham-

(Continued on page 16)

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Hosted by: from left, Tulsa Public Schools Athletic Director Gil Cloud, local and national TV sportscaster Chris Lincoln.

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John Holcomb Named Oklahoma Sportscaster of the Year

News On 6 Sports Director John Holcomb has been named the 2019 Oklahoma Sportscaster of the Year by the National Sports Media Association (NSMA). This is the fourth time Holcomb has received this honor from the NSMA.

"John is very deserving of this award," said Chuck Maulden, News On 6 Director of Content. "No one in Tulsa covers sports better than John Holcomb. He represents the values that everyone at Griffin Communications embodies - embracing the local community with the best and most relevant content in our state. Local ownership means award-worthy people and content."

This award is given to sportscast-

ers rooted in Oklahoma that have demonstrated outstanding reporting and analysis. Holcomb has previously been named Oklahoma Sportscaster of the Year in 2001, 2002 and 2011.

"I'm humbled to have been given this award," Holcomb said. "It has been a privilege serving the Tulsa community while doing what I love. I want to thank Griffin Communications for allowing and enabling me and my fellow anchors and reporters to cover the news and sports that's most important to our communities."

Holcomb began his KOTV career in 1995 and has been on Tulsa television screens for two decades. After graduating from Oklahoma Baptist University, he began

his career in sports journalism working at radio and television stations across the state. He has broad experience in the Oklahoma sports industry, serving from sports director and anchor to radio color analyst for the OSU football team for 15 seasons and the OSU men's basketball team for 13 seasons. Holcomb's coverage on the OSU Cowboys can be heard on the Cowboy Sports Network.

He can be seen on News On 6 every weeknight at 6 and 10 p.m., delivering stats and reports to sports fans. He also co-hosts "Oklahoma Sports Blitz," covering Oklahoma sports, and anchors "Friday Football Blitz," covering local Tulsa high school football teams.

When Holcomb isn't covering



JOHN HOLCOMB

Courtesy photo

sports, he can be found enjoying basketball, tennis or golf with his wife, Jenna and daughters, Melody and Maggie.

TPS Inducts 13 Into 2020 Hall of Fame Class

A total of 13 names have been inducted into the eighth class of Tulsa Public Schools Athletics Hall of Fame. The event was held January 30 during a banquet at the DoubleTree Tulsa at Warren Place. All nine TPS public schools are represented in the Class of 2020, announced by Gil Cloud, TPS Director of Athletics.

The honorees include Jim Benien, Central, 1968; Lisa Barry Berg, Edison, 1974; Ebi Ere, McLain, 1999; Emmett Hahn, Webster, 1958; Wally Knapp, Rogers, 1949; Lawrence Lane, Central, 1966; Jim Linn, Hale, 1964; Emmit J. McHenry, Washington, 1962; Vincent Orange, Webster, Jason Parker, Memorial, 2000; Jim Shields, Coach; Joe Shoulders, East Central, 1943; and Bobby Jack Stuart, Rogers, 1944.



HONOREE: TPS Hall of Fame member Jason Parker, center, with the evening's Master of Ceremonies Chris Lincoln, left, and Parker's University of Tulsa Head Coach John Phillips. Parker is now Director of Athletics for Muskogee Public Schools.



DISTINGUISHED ARRAY: Tulsa Public Schools Director of Athletics Gil Cloud welcomes the attendees at the TPS Hall of Fame event at the DoubleTree Tulsa at Warren Place January 30.

Victory Christian's Ruth Udomouh Signs with OSU

By **MIKE MOGUIN**
GTR Sports Writer

One visit to Oklahoma State and Ruth Udomouh knew that's where she needed to be to play college basketball.

The team chemistry stood out to the 6-foot Victory Christian senior guard. She signed with the Cowgirls in November.

"They're really like a family and it's close to home," Udomouh said. "And it's a really good basketball program. I enjoyed the visit out there. I felt like it was the right place for me."

Udomouh chose OSU over Oral Roberts. Other schools had also sought her out, she said, but they didn't offer.

Udomouh has gotten to know the coaches and players in Stillwater as well.

"They're really fun and nice," Udomouh said. "They want the



MIKE MOGUIN for GTR Newspapers
RUTH UDOMOUH

best for you and they care about you as a person too and not just as a player."

The excitement of winning and making plays is what draws this

Lady Conqueror to the game. Playing together with unity with heart out on the court, she said, makes the game fun.

Udomouh's favorite NBA team is the Los Angeles Lakers and she is a fan of LeBron James.

"He's a good player," she said.

For now, Udomouh is hoping to help Victory win a state championship. She has already tasted a state title three times as a member of the volleyball team.

"Winning it (in 2017) was the first time in history here," she said. "It was a great experience for me and my team."

Having played volleyball benefits Udomouh with her basketball skills, as well as vice versa.

"I think volleyball helps me more in my jumping. It helps me be more explosive on the basketball court," she said. "Basketball helps with how I hit in volleyball because you are being aggressive

on the court. Getting rebounds in basketball also helps by strengthening you to hit the ball in volleyball."

As of Jan. 30, Victory was 13-3 overall and ranked No. 5 in the Class 4A girls poll.

In a 46-27 win over Cascia Hall on Jan. 21, she was pleased with her performance but did indicate the team still needs to improve in some areas.

"We were sharing the ball a lot (in the game against Cascia Hall). In the beginning we had a few turnovers, which we are working on to get better at. But, we still have a lot of work to do," Udomouh said. However, she can see her team win a state championship.

"We have a lot of growing to do these next few weeks. We have 'til the playoffs. Our goal is to make it to the state tournament and hopefully win a state title," Udomouh said.



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Coach Montgomery Gives Credit to Allan Trimble

(Continued from page 14)

pionships. Montgomery wanted to pair his teaching internship with a coaching internship.

"I said I will make coffee, I will be a fly on the wall. I just want to learn," Montgomery said.

Trimble was impressed. He offered Montgomery a position right on the spot.

It was the beginning of a special connection. Jenks won the next two state championships in Class 6A.

"I thought coaching was easy," Montgomery said, laughing. "We didn't lose a game those first two years I was at Jenks."

"He treated me just like an assistant coach."

And he was eventually hired as an assistant coach, earning more responsibilities each year. In his 10th season, 2009, Montgomery was handed the added responsibility of interim head coach when Trimble drew an OSSAA suspension.

In that role, Montgomery responded with a 9-1 record, taking Jenks to the state finals.

"I had the perfect job at Jenks," he said. "I wasn't looking to leave. I'd never applied for another job. I was hired to teach in the same place where I did my internship."

Following the 2009 season, before Trimble was reinstated for 2010, Montgomery explored the possibility of moving. Pat McGrew was resigning after 11 seasons as head coach at Bixby.

Montgomery scored an interview for the position, but it was more like he was asking all the questions.

He wanted to know if Bixby would commit the resources for a first-class weight room, for additional coaches. "A lot of the things that we had built into our program at Jenks," he said.

The answers were obvious. Bixby had already revamped its football facilities, with turf, expanded press box, endzone office space.

Montgomery was offered the job. And in August 2010, he was preparing for his first season as a head coach, a full decade after taking a seat at the Allan Trimble table.

Under McGrew, Bixby had been performing at an elite level in Class 5A, with



Courtesy photo

ALLAN TRIMBLE

three state runner-up finishes in its last five seasons. For 2010, Bixby was headed into Class 6A due to the city's rapid population growth.

Montgomery said that his first four years at Bixby "were rough." His teams qualified for the playoffs in his first two seasons, but not in the next two. His four-year debut record was 18-24.

Trimble always was just a telephone call away.

Montgomery recalled one revealing conversation as he was facing a situation "that I was extremely unhappy about."

Trimble responded: "Well, you've got two choices. You can come back to work for me, or you can go back in on Monday and get your plow in the ground. What's it going to be?"

Montgomery chose the latter option. He put his "plow in the ground," met with his staff and refocused his energies. It was a turning point for him, for his program.

"We knew we had some really great kids coming back for the '14 year," he said. "And that's when 6A was splitting."

"We had a whole lot of players that



Courtesy photo

GOLDEN DISPLAY: A golden display in the Bixby fieldhouse readily illustrates the Loren Montgomery run of success over the last six seasons.

bought into what we were selling as far as the way we train year 'round, the way we practice, the way we attack our summers," he said. "They could see the light at the end of the tunnel."

And, at the end of that tunnel, after a 12-1 finish, the light was shining on Bixby's first football state championship.

It was the beginning of the harvest.

Montgomery acknowledged the contributions of his former boss who died in December 2019.

"Coach Trimble was so influential in what we do," Montgomery said. "That is where I started. That is where I cut my teeth. From the coaching perspective, that is all I know."

"From the way our practices are structured, from the way that I try to coach our coaches."

"Just the way he developed players. He was such a big believer in strength and conditioning, and developing those program kids before it was ever a trendy or cool thing to do."

"A lot of coaches give lip service to lifting weights as important. Strength and conditioning is important. Coach Trimble was, I think, a pioneer in that area."

At Bixby, Montgomery has a full-time strength coach.

"It is the most important thing we do," he said, matter-of-factly. "I think the way we strength-train and develop players, lift our kids year 'round, is the cornerstone of our program."

And, as head coach, as overseer of the football program, Montgomery is chief practitioner. "I'm in there working with the guys," he said.

At 41, Montgomery is fit and trim, a testament to his weight commitment.

He is not the laid-back type. He is straight-ahead serious. Demanding. Determined.

"I prefer structure," he said. "When we walk into the weight room, I want to see things going in a certain way, and a certain level of intensity."

"I like things organized. You'll see that in practice. You'll see our practices are extremely well run and organized and coaches coaching hard."

"I understand that a little bit about myself, that I'm probably not as much of a

player's coach. So, I try to have some guys on staff that are those guys. You can't have all 10 of you be Loren Montgomerys."

"I'm pretty serious. I don't think I'm a big yeller. Used to be. I've learned there's a better way to get your point across," he said.

"I think I've become a little bit more relaxed on some things, maybe now that I've had my own kids. I think that changes your perspective. Also, being a head coach changes your perspective."

Montgomery and his wife, Jessie, have two children, son Guy and daughter Sloane.

For the last five years, Montgomery has been Dean of Students at Bixby's Ninth-Grade Center.

Coaching has been good for Montgomery.

"In order for a football program to be successful, you've got to have commitment from the community and administration, to build facilities like (we have), to provide the weight room that we need to be successful."

"And then you have to have coaches that believe and are willing to work their tail off and do things over and over and over the right way, and to care about kids, and build relationships with kids every day."

"It's time-consuming. It's stressful. But it's a group effort."

Together, they face the expectations of entering a football season as a defending champion.

"To be honest, I think it increases the pressure," he said, talking about the challenge of remaining on top.

"We absolutely cannot become complacent or let our guard down. We have to ask, how are we going to make our program better this year."

"It almost creates just a little bit more anxiety on how we're going to build on it. We can't let our coaches or players become complacent in the way we train."

With five championships in six years, with an atmosphere veiled in gold, Montgomery and Bixby do not appear to be negligent.

"I am very lucky," he said. "I recognize that."

"But you've got to have luck. You've got to get breaks."



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Meridia Building: A Successful Massive Remodel

The Meridia building at the north west corner of 6th Street and Boston Avenue is a prime example of a massive remodel with a successful outcome. This building site began its development in early 1920's in Tulsa as a parking lot owned by my grandfather, C. C. Cole. In the late 1920's, Cole sold the site to a developer who put up a non-descript nine story office building. We know little about its exterior appearance. We can assume its perimeter walls were the brick masonry common for the period with regularly spaced windows utilizing its street corner exposure. We know the building has a structural concrete frame. We also know it abuts a small two-story building on the north, still owned by the Cole fam-

On Architecture



By ROGER COFFEY, AIA

ily which allows some windows on the north for its upper floors. The building's 150-foot depth ends at a service alley on the west. Sometime in the mid 1950's, in Tulsa's last 20th Century downtown boom years, the building received a new light bronze aluminum curtain wall skin. Perhaps the owners hoped a new look would keep tenants in the building as downtown office occupancy dwindled. The building, with its name changed to the Enterprise Building, gradually emptied. It remained empty for over 20 years. Enter River City Development, owned by the Jim Hawkins Family. As downtown Tulsa began making an economic comeback, the time was ripe for conversion to apartments, and in 2015 RCD bought the building. In 2017, the Meridia opened with 93 apartment units and a ground floor which houses three food service estab-

lishments and soon a Dollar General convenience store. What is really interesting about the Meridia is the attention given to energy and environmental design. It is the first LEED-certified high-rise apartment building in Oklahoma. Innovative features include ultra-high efficiency heating and cooling systems, heavily insulated walls, water-saving plumbing fixtures, energy saving light fixtures, and argon gas-insulated windows. RCD acted as the developer, the general contractor, and now the building owner-operator. The east and south elevations feature recessed balconies each of which occupy a full column bay. Facing these in the recess are four panels of floor-to-ceiling glass. The balconies are augmented by exposing some of the concrete structural frame. The balcony railings are glass with a light aluminum support frame and a perforated metal feature panel at one end. Elsewhere, the new building skin features off-white flat metal panels. RCD has not publicized the current occupancy level of the Meridia, but after almost three years in the marketplace, best guess is that its high.



GTR Media Group photo

IMPRESSIVE PROJECT: *The Meridia building in downtown Tulsa is one of the most impressive downtown apartment projects in the nation with many energy and environmental highlights.*

Bird & Bottle Coming on Two Years in Midtown Location

LOCAL DINING

By BLAKE AUSTYN
Contributing Writer

Bird & Bottle, 3324 E. 31st St., opened nearly two years ago, in March 2018, in the Ranch Acres shopping center at 31st Street and Harvard Avenue.

The fresh-ingredient American eatery is one of three endeavors by the Three Sirens Restaurant Group, which also owns the Bramble Breakfast and Bar and Celebrity Restaurant.

Bird & Bottle is tucked in the corner of the center in the same location as the historic St. Michael's Alley, Rick's Cafe Americain, which closed in 2011, and The Alley Gastropub, which closed in 2014.

It has a unique curbside appeal, with outdoor seating nestled into its triangle-shaped space, and outdoor lights strung for added ambiance.

Upon entering, patrons are greeted with a square bar, a fairly open kitchen and high-table seating in a cozy front room with a wall of windows; further seating is found in the adjoining dining room.

According to our server and cocktail creator Ryan, Bird & Bot-

tle's menu features diverse options of tried-and-true, popular dishes with something for every kind of taste bud.

We dined during happy hour, so we took extra advantage of some of the dishes. Happy hour runs every day except for Sunday, 3-6 p.m., and offers half-priced Small Plates and Meat & Cheese items.

We chose Perogies from the Small Plates menu and Duck Sausage, Jalapeño Cheddar Pork, and Goat Cheese from the Meat & Cheese selection.

Our plate came with three Perogies stuffed with potato, jalapeño, sausage, cabbage and cheese. I admit I did not detect the jalapeño, but the flavors combined to create a mild flavor that was light and easy to eat. The star of the dish, however, was the creme fraiche that offered a bright, citrus flavor that completely elevated the dish. It made us want more.

The meats and cheeses that we ordered came on a wooden board with a side of house-made mixed berry jam. The jam's sweetness paired particularly well with the breaded Duck Sausage, which had a mild, slightly gamey flavor but without the grease that often comes with duck. The Jalapeño Cheddar Pork had a nice flavor with a subtle amount of spice.

Based on our meat choices, Ryan suggested Goat Cheese as an easy



Photos by BLAKE AUSTYN for GTR Newspapers

VEGETABLE FLATBREAD: *Bird & Bottle offers a selection of flatbreads, including the Vegetable & Ricotta Flatbread, with rosemary mushroom, roasted tomato, artichoke, arugula salad, ricotta, pesto and fried garlic.*

palate cleanser, and it was. For our entrees, we chose the Vegetable & Ricotta Flatbread and the Brick Chicken.

We were thrilled with the generous amount of fresh arugula on top of the flatbread and the size of the flatbread. It is more than enough for one person.

The arugula brought a splendid lightness to the rosemary mushrooms, roasted tomato and artichoke. I detected more of the flatbread's additional ingredients



COMFORTABLE AMBIANCE: *Upon entering Bird & Bottle, patrons are greeted with a square bar, a fairly open kitchen and high top seating in a cozy front room with a wall of windows; further seating is found in the adjoining dining room..*

of ricotta, pesto and garlic when I was finishing the flatbread the next day as leftovers at home.

The Brick Chicken came as two grilled, bone-in pieces set atop lemon herb ricotta gnocchi. The chicken had a subtle flavor, with the gnocchi serving as a mild compliment.

Bird & Bottle is open every day of the week. Visit birdandbottle.tulsa.com or call 918.895.6468 for more information and to make reservations.



NOSTALGIC LOCATION: *Bird & Bottle has established itself as a mainstay since opening nearly two years ago at 3324 E. 31st St., the former location of the historic St. Michael's Alley, Rick's Cafe Americain, which closed in 2011, and The Alley Gastropub, which closed in 2014.*

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THE ECONOMY

Tulsa Regional Chamber Inaugurates Roger Ramseyer of Cox as 2020 Chair

Awards Presented to Chamber Partners at Annual Meeting

At its Annual Meeting in January, the Tulsa Regional Chamber inaugurated Roger Ramseyer, vice president and Tulsa market leader for Cox Communications, as the 2020 chair of its Board of Directors.

Nearly 1,500 attendees were on hand as Ramseyer outlined his five strategic focus points for the organization in 2020: diversity, equity and inclusion; regional branding; direct flights; small business support; and education.

"It is a great time to be a Tulsan, and an Oklahoman," Ramseyer said during his inaugural speech. "But we must continue to innovate and evolve to ensure sustained growth and long-term economic prosperity in Tulsa."

Ramseyer succeeds outgoing chair David Stratton, who reflected on the Chamber's efforts in 2019 around degrees, workforce development, downtown development, direct flights and diversity.

"I cannot help but be proud of how much — as a region — we have really gone places this past year," said Stratton. "And to be clear, we have moved collectively as a region thanks to everyone's efforts

and commitment."

Also at the Annual Meeting, Stratton and Chamber President and CEO Mike Neal presented awards to the Chamber's most outstanding partners in 2019:

- Economic Development Partner of the Year: Sid McAnnally, ONE Gas
- Regional Tourism Partners of the Year: Wendy Drummond, Drummond Communications, and Kirk Hays, Arvest Bank
- Government Affairs Partner of the Year: Gordy Guest, Cyn-tergy
- Community Development Partner of the Year: Hannibal Johnson
- Regional Partner of the Year: Cherokee Nation
- Legislative Partner of the Year: Sen. Roger Thompson

About the Tulsa Regional Chamber

Representing more than 2,150 member organizations and more than 178,000 workers, the Tulsa Regional Chamber is the primary driver of regional and individual prosperity in northeast Oklahoma.



Photo by RIP STEEL

ANNUAL MEETING: Nearly 1,500 people attended the Tulsa Regional Chamber's Annual Meeting in January, which was held at the Cox Business Center in downtown Tulsa. On the screen and at the lectern is the 2020 Chair, Roger Ramseyer.

The Chamber develops and delivers a wide variety of programs and services designed to bolster and benefit Tulsa-area businesses of all shapes and sizes, from large corporations to small startups. For more than 115 years, it has served as an integral part of what makes the Tulsa region a great place to live, work and play. As epitomized by the Chamber tagline — "Your Partner in Prosperity" — every strategy, program and service of the Chamber is created specifically to increase prosperity.



GTR Media Group photo

SUCCESSFUL EVENT: This year's Tulsa Boat, Sport and Travel Show was another successful and well attended event. The show, held Jan. 27-Feb. 2, unveiled 2020 model boats, RVs and thousands of other outdoor accessories at River Spirit Expo at Expo Square.

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Stava Building Receives Multiple Awards

Stava Building of Tulsa was honored with multiple "Build Oklahoma" awards from the Associated General Contractors of Oklahoma (AGCOK) during its annual awards ceremony held on Jan. 11. The awards were received for their Jackie Cooper Imports Mercedes Benz and Porsche Renovations, as well as the 111 Lofts in Downtown Tulsa for Price Family Properties.

Each year AGCOK presents "Build Oklahoma" Awards to acknowledge projects considered exceptional throughout the state. Awards are only given to one contractor in the categories of Commercial, Industrial, Education, Healthcare, Institutional, Historic and Specialty, and are further categorized on the project dollar amount. With hundreds of projects completed each year, it is considered a great honor to receive one of these meaningful awards.

Additionally, Stava was recog-

nized as a "Best of the Best" award recipient for 111 Lofts. AGCOK created this award to further recognize a "Build Oklahoma Award" winner that was involved with a true stand-out project worthy of additional recognition. This is only the second year for this honor to be given, and Stava projects have won both years. "Being recognized in this category is something special but receiving the honor two years in a row is truly outstanding!" said Curt Hellen, President of Stava Building. "Working for Price Family Properties on 111 Lofts has been an honor for me and the entire Stava team."

The recently completed Mercedes Benz and Porsche renovation projects were on the Jackie Cooper campus at 91st Street and Memorial Drive. To keep their facility completely operational with limited disruption to their customer experience, this complex

project was split into five phases to renovate over 71,000 square feet. The new space includes high-end finishes, upscale lighting, and custom displays tailored specifically for Mercedes Benz and Porsche.

The 111 Lofts (said as One Eleven) is a Historic Rehabilitation project updating a 1920's Art Deco downtown Tulsa office tower, into modern luxury apartments. Residents and guests walk into the buildings grand entrance to see a restored 12-story atrium, new skylight, custom Art Deco railing panels, decorative brass cabling installation covering all 12 stories of the atrium, modern oak paneling, and custom woven Art Deco carpet. Each loft includes high-end designer finishes and luxury amenities throughout.

Stava Building is a locally owned and operated commercial construction company in Tulsa,

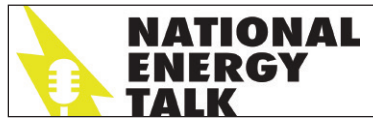


STAVA LEADERS: The Stava Building executive staff includes, from left, President Curt Hellen, Vice President LouAnn Smith and Founder John Stava

with core services including Construction Management, General Construction and Design-Build. Founded in 1988, Stava has been

involved with notable projects in downtown Tulsa, as well as throughout the State of Oklahoma and beyond.

Women are Playing Vital Roles in Energy



In 2007 I chaired four energy events for the centennial celebra-

tion of Oklahoma's statehood. The events were a salute to the past, present, future, and women in energy. In the early days, it was known as a men's energy industry. Over the years, especially in most recent years, women have played an important role in the success of a vital energy industry. At the Salute to Women in Energy in 2007, which was held in Tulsa, Oklahoma, we



By MARK A. STANSBERRY

had a room full of women who had made a major impact on our American energy industry. Those honored at the 2007 event included June Brooks, Christine Hansen, Liz Fagen, and Denise Bode. At the event, Christine Hansen, executive director of the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission (IOGCC), served as the luncheon keynote speaker. Prior to becoming executive director of the IOGCC, Hansen was in private law practice and had been a senior executive officer with two

large utility companies. The salute honored many other women in the fields of landmen, geologists, engineers, geophysicists, oil and gas attorneys, accountants, and other areas.

In this column, I highlight three women, for example, out of so many that are currently involved in the energy industry:

Linda Nichols currently serves as the Genave King Rogers Dean of the Collins College of Business at the University of Tulsa. Prior to becoming Dean, Linda served as Director of the School of Energy Economics, Policy and Commerce as well as the A. Charles Funai Chaired Professor in Business. Linda is recognized as a worldwide expert in the field of financial accounting and reporting for the oil and gas industry. She continues to be heavily involved with the oil industry through consulting and providing training for oil companies across the globe as well as serving as an expert witness in some energy-related disputes.

Jennifer M. Grigsby joined As-



LINDA NICHOLS

cent in 2015 as Executive Vice President - Chief Financial Officer. She previously worked at Chesapeake Energy Corp. for 19 years in management roles including her most recent positions as Senior Vice President, Corporate and Strategic Planning and Senior Vice President, Treasurer and Corporate Secretary. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from Oklahoma State University and a Masters of Business Administration with an emphasis in finance from Oklahoma City University. Jennifer is a Certified Public Accountant and Chartered Global Management Accountant.

Patrice Douglas counsels banks, energy companies and utilities on legal, regulatory and compliance matters. She has extensive experience in both community banking



JENNIFER M. GRIGSBY

and energy industry. As a former Oklahoma corporation commissioner, she gained expertise in the industries of energy, public utilities and telecommunications because the Oklahoma Corporation Commission is the chief regulatory body for these industries. She has served on both public and private corporate boards. Patrice was presented the 2013 Energy Visionary Award in Tulsa for her outstanding service to the energy industry.

Women continue to play such an important role in the energy industry. We salute all the contributions of those past and present who have made an impact on the energy industry.

America needs America's energy, and America needs women in energy!



PATRICE DOUGLAS

Mark A. Stansberry is Chairman of the GTD Group, an award winning author and Energy Advocate. Visit Facebook: National Energy Talk.

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Tulsa Regional Tourism Hires Nationally Known Sports Professionals

Tulsa Regional Tourism, a division of the Tulsa Regional Chamber, recently welcomed to its staff two nationally known sports professionals. Ashleigh Bachert, previously with the Durham Sports Commission, joined Tulsa Regional Tourism as vice president of sales. Joel Koester, previously with the Chicago Southland Convention and Visitors Bureau, joined as its new director of sports sales.



ASHLEIGH BACHERT

"I'm thrilled to have Ashleigh and Joel join the team, and I look forward to them bringing their incredible skill sets to Tulsa," says Ray Hoyt, president of Tulsa Regional Tourism. "They'll help us not only implement big ideas, but also recruit new business that best fits our growing, world-class city."



JOEL KOESTER

Bachert comes to Tulsa from the Durham Sports Commission, where she had been executive director since 2017. During her tenure, she doubled sports tourism's economic impact in Durham and was named a Connect Sports Game Changer in 2019. She graduated from the University of Connecticut, where she also played softball, and received her master's degree in sports administration from the University of Southern Missouri.

12 years in the golf industry. A graduate of the University of Nevada Las Vegas, he worked at some of the best resort golf courses in the country. In 2017, he received the Connect Sports Game Changer award for advancing sports tourism in the Chicago Southland.

"I'm excited to be part of the Tulsa Regional Tourism family and thankful to Ray and the team for trusting me to lead their dynamic and successful sales staff," says Bachert.

"I am extremely excited to be part of this wonderful team in Tulsa – they have incredible experience and knowledge, and the possibilities moving forward are endless," says Koester. "Tulsa has so much to offer and is quickly becoming a major sports destination."

Joel Koester joins Tulsa Regional Tourism from the Chicago Southland Convention and Visitors Bureau, where he had worked since 2012 after

BUSINESS & PEOPLE NOTES

Through an extensive recruitment effort led by Tulsa-based consulting firm Schnake Turbo Frank, **Krista Hemme** has been selected vice president of marketing and communications for the **Tulsa Area United Way (TAUW)**. She will lead the marketing/communications team in promoting the TAUW and its 59 partner agencies that improve people's lives through education, financial stability and health/safety.



HEMME

Hemme is a graduate of Oral Roberts University and received a B.S. in Mass Media Communications. She is an award-winning communicator who most recently spearheaded campaigns for the City of Broken Arrow through news stories, video production, digital media and public relations.

"I love the Tulsa community and the people who work every day to make it the kind of place where we want our children and our children's children to grow up," said Hemme. "When everyone has access to the resources needed to succeed, it has a ripple effect on the entire community that leads to better outcomes in education and the economy. I look forward to working with Alison Anthony and the passionate team members of the Tulsa Area United Way to provide even more people with the tools they need to reach their full potential."

The Tulsa Area United Way (TAUW) is the only nonprofit organization in the six-county area funding 59 partner agencies whose critical services deliver the three building blocks to a better life: education, financial stability and health/safety.

Since 1924, TAUW has raised and invested more than \$825 million to assist the lives of people in need in Creek, Okmulgee, Osage, Rogers, Wagoner and Tulsa counties. All contributions to the TAUW are invested locally. Governance is maintained by a highly dedicated local board of directors.

Ken Holdman, senior vice president at SodexoMAGIC, recently joined the **American Red Cross of Northeast Oklahoma Advisory Board** in Tulsa.



HOLDMAN

"I am excited about the opportunity to serve," Holdman said. "Joining the Tulsa Advisory Board for the Red Cross allows me to make an impact in my community and state where I grew up."

Holdman currently leads SodexoMAGIC, the joint venture between Magic Johnson Enterprises and Sodexo. He is an experienced operator and leader with nearly 20 years of service. His career is underscored by a commitment to excellence and growth of both the business and members of his teams. Holdman actively engages with clients and partners to support and enhance underserved communities.

In Holdman's free time, he is a role model, supporting a range of youth and young adult activities including coaching and refereeing college basketball. He grew up and currently resides in the Tulsa area with his family.

The Oklahoma Hotel and Lodging Association (OH&LA) has announced its 2020 board of directors. Tulsa-area members include Chair – **James Cunningham**, Hyatt Regency; Treasurer – **Michelle Hartman**, Courtyard by Marriott Downtown; **Chad Horvath**, Tulsa Club Hotel; **Trisha Kerkstra**, POSTOAK Lodge & Retreat; **Charles DiClemente**, Doubletree Hotel Downtown; **Heather McGregor**, McGregor Insurance Group; **Pete Patel**, Promise Hotels; **Chelsea Penn**, Metro Tulsa Hotel & Lodging Association; and **Kyle Reans**, River Spirit Casino & Resort; Travis Taylor, Hotel Indigo Tulsa Downtown;

The Oklahoma Restaurant Association (ORA) announced its board of directors for the year 2020. Tulsa area board members include **Mike Bausch**, Andolini's Pizzeria; **Jeff Castleberry**, Caz's Chowhouse; **Momodou Ceesay**, Mamadou's Restaurant, Glenpool; **Bo Davis**, RB American Group; **Robert Founds**, Tulsa Drillers; **John Gaberino III**, Topeca Coffee; **Thomas Hunter**, Ricardo's Restaurant; **Jared Jordan**, Summit Club; **Amy Moss**, McGill's; **Elliot Nelson**, McNellie's Group; **Erik Reynolds**, Smoke Woodfire Grill; **Eric Selby**, Mazzio's, LLC; and **Alex Stodghill**, GoFresh Produce.

Founded in 1933, the Oklahoma Restaurant Association is the trade association of restaurants and foodservice operations, the state's largest private industry employer.

Keri Fothergill has been appointed **District 2 Commissioner Karen Keith's chief deputy**. Fothergill replaces John Fothergill who moved to the Tulsa County Treasurer's Office to serve as first deputy.



FOTHERGILL

Keri Fothergill comes to Tulsa County from the City of Tulsa where she most recently served in the Mayor's Office of Economic Development as Development and Constituent Services Liaison. In this capacity, Fothergill coordinated and facilitated business and land development procedures, projects, and programs for the City.

Throughout her career, Fothergill has served in numerous related functions including: Community Involvement Coordinator for City of Tulsa Refuse and Recycling Department; Constituent Services/Real Estate for Mayor Dewey F. Bartlett, Jr.; Commercial Project Manager/Government Liaison for Williams & Williams Auction; Council Legislative Aide for Tulsa City Council; Mayoral Aide for Mayor Bill LaFortune and Mayor Susan Savage and Event Coordinator for the Tulsa Metro Chamber

The Sand Springs resident has also served as Commissioner for the Sand Springs Planning and Development Commissions. She was also a Tulsa Global Alliance Board Member.

"I've worked as a public servant since 2001, but this is the first opportunity for me to have my day job impact my own community," said Fothergill. "Working for the City of Tulsa was wonderful; I look forward to working in District 2 with the people I call friends and neighbors. I will be their champion and help them make an impact not only in District 2 but through all of Tulsa County."

Echoing Fothergill's sentiments, Commissioner Keith said "The common thread through all Keri's extensive experience, which I saw firsthand when I worked with her at the City, is her focus on serving as a liaison between the government and its constituents. This simply made her the best choice for my new Chief Deputy. The ease with which she can develop, coordinate, and implement initiatives that positively affect the community and the local government is just one of the many reasons I approached her about this position. I am so pleased she is on board and am looking forward to all she will accomplish."

Jack Blair, chief of staff for Mayor G.T. Bynum, said of Keri's movement to the County, "Keri is the most diligent and hard-working person I've worked with on a regular basis since I started working with the City."

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‘Just Between Friends,’ a Popular Children’s Consignment Sales Event To be Held at Expo Square March 1-7

Just Between Friends, the popular children’s consignment sales event, will provide an opportunity for attendees to explore products like articles of clothing, accessories, toys, books, baby clothes and gear, baby shoes, infants wear, maternity items, strollers and more.

As organizers say, “It’s hard to believe, it’s time once again for Green Country’s leading children’s and maternity consignment sales event, in the Exchange Center Building at Expo Square. JBF Tulsa, the founding sales event for JBF, is much more than a garage sale.

“Daven Tackett, co-founder of Just Between Friends, never imagined this idea of bringing some friends together during the spring and fall would grow to help our community in so many ways.

Come experience what many moms, dads, grandparents, family and friends have grown to love, it’s JBF Tulsa! Its success goes beyond that of running a business, its families helping families, parents teaching their kids about the value of money and finding more with less. It’s a great story.”

Everyone wins at Just Between Friends because it’s a unique way of recycling children’s clothes and equipment without impacting the family’s budget, along with helping others.

There are two parts to this. When people shop at a JBF, the majority of the proceeds go to help families in our community, maybe a friend or a neighbor, not a large corporation. Those families use the money for a variety of things including going on family vacations, braces, sports team fees and a long list of other things which keeps families smiling. What doesn’t sell during a sales event is often times donated to local charities (Emergency Infant Services and Hope Harbor) who in turn, help other local families, who are in need. The generosity of consignors, at times, is overwhelming to see.

A representative says, “Just don’t believe what I’m telling you, please come see what we’re about. When you experience JBF Tulsa, you’ll understand. This is One-stop shopping at its best, with great selection, awesome savings and a worry-free environment. It’s a place where friendships are forged.



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The sales event opens to the public starting at 11 a.m. on Sunday, March 1.

Admission is \$10 or free with a donation to Emergency Infant Services in the form of diapers, wipes and/or formula. All remaining days are free admission. If you have any questions, call 918-814-9326 or contact Paul@jbfsale.com.

For more detailed information about JBF Tulsa, go to Tulsa.JBF-Sale.com.

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9 February
I HAVE BEFORE ME A REMARKABLE DOCUMENT GIVEN TO ME BY A YOUNG LADY FROM RWANDA
PITBULL
BOK Center
7:30 p.m.

10
LEGO BUILD
South Broken Arrow Library
10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

11
GMAT INFO. SESSION
OSU-Tulsa
7-9 p.m.

12
DANIEL TIGER'S NEIGHBORHOOD LIVE!
Brady Theater
6 p.m.

13
WILLIAM SHATNER: SCREENING OF WRATH OF KHAN
Brady Theater
7:30 p.m.

14
COLD WAR KIDS
Cain's Ballroom
8 p.m.

15
TULSA OILERS vs. Wichita
7:05 p.m.

16
GODSPELL
Tulsa Project Theatre
2 p.m.

17
BASS FISHING TECHNIQUES 2020
Tulsa Tech Riverside Campus
7 – 9 p.m.

18
ADVANCED PICKLEBALL
LIFE Senior Services
12:30 p.m.

19
TRAVELS WITH TULSANS: IRELAND
Central Library
12:10 – 12:50 p.m.

20
VINTAGE VOICES
LIFE Senior Services
10 – 11:30 a.m.

21
NEW HOPE OKLAHOMA'S MARDI GRAS
Tulsa Club Hotel
6 – 11 p.m.

22
AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY Theatre Tulsa
8 p.m.

23
MAKE MY DAY WEDDING EXPO
Spain Ranch
12:30 – 4 p.m.

24
MUSIC MONDAY
Central Library
11 – 11:30 a.m.

25
MARDI GRAS AT CAJUN ED'S HEBERT'S
Hebert's Specialty Meats
10 a.m.

26
OSU TULSA BUSINESS FORUMS WITH DAN COCKERELL
Doubletree By Hilton Hotel Tulsa
12 – 1:30 p.m.

27
'ANOTHER CHAPTER' BOOK DISCUSSION
Central Library
2 – 3 p.m.

28
MEMORY GALA
Cox Business Center
6:30 p.m.

29
SPLASH!
Oklahoma Aquarium
7 – 11 p.m.

1 March
DROP-IN STUDIO
Gilcrease Museum
1 – 4 p.m.

2
LEGO LAB
Broken Arrow Library
2 – 3 p.m.

3
YOGA FOR EVERY BODY
Central Library
5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

4
BROWN BAG IT: FINNEGANS AWAKE
PAC Trust
12:10 p.m.

5
HANDS-ON STORYTIME
Central Library
10:30 – 11 a.m.

6
MOON MOUSE: A SPACE ODYSSEY
PAC Trust
9:30, 11:30 a.m., 7 p.m.

7
BIG 12 WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIP
BOK Center
March 7-8

8
ALPHA - EXPLORE YOUR FAITH
Christ United Methodist Church
12:20 – 3 p.m.

9
COCKTAIL CONCERT: ROMANTIC INSPIRATIONS
Ambassador Hotel Tulsa
7 – 9 p.m.

10
ART FOCUS
Philbrook Museum of Art
10 a.m.

11
DIGITAL LITERACY LAB ORIENTATION
Central Library
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

12
TULSA TREASURES: PRIVATE COLLECTIONS IN PUBLIC
Philbrook Museum of Art
5:30 p.m.

13
A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC
Theatre Tulsa
8 p.m.

14
FC TULSA VS. NEW MEXICO UNITED
ONEOK Field
7 p.m.

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Oklahoma Veteran Jim Tygart Receives French Legion of Honor Medal in B.A.

By BOB LEWIS
Contributing Editor

The new year is getting off to a rousing start for Broken Arrow's Jim Tygart.

On Jan. 18, the World War II veteran was presented the French Legion of Honor Medal by French Consul Representative Grant Moat before a standing room only crowd at the BA Military History Center.

On March 31, the normally publicity-shy Tygart will again be the center of attention as he celebrates his 100th birthday.

The highest French order of merit, the Legion of Honor was established in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte. Originally, it was restricted to French nationals. But recognizing the heroic role of American and British soldiers in

liberating France from Nazi Germany, the program was expanded after World War II to include them as well.

With the medal firmly in hand, Tygart now joins an elite group of military honorees that includes Sgt. Alvin York; Gen. Douglas MacArthur; Allied Commander and former President Dwight David Eisenhower; WWII's most decorated soldier, Audie Murphy; Gen. George S. Patton, and former Secretary of State Gen. Colin Powell.

Tygart, who is also a Purple Heart recipient, was a truck driver for NABISCO in Tulsa before joining the military. Because of this experience, he was made a jeep driver with the Army's 2nd Infantry Division.

He watched the beginnings of the

June 6, 1944 Normandy Invasion from a military ship before coming ashore in the face of heavy fire the following day. He served in a number of European locations during the next few months before being wounded in a shell attack during the Battle of the Bulge. He spent that Christmas in a Paris hospital before being shipped home.

Tygart's sons, Jim and Delbert Tygart, say their dad is an unusually modest man who simply refuses to talk about his military experiences. That changed, however, when he agreed to be interviewed by the Tulsa World's Tim Stanley as part of a series of articles the reporter was writing on Oklahoma veterans.

Once published, that story caught the eye of personnel at a military museum in Enid. They were so im-



GTR Media Group photo

INTERNATIONAL HONOR: World War II veteran Jim Tygart, right, was presented the French Legion of Honor Medal by French Consul Representative Grant Moat before a packed crowd at the B.A. Military History Center.

pressed, they nominated Tygart for the Legion of Honor Medal and had every intention of hosting its presentation ceremonies.

Mother Nature, however, had other ideas. Severe weather forced a postponement in the festivities which led to a relocation to B.A.

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