



CANCER TREATMENT CENTER NAMED  
A TOP RECOMMENDED HOSPITAL See Page 8



J.A. ANNOUNCES TULSA TYCOONS See Page 5

# BIXBY BREEZE

One of Six Greater Tulsa Reporter Newspapers

Oklahoma's Largest Monthly News Group

Volume 17

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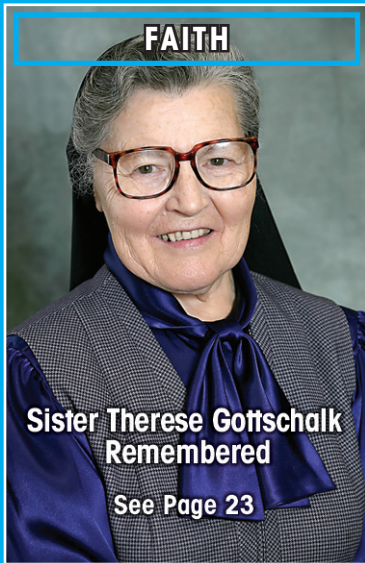
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## Coronavirus Captures the News

By D. FORREST CAMERON  
Editor and Publisher

The outbreak of the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has resulted in dramatic interruptions in the normal life flow of people and institutions around the world.

Concerning coverage in the Greater Tulsa Reporter Newspapers, we will continue to keep readers updated online as much as possible, and in the papers on the usual monthly and local retrospective basis. We will continue to concentrate on local news.

In Oklahoma, Governor Kevin Stitt has announced an executive order declaring an emergency in all 77 counties.

Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum has issued a civil emergency declaration, which gives officials the au-

thority to move expeditiously from a policy and purchasing perspective during the COVID-19 threat.

Mayor Bynum also updated his executive order and is limiting gatherings at all city-led and city-owned facilities based on the latest CDC guidelines.

All major attractions in Tulsa County have agreed to close indefinitely. Attractions include: Philbrook, Gilcrease Museum, Discovery Lab, Tulsa Zoo, Oklahoma Aquarium, Gathering Place, River Parks, Botanical Gardens, Historical Society, AHHA Tulsa, Woody Guthrie Museum, Tulsa Garden Center as well as Mayfest. Open space at River Parks and Gathering Place will stay open.

Additional COVID-19 news can be found in this issue on pages 3, 9 and 18.



RIP STELL for GTR News Group

**EMERGENCY DECLARATION:** Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum speaks to members of the Tulsa-area media during a March 14 press conference at Central Community Center in Centennial Park. He discussed the recently announced delay or cancellation of events in Tulsa that include more than 250 people.

## American Airlines Gives Economic Boost to Greater Tulsa with \$500 Million Investment

The recent American Airlines announcement that it will invest \$550 million at its Base Maintenance facility in Tulsa (Tech Ops-Tulsa) is great news for greater Tulsa. It is American's largest Base Maintenance facility and is an integral part of operating the carrier's fleet of nearly 1,000 mainline aircraft safely and reliably.

Tech Ops-Tulsa is home to more than 5,500 team members, 600 of which were added in 2019. The facility conducts nearly half of the airline's overall maintenance work. The new project includes construction of a new widebody-capable hangar and base support building. The investment also provides improvements to the existing infrastructure, including roof replacements, utility and IT upgrades, and ramp repairs. This is the largest investment ever made at a maintenance location in American's history.

This investment underscores American's long-term commitment to the Tech Ops-Tulsa team, State of Oklahoma and City of Tulsa by making improvements to ensure success.

"The American team in Tulsa and around the world is the best in the business when it comes to operating the safest and most reliable fleet of commercial aircraft," said American's chairman and CEO Doug Parker. "Tulsa has been core to American's operation for more than 70 years, and this investment in the base, along with the new positions we added at Tech Ops-Tulsa in 2019, will ensure our customers can continue to rely on our fleet as the safest and most reliable for decades to come."

The new 193,000-square-foot hangar will be able to hold two widebody aircraft, or up to six narrowbody aircraft, and will replace two existing hangars that can no longer fully accommodate the size of American's current aircraft. This will allow team members to continue maintenance work on the more than 900 aircraft that visit the site annually while also adding to the widebody hangar capacity in American's system.

"With this historic investment, American Airlines continues to display their commitment to Okla-



Courtesy photo

**FLYING HIGH:** Doug Parker, Chairman and CEO of American Airlines, shares the historic investment announcement with team members at Tech Ops-Tulsa.

ma. As one of the largest employers in our state, American Airlines plays an integral role in our economy and provides quality jobs for our citizens," Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt said. "I am proud that Oklahoma is one of the top states in the nation for the aviation and aerospace industry, and I am honored to have American Airlines choose Okla-

ma, once again, to grow their business."

Oklahoma Governor Stitt, City of Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum and Tulsa Regional Chamber President and CEO Mike Neal joined American leadership and nearly 2,000 team members at the ceremony on Feb. 28 to unveil the project.

"This investment marks the largest single capital investment in our city's history," Bynum said. "As a city, we are grateful that one of the largest employers in our community is a true partner with the kind of foresight that will create more opportunity in the next era of the aerospace sector."

The \$550 million investment will take approximately seven years to complete and will involve upgrades to nearly every building. The new hangar and base support building construction is expected to begin in early 2021 and will take approximately 18 months to complete.

"If there were any doubts about American's long-term commitment to Tulsa, this transformative investment should put them to rest once and for all," Neal said.

## KUDOS of the MONTH: Miss Helen's

Miss Helen's Private School has been providing excellence in early childhood education since 1954. It was then that "Miss Helen" Wingo realized many of the children entering Kindergarten had difficulty adjusting socially, emotionally as well as academically.

She believed there must be a better way for the young students of Tulsa to be prepared for their academic futures. She was right and Miss Helen's Private School has grown to become a

leading educational institution.

Executive Director Lynda Wingo believes in the philosophy of her mother-in-law;

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. The school offers programs in

three areas, Preschool, Kindergarten, and Elementary Grades 1 through 5.

Miss Helen's Private School employs degreed professionals and encourages ongoing teacher training throughout the school year. Each pod is supported by a lead teacher with experience and expertise in their grade level. These highly trained individuals ensure the educational experience is consistent with state and national standards as well as assure the unique needs of each student are met.

The goal of Miss Helen's is to provide an environment full of



Courtesy Miss Helen's Private School

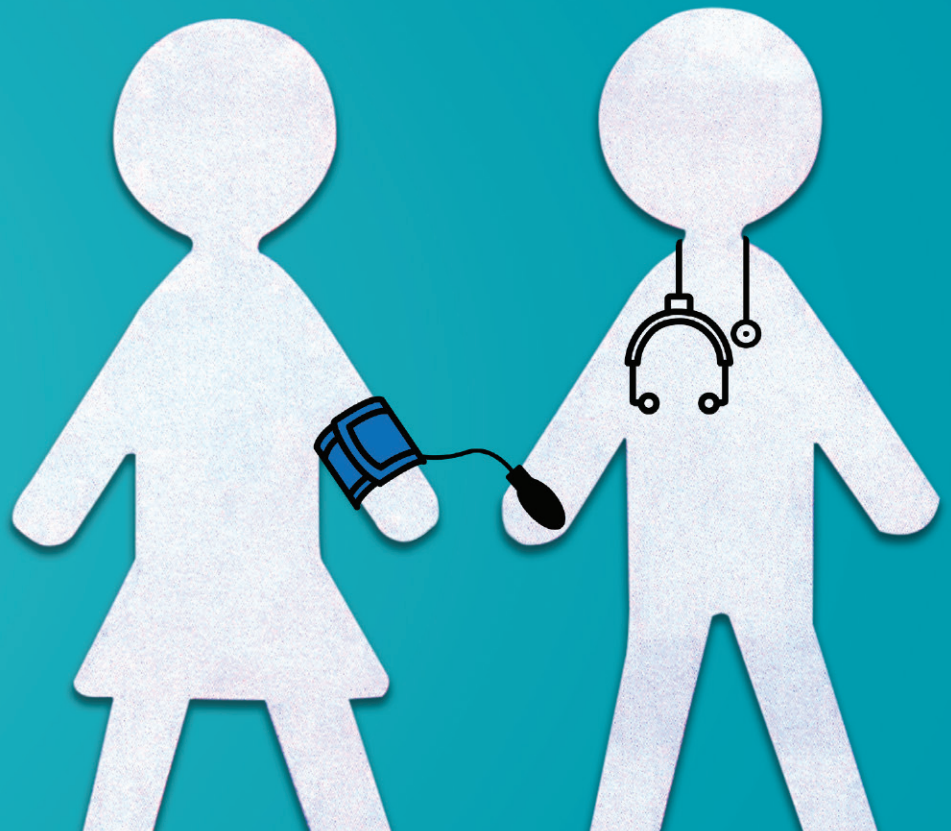
**LEARNING HABITS:** Miss Helen's Private School provides an ideal learning environment.

security and compassion where the teaching staff can facilitate the development of each student's exceptional talents.



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# Governor Stitt Featured at Tulsa Press Club Page One Luncheon

Page One luncheons returned to the Tulsa Press Club in February featuring Gov. Kevin Stitt, who updated Press Club members on accomplishments from his first year in office, and the priorities he's outlined for his second year in office.

Page One luncheons were a staple of the Tulsa Press Club for more than a decade before taking a hiatus in 2013. The luncheons served as a platform for newsmakers to broadcast their policy positions and news of the day from Tulsa to a statewide audience.

"Page One luncheons are an opportunity for business leaders, politicians, government heads and other newsmakers to speak directly to Tulsa's journalism community about important issues," said Jarrel Wade, Tulsa Press Club president. "We're excited to have

Gov. Stitt as our first guest, and we look forward to announcing more exceptional speakers throughout this election year."

The Tulsa Press Club's mission is to promote high standards of journalism, foster the highest ideals of ethics and fairness among its members, defend freedom of the press and access to public information, encourage the free exchange of ideas between the community and members of the public and encourage the pursuit of journalism careers among students.

Proceeds benefit the mission of the Tulsa Press Club, which includes providing college scholarships for Tulsa-area journalism students. The Club is on the first floor of the historic Atlas Life Building at 415 S. Boston Ave. in downtown Tulsa.



GTR Media Group photo  
**IMPRESSIVE SPEAKER:** Gov. Kevin Stitt, left, and Tulsa Press Club President Jarrel Wade in the lobby of the Atlas Life Building in downtown Tulsa after the February Page One Luncheon.

# Masonic Charity Donates \$50,000 To Junior Achievement of Okla.

The Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma has donated \$50,000 to Junior Achievement of Oklahoma.

Brian Jackson, development manager, Junior Achievement of Oklahoma, says, "These dollars will continue support for our efforts teaching the important life lessons of budgeting, financial investments, philanthropy, and personal finances through Junior Achievement capstone programs like J.A. Finance Park-Mobile that provide the outreach necessary to serve rural Oklahoma students."

Through hands-on classroom activities and site-based experiences, J.A. Finance Park students build a foundation for making intelligent, lifelong personal-finance decisions. The program includes hands-on in-school activities that culminate with a visit to the park.

Jackson says, "Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma is our new Philanthropy Kiosk within J.A. Finance Park-Mobile, which is dedicated to educating 7,000 Oklahoma middle and high school students in the basics of financial literacy, including budgeting, investing, philanthropy and managing risk - all while reinforcing the value of education and how it affects one's future."

Its curriculum covers all 14 areas of instruction on the Oklahoma State financial literacy requirement."

Bob Peters, Grand Master of Masons in Oklahoma says, "The Masonic Fraternity is proud to support financial literacy education programs such as those offered by Junior Achievement. The financial knowledge gained in this program will empower students to make good financial decisions as they begin their adult lives."

Jackson adds, "Most of us learn best when we are able to experience things firsthand. J.A. Finance Park takes reality-based learning to a new level by placing students into authentic, tangible, real-world scenarios where they take control of their decisions. It will bring together teachers, community and corporate volunteers, and local businesses to prepare students for adult life."

### About Junior Achievement of Oklahoma

Junior Achievement inspires Oklahoma students K-12 by bringing the business world to life inside the classroom through memorable, exciting, hands-on learning experiences. This year Oklahoma students will spend 900,000 hours engaged in Junior Achievement.



Courtesy photo  
**SIGNIFICANT GIFT:** Present at the check presentation were, from left, William Cloud, President Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma; Bob Peters, Grand Master of Masons in Oklahoma; Brian Jackson, Junior Achievement of Oklahoma; Jo Wise, Junior Achievement of Oklahoma; and John Logan, Executive Director of the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma

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### EDITOR & PUBLISHER

D. Forrest Cameron, Ph. D.

### CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Margaret Butler-Disney • Lesa L. Jones  
 Bob Lewis • Joanne Whitney

### EDITORS AT LARGE

Terrell Lester • K.J. Webb

### CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Blake Austyn • Nancy Hermann  
 Glenn Hibdon • Mike Mognin  
 Roger Coffey • D.J. Morrow-Ingram

### ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

John Bensinger

### CO-PUBLISHER

Sharon Cameron

### ART DIRECTOR

Bryan Cantrell

### PHOTOGRAPHY

Harry Lentz • Dean Atchison  
 Rip Stell

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### GREATER TULSA REPORTER

P.O. Box 470645 • Tulsa, OK 74147-0645

918-254-1515 • 918-254-1550 (fax)

[info@gtnews.com](mailto:info@gtnews.com)

[advertising@gtnews.com](mailto:advertising@gtnews.com)

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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.

All advertising published in any or all of the GTR Newspapers is subject to the applicable rate card, copies of which are available at the GTR Newspapers office or from the account representative listed in the above newspaper credits.





## CIVICS

# Chief Wendell Franklin Ready to Lead Tulsa's Police Department into the Future

He is tough, but he is fair — those are the words many in the Tulsa Police Department have used to describe Tulsa's new police chief, Wendell Franklin. One of the most challenging and important decisions I've made in my time as mayor was hiring him, but I truly believe he is the best person for the job.

Following the announcement of Chief Chuck Jordan's retirement, I needed to name TPD's new police chief, a process that would define the future of the department.

To keep the hiring process transparent, the Crime Prevention Network and I held three town halls and a public forum to see what the public would like to see in Tulsa's

next police chief. This had never been done before

## From Tulsa's Mayor



By G.T. BYNUM  
Mayor of Tulsa

selection process. We had 600 people attend those meetings and I talked directly with more than 160 people. The comments from the community and input from councilors certainly played a role in deciding the qualities of the person who I wanted to lead TPD for years to come.

Those qualities shined through with Wendell Franklin, ultimately leading to my decision to hire him.

Chief Franklin represents everything I want to see in a police chief. He has

an incredible knack for building successful teams, he is passionate about technology and innovation, and he is a selfless leader.

A product of this city, Chief Franklin grew up in north Tulsa. Losing his mother at an early age and having to overcome a speech impediment helped shape him into the kind of person he is. Today, his vision is clear and he knows well the realities of community policing. Those who have been under his command have either elevated their game or have moved on to other assignments. Since his hiring 23 years ago, Chief Franklin has gained respect and admiration among those in the department because of his high moral character.

It's with Chief Franklin that we will build on the successes we've seen with community policing, implicit bias training, and more. Under his guidance, we will continue to make Tulsa a stronger, safer and more inclusive place to live, thrive and grow our families.

If the hiring process taught me one thing, it was that we have tremendous talent in TPD. The oth-



City of Tulsa

**TULSA LEADERSHIP:** Chief Wendell Franklin, left, Mayor G.T. Bynum, and Chief Chuck Jordan attend the Mayor's announcement on Jan. 22, 2020, of Wendell Franklin as he is named Tulsa's 40th Police Chief.

er six candidates made me proud to know their policing efforts are bettering the level of service our citizens receive every day. I'm incredibly thankful to what Chief Chuck Jordan gave this city and

for his handling of the department for the last 10 years.

It's with confidence that I believe Chief Franklin will continue to build the kind of policing for Tulsa that we all want and need.

# Tulsa County Inspection Division Oversees Unincorporated Areas of Significant Growth

While most of the citizens in Inspections Division.

Tulsa County live in one of its 10 metropolitan areas within the County, more than 30,000 live in unincorporated areas in Tulsa County, outside of any city's boundaries. The unincorporated area is also where some of Tulsa County's largest commercial development has taken place.

Whether it's residential or commercial development, the responsibility for overseeing orderly and proper commercial and residential development is the responsibility of the

## From Tulsa County



By COMMISSIONER  
RON PETERS

Examples of development projects supervised by the County Inspection Division include: the Macy's Distribution center (\$92 million); Milo's Famous Tea (\$25 million); Whirlpool (\$31 million); Expo Square (\$17 million) and renovation of the county's Administration Building (\$30 million).

In these, and many other commercial projects, the staff of the County Inspection Division provides professional oversight to make

projects move forward as quickly as possible.

The Inspections Division also regulates construction of residential buildings. It issues building, electrical, zoning, mechanical, plumbing, and earth changing permits for new and remodeled residential properties in the unincorporated areas of Tulsa County.

With all the recent residential development in the unincorporated areas, approximately 1,400 permits were issued in 2019.

The staff works with property owners, and developers every step of the way through their projects. Providing each of the required permits until a certificate of occupancy is issued.

To improve on the permitting service, the staff is adopting new mobile software that will allow inspectors to have all the relevant permitting information in the field and accessible by tablet to eliminate as much delay as possible. The professional staff in the Inspection Division is striving to replace the

red tape with a red carpet.

Another important issue the department deals with is zoning. The office receives hundreds of calls and complaints every year that cover about 150 different properties with more than 220 violations documented.

The violations are reported from citizen complaints as well as a county inspector. Each complaint is personally investigated, and all violations are thoroughly documented with pictures and written descriptions. All owners are given an opportunity to abate the problem before any official action is taken.

In 2019, the Inspections Division was heavily involved with two very significant events in Tulsa County: the 2019 flooding and the growth of the medical marijuana business.

Since Oklahoma legalized medical marijuana, 67 building permits on 40 different properties have been handled by the Inspections Division.

The staff treats medical marijuana

business just as they would any other business in the inspection process. The main difference is that the medical marijuana businesses must also comply with state regulations and have Certificates of Compliance approved and signed by the Inspections Division.

More than 180 properties underwent onsite flood assessment during the flooding with at least 100 undergoing more in-depth flood investigation to determine whether they were substantially damaged. Most of these were in the Town and Country area.

The Inspections Division recently updated the Fee Schedule for Tulsa County which will go into effect in March.

To see the full list of the costs for the various permits as well as building permit applications and a "Building Permit How To Guide," visit Director Teresa Tosh at [ttosh@tulsacounty.org](mailto:ttosh@tulsacounty.org) and Zoning Specialist Daniel Walden at [daniel.walden@tulsacounty.org](mailto:daniel.walden@tulsacounty.org).

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# GREATER TULSA PERSONALITIES

## Junior Achievement Announces 2020 Tulsa Tycoons

Junior Achievement of Oklahoma has announced honorees for its 5th Edition of Tulsa Tycoons, A Night of Monopoly fundraiser. The 2020 honorees are:

- Carlos Conerly, Linde Engineering North America
- Dr. Leigh B. Goodson, Tulsa Community College
- Angela Kouplen, WPX Energy

This year, Junior Achievement of Oklahoma's largest fundraiser is an opportunity to honor outstanding business leaders who, through their work, have made a significant contribution to the workforce of today, and are helping to shape the workforce of tomorrow.

"We are excited to provide a fun environment as we celebrate these incredible leaders in our community," said Shannon Beeler, J.A. president. "As the economy and workforce continue to evolve at a rapid pace, we know we must also change the way we prepare today's youth for tomorrow's challenges. Junior Achievement is committed to developing a new generation of individuals who are armed with the confidence, knowledge and determination to thrive and build a better future for themselves and our state."

Tulsa Tycoons, a Night of Monopoly, 5th Edition, includes a mobile auction, live auction, networking, stories of JA impact, and amazing food. In addition, attendees can engage in low-key Monopoly-themed activities. The event is scheduled for Thursday, May 7 from 6 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. at the Cox Business Convention Center in Tulsa.

Funds raised from the event and auction will support Junior Achievement programs, which will bring lessons on financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and work readiness through over 900,000 contact hours with students this academic year. Financial literacy prepares students to manage resources effectively through courses on budgeting and planning. Entrepreneurship lessons focus on what it takes to start, manage and grow a business. Work readiness helps ensure students understand the skills they need to successfully enter the workplace.

"We look forward to honoring this year's Tulsa Tycoons because of their commitment to business, education and the Tulsa community," said Beeler. "Their leadership in the community should be an inspiration to any student now learning about business and entrepreneurship through Junior Achievement."



CARLOS CONERLY



DR. LEIGH B. GOODSON



ANGELA KOUPLEN

### Sponsors for the event include:

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Ltd., Matrix Service Company, T.D. Williamson, WPX Energy and Zeeco, Inc.

Additional sponsorships and tickets are now available. For more information concerning Tulsa Tycoons, A Night of Monopoly, 5th Edition, please contact Martha Rongey at [mrongey@jaok.org](mailto:mrongey@jaok.org), call 918-663-2132 or visit [www.tulsatycoons.com](http://www.tulsatycoons.com).

### About Junior Achievement of Oklahoma

Junior Achievement inspires

Oklahoma students K-12 by bringing the business world to life inside the classroom through memorable, exciting, hands-on learning experiences. Established locally in 1966, JAOK serves more than 62,137 Oklahoma students in 103 school districts and 319 schools. Junior Achievement utilizes more than 4,410 dedicated members of the community to implement its programs reflecting over 900,000 contact hours. To learn more, visit [www.jaok.org](http://www.jaok.org) or call 918-663-2150.

## Terry Simonson Honored with Tulsa Hero Award By 'The Other Other Club' For Meritorious Service

Recently, at the annual black-tie dinner of "The Other Other Club" held at Southern Hills Country Club, 350 public and private leaders from across Oklahoma recognized Terry Simonson with the Tulsa Hero Award. The Tulsa Hero is one who has given unrecognized meritorious service to Tulsa.

The Other Other Club of Tulsa derives its title from the name taken by Winston Churchill and other kindred souls who took it upon themselves to form the "other club" in 1911 for irrepressible, outspoken conduct and unconventional political initiatives.

The Other Other Club of Tulsa was founded in 2001 to sponsor an annual celebratory dinner for the sole purpose of honoring those who share an abiding faith and devotion for the democratic institution and traditions of Western civilization. It is made up of men of civic virtue who wish to serve and improve the city of Tulsa, the state of Oklahoma, and the nation. Since this spirit was particularly

articulated and exemplified in the life of Churchill, The Other Other Club honors Sir Winston's memory, both for his noble deeds while in public office as well as the style and relish he brought to his private pursuits.

The Other Other Club celebrates the event and honors those who "do good" by honoring Terry Simonson with the Tulsa Hero Award.

Simonson, an attorney with a juris doctor from the University of Tulsa, currently serves as Director of Governmental Affairs for the Board of Commissioners of Tulsa County, where he develops and executes the legislative agenda for Tulsa County with the Oklahoma Legislature.

Simonson also served as Chief of Staff and General Counsel to former Tulsa Mayor Dewey Bartlett and as Chief Deputy to former County Commissioner Randi Miller.

He is also president and owner of Pathways Consulting and Government Relations, LLC.



TERRY SIMONSON



THE OTHER OTHER CLUB MEDAL WITH SIR WINSTON

Other Other Club Members of Distinction from Tulsa and the Tulsa area include, by category:

Members Decorated for Valor (for service to their country): Pete Chacon, Reuben Davis, Gentner F. Drummond, Rusty Goodman,

Jerry Holmes, Michael Lapolla, Nick Krawciw, Bob McCoy, Harlan S. Pinkerton and Charles Ward.

Educators: Howard Barnett, David Boren, Jim Corbridge, James L. Gallogly, James Hal-

ligan, Burns Hargis and John Schumann.

Members of Distinction: Dr. Thomas W. Allen, Dewey Bartlett, Thomas R. Brett, John A. Brock, G.T. Bynum, Joe Cappy, Cason P. Carter, Dr. Tom A. Coburn, Brian Crain, George Dotson, Fredrick Drummond, Cy Elmberg, John M. Eagleton, Leonard J. Eaton, Tom Hughes, Terence C. Kern, King Kirchner, Phil Lakin Jr., Chip McElroy, Lew Mieberger, Joseph W. Morris, DeVier Pierson, A.T. Stair, S. Robson Walton, Henry G. Will and Mickey D. Wilson.

Members of Distinction are those who have been decorated for valor in the service of the United States, been elected to public office by Tulsa voters, founded a company creating significant employment (500+) for Tulsa, been CEO of a Fortune 500 company, been elected to an Oklahoma Hall of Fame, and/or named an Other Other Club Tulsa Hero. A Tulsa Hero is one who has given unrecognized meritorious service to Tulsa.

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## VARIETY

# Broadway Roars Back to the PAC in August

*Editor's note: This column was written before the COVID-19 cancellations. Please check with the venues before attending.*

When Broadway singer Thembelihle Cele took centerstage at the Tulsa Performing Arts Center and belted out the opening bars of "Circle of Life" from "The Lion King," those attending the season announcement press conference were instantly transported to the mighty Serengeti. Music and the magic of theatre have a transformative power.

Tulsa's purveyor of that power when it comes to touring Broadway is Celebrity Attractions. The company has brought Broadway to Oklahoma since 1983. Its upcoming season, which includes "The Lion King," is one of Celebrity Attractions' most ambitious and thrilling yet.

"Tulsa continues to support Broadway in such an incredible way," says Celebrity Attractions CEO Kristin Dotson. "Our sponsors, the staff at the Tulsa PAC, our team at Celebrity Attractions, and most importantly our subscribers and patrons all come together to put Tulsa on the map as one of the most successful Broadway seasons in the country."

Season highlights include uproarious comedies, a blockbuster favorite, and two recent Tony Award champions.

Appearing without his lost shaker of salt, but with Dotson on a filmed clip, Jimmy Buffett became part of the Celebrity Attractions announcement proceedings by heralding a production based on his music. Opening the Celebrity season August 18-23, Tulsa PAC audiences will party down with "Jimmy Buffett's Escape to Margaritaville." The musical features Buffett classics like "It's Five O'clock Somewhere," "Margar-

## Show Buzz



By NANCY HERMANN

itaville," and "Cheeseburger in Paradise," along with original songs (a total of 24 numbers) in a heartwarming story about people finding love.

There is probably no comedienne in America with a sharper wit and laser beam instincts for comedy than Tina Fey. Direct from Broadway comes Fey's "Mean Girls," Sept. 15-20. The production team for the show are all-stars: lyricist Nell Benjamin ("Legally Blonde"), and director Casey Nicholaw ("The Book of Mormon") along with Fey, whose writing talents have won over fans through "Saturday Night Live" and "30 Rock." The musical's composer is Jeff Richmond ("Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt").

I've seen "The Lion King" several times, but its music, grandeur and sheer beauty still bring tears to my eyes. Thank you, Elton John and Tim Rice. The heart of Africa beats through this brilliant creation honed by Tony Award-winning director Julie Taymor. "The Lion King" represents a landmark in musical theatre. A stunning achievement. It roars into Tulsa Nov. 11-29.

"Rolling Stone" magazine said about "Tootsie," "In these turbulent times, with the world out of balance, we need a place to let the good times roll. 'Tootsie' is it." Coming to the PAC Feb. 9-14, 2021, the show is based on the Oscar-nominated film starring Dustin Hoffman about an out-of-work male actor who dresses as a woman to land a role in a soap opera. The musical features a score by 2018 Tony winner David Yazbek ("The Band's Visit," "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels") and a Tony Award-winning book by Robert



Photo by DEEN VAN MEER

**THE LION KING:** Disney's Tony Award winning production returns to the PAC Nov. 11-19.



Courtesy photo

**OKLAHOMA!** An acclaimed reimagined version of the Rodgers & Hammerstein classic plays at the PAC Jan. 5-10, 2021.

Horn. "Forbes" called it "the best comedy on Broadway."

Writing team Bryan Adams and Jim Vallance are known for their pop songs "Summer of '69" and "Heaven," among them. They joined forces with two-time Tony Award-winner and director/choreographer Jerry Mitchell ("Hairspray," "Kinky Boots," "Legally Blonde") and Garry Marshall, who directed the movie with Julia Roberts, to create Broadway's romantic runaway hit and Audience Choice Award-winner "Pretty Woman: The Musical." It features Roy Orbison and Bill Dee's hit song "Oh, Pretty Woman," along with music by Adams and Vallance. See it at the PAC Apr. 13-18, 2021.

The musical to beat in the 2019 Tony Award race was "Hadestown." The unconventional love story captured Broadway's top prizes, garnering eight Tonys, including Best Musical. "Hadestown" is a love story that intertwines the mythic tales of Orpheus and Eurydice with that of King Hades and his wife Persephone, taking audiences to the underworld and back. Music was written by celebrated singer-songwriters Anais Mitchell and director Rachel Chavkin. It plays Jun. 15-20, 2021.

Between "Hadestown" and Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Oklahoma!," Celebrity has locked down the 2020 Broadway season's most talked about shows. Without altering the original lyrics, a new version of "Oklahoma!" re-interprets the love triangle between Laurey, the "belle of Claremore," the cow-poke Curly and the hired-hand Jud. I am engaged and appreciative when creators reach for new expression and meaning through pieces that are well known. This deconstructed and somewhat darker "Oklahoma!," which won Best Revival of a Musical at the Tonys, reveals more complex characters who



Photo by DEEN VAN MEER

**MARGARITAVILLE:** Sarah Hinrichsen as Rachel and Chris Clarke as Tully in Jimmy Buffett's "Escape to Margaritaville."



Courtesy photo

**TOOTSIE:** The musical provides a big dose of comedy and clever music, Feb. 9-14, 2021.



Photo by MATTHEW MURPHY

**HADESTOWN:** Winner of the 2019 Tony Award for Best Musical, the timeless, unconventional love story comes to the PAC in 2021.



Photo by MATTHEW MURPHY

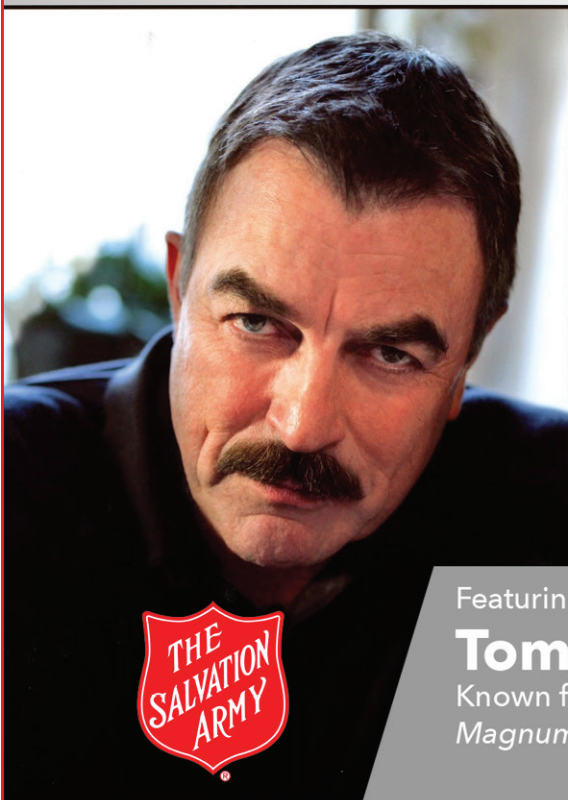
**MEAN GIRLS:** An all-star production team brings Tina Fey's comedy to the PAC Sept. 15-20

struggle with issues that are relevant today. Look for it in Tulsa, Jan. 5-10, 2021.

"We are very grateful for our sponsors and the many season subscribers who continue to support us," said Celebrity Attractions owner Kay Payton. "The arts are so important to the quality of life and the economy of Tulsa, and we are proud to do our part."

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# Ninth Annual Bob Childers Gypsy Cafe Festival Celebrates Oklahoma Songwriters, Restless Spirits

*I hope that every day becomes  
your friend  
That you find laughter there again  
and again  
And when you speak your mind, be  
fair what you say  
And make your own way at the end  
of each day*

— Jimmy LaFave

cluding the Jimmy LaFave Songwriting Contest in the festival. The winner will perform at the festival and take home \$500. The contest is open to unsigned musicians and is free to enter, but, as I reminded you last month, the deadline for entries is March 1, so it's time to start thinking about the 2021 contest.



Courtesy photo



Courtesy Storyteller Productions, LLC

**RESTLESS SPIRITS:** Jimmy LaFave, left, was the recipient of the inaugural Restless Spirit Award in 2017. Randy Crouch, right, received the honor last year and was presented the guitar strap with which he's photographed. The next honoree will be announced at the 9th Annual Bob Childers Gypsy Cafe Festival April 29.

It was nearly three years ago that musician/songwriter and Red Dirt music pioneer Jimmy LaFave broke the news publicly that he suffered from a rare form of cancer called spindle cell sarcoma. And while that disease ultimately took his life less than two months later, LaFave never canceled a show or missed a performance while battling the illness, even attending his own sold-out benefit show at the Paramount Theater in Austin three days before his death on May 21, 2017.

Three weeks before his death, LaFave was presented with the Gypsy Café Festival's inaugural Restless Spirit Award: an award given, as the plaque states, "In recognition of your impact and influence on the Oklahoma Music Community in a spirit akin to Bob Childers." The award, named after a Bob Childers song, has since been given to Brandon Jenkins (posthumously) and Randy Crouch ("I ain't dead yet!")

Akin to Bob Childers (A.K.A. the Godfather of Red Dirt Music) is accurate. LaFave produced Childers' (A.K.A. Dylan of the Dust's) first album, *I Ain't No Jukebox*, in 1979, and both were instrumental in ushering Red Dirt music from a farm in Stillwater to radio stations throughout Oklahoma and Texas.

The next Restless Spirit Award will be presented on April 29 in Stillwater (for now, more on that later), at the 9th annual Gypsy Café Festival. Featuring more than 60 Oklahoma songwriters on three stages, this is the largest homegrown songwriter festival in the state, with all proceeds benefiting Oklahoma musicians in need through the Red Dirt Relief Fund. Last year, the festival raised more than \$22,000.

In 2018, Gypsy Café and the Red Dirt Relief Fund brought some of LaFave's spirit into the mix by in-

## Searching for The Sound



By BRYAN CANTRELL

### Gypsy Café Online?

It is not, however, too late to make plans to attend Bob Childers Gypsy Café Festival. In fact, as we get closer to press time, it turns out it's too early to make plans to attend this, or any festival or gathering in the foreseeable future.

This is an especially challenging time to be writing for a monthly paper. When a situation is so fluid that it changes hourly, a month is a virtual eternity.

Virtual is a word we're going to be hearing a lot over the next month or so, as in, virtual meeting, virtual presentation, virtual fundraising event, and even virtual concert, in which we get our live music fix through live, online streaming video.

There's a good possibility that this year's Gypsy Café Festival will be a virtual event, although there has been no official announcement as of press time. Visit [reddirtrelief-fund.org](http://reddirtrelief-fund.org) for information.

If the festival is forced to go online, it'll still be a great show to watch from the comfort of your own home while practicing social distancing. Just remember to click that donate button. Red Dirt Relief Fund is providing a much-needed safety net during a difficult time for our local musicians and could use your donation now more than ever. Allow me to expand on that a bit...

### Red Dirt Relief Fund Steps Up

As we get closer to press time, more and more gigs and festivals are being canceled or postponed to combat the spread of COVID-19. These decisions are necessary, and those responsible are doing the right thing by making the health and safety of the community the No. 1 priority. We're all making sacrifices to deal with an unprecedented situation, but many musi-

cians are sacrificing more than their share.

Like many professionals, I have the ability to work from home, so this pandemic is not affecting my income. Musicians, however, don't have a work-from-home option or paid sick leave. If the gig is canceled, so is their paycheck.

To alleviate this strain, Red Dirt Relief Fund has pledged to donate \$50,000 to working Oklahoma music people in the form of one-time emergency grants of \$250 on a first-come, first-served basis.

The grant is eligible to Oklahoma musicians who have worked in the music business for the past five years.

"As an organization that provides a safety net of emergency assistance

to Oklahoma music people, we cannot imagine a more critical time to come to their aid," Red Dirt Relief Fund stated in a press release. "While we realize these smaller grants will not completely alleviate the financial strain for our working music community, we believe this act of solidarity can help everyone better weather this storm."

If you would like to be part of this act of solidarity, go to [reddirtrelief-fund.org](http://reddirtrelief-fund.org) and make a donation.

It's a different world out there right now, as America is basically closed. I was disappointed when March Madness was canceled. The NBA, MLB and Master's postponements; also very unfortunate. But when live music joined the

indefinite hiatus list, the crisis got real.

For literally thousands of generations, humans have gathered around music. Whatever your race or ethnicity, religion or nationality, your ancient ancestors sat around the fire and somebody had a drum. Somebody had a song. Charles Darwin insisted that humans sang to each other before we spoke to each other. Music is so engrained in us that going without for a while is going to be a challenge.

We will get through this. Follow your favorite musicians on social media and support virtual concerts by clicking the donate button. It's not ideal, but for now, we need to use the help of technology to keep searching, keep listening.



Courtesy photo

**TULSA YOUTH SYMPHONY AT WOODLAND HILLS:** The Tulsa Youth Symphony recently entertained visitors at Woodland Hills Mall in Tulsa. TYS was founded in 1963 with a stated mission to provide advanced orchestral training and performance experience for talented young musicians in northeastern Oklahoma.

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## HEALTH &amp; WELLNESS

# Cancer Treatment Centers of America in Tulsa Named a Top Patient-Recommended Hospital

Cancer Treatment Centers of America (CTCA) recently announced that its hospital in Tulsa has been named to a list of "Top Patient-Recommended Hospitals" in the nation, as reported by Becker's Hospital Review. Only 22 facilities were included on this list which distinguishes those hospitals ranked as "highly recommended" among patients surveyed. CTCA Tulsa is the only facility in Tulsa and one of only three in the state of Oklahoma to be recognized. CTCA hospitals in Chicago and Philadelphia were also named to the list.

The "Top 22 Patient-Recommended Hospitals" list is based on figures from CMS' Hospital Compare website and represent Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) scores collected from April 2018 through March 2019. At least 93 percent of patients at

these 22 hospitals responded, "Yes, I would definitely recommend the hospital."

"We are honored to be included among the nation's top hospitals based on patient recommendations," said Pat Basu, MD, MBA, President and CEO of CTCA. "This recognition reflects our unrelenting commitment to patient care both in terms of clinical excellence, as well as patient and caregiver support. Further, this distinction reinforces our model of putting patients at the center of everything we do, as our physicians, staff and volunteers deliver safe, effective, compassionate care tailored to the people and communities we serve."

This recognition comes shortly after the publication of CTCA's seventh annual summary of Patient Treatment Results, a comprehensive presentation of treatment outcomes including length of life,

quality of life, patient experience and patient safety for 11 tumor types. The report, one of the most comprehensive presentations of treatment results published by any cancer care provider, "is a testament to CTCA's belief in the importance of transparency and patient empowerment," said Maurie Markman, MD, President of Medicine & Science at CTCA.

## About Cancer Treatment Centers of America

Cancer Treatment Centers of America Global, Inc. is a comprehensive cancer care network of hospitals and outpatient care centers in Atlanta, Chicago, Philadelphia, Phoenix and Tulsa. Specializing in the treatment of adult cancer patients, CTCA offers an integrative approach to care that combines surgery, radiation, chemotherapy and immunotherapy



CANCER TREATMENT CENTERS OF AMERICA IN TULSA

Courtesy photo

with advancements in precision cancer treatment and supportive therapies designed to manage side effects and enhance quality of life both during and after treatment. CTCA also offers qualified patients a range of clinical trials that may reveal new treatment options

supported by scientific and investigational research. CTCA patient satisfaction scores consistently rank among the highest for all cancer care providers in the country. Visit [cancercenter.com](http://cancercenter.com), Facebook.com/cancercenter and Twitter.com/cancercenter for more information.

# Monterneau's Board of Directors Appoints Angela Larson as New President and CEO

Monterneau has selected Angela Larson as its new president and chief executive officer. Larson replaces David Murlette who was appointed to a leadership position at Mather, Inc. With more than 20 years of experience in the senior living industry, Larson brings a wealth of knowledge to the position. Chairman of Monterneau's

Board of Directors, John-Kelly C. Warren, said, "We are thrilled she has accepted the position as she will focus on delivering the highest level of quality care and promoting a fun, home living environment through her unique personal touch."

Shortly following her appointment, she shared, "I am honored and overwhelmed by the support of residents and staff as I transition into my new role as CEO at Monterneau," and went on to emphasize that her vision for Monterneau is "to build upon the already unique

culture and social experience in which residents are able to age in place with a sense of purpose while maintaining intellectual and physical fitness."

Larson previously served as Monterneau's chief financial officer for more than seven years where she was responsible for managing and reporting the financials to Monterneau Leadership and residents. As a member of Monterneau's Executive Leadership Team, she was tasked with providing direction, management, and leadership for strategic plan-

ning, corporate compliance and finance, and she served as the primary management contact for the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

Larson is very active in the senior living community and community at large. She has served on the board of directors for LIFE Senior Services for more than six years and was most recently appointed as Board Chair. She also is on the board for its PACE program and Caring Communities, an industry-specific member-owned liability insurance company exclusively serving not-for-profit senior housing and care organizations, where she serves on the Finance and Investment Committee. She is also a member of the Bixby Rotary Club.

Outside of Monterneau, Larson is a leader on topics including senior living trends and maximizing financial resources. She has published articles in several industry publications.

Prior to joining Monterneau in 2013, she worked for Ziegler, a privately held investment bank specializing in healthcare and senior living and education. Larson's position as vice president of Senior Living Finance Research and Development focused on market research and trend analyses for education purposes.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration and Accounting from Bloomsburg University in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania. Her industry specific credentials include: Certified Public Accountant, 2015 LeadingAge Leadership Academy Graduate, Certified Professional in Aging Services Risk Management



ANGELA LARSON

(CPASRM), and successful completion of the Series 7 (General Securities Representative) Exam.

## About Monterneau

Founded in 2003 by The William K. Warren Foundation, Monterneau was designed for Tulsa seniors to continue to live an active lifestyle that represents their values, spirit and style. The community has earned a reputation for raising the bar for Life Plan communities, formerly Continuing Care Retirement Communities. Monterneau Retirement Community is located at 6800 S. Granite Ave. in Tulsa.

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# Medical Leaders Discuss Coronavirus Prevention

Stephen Prescott, M.D., president of the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation (OMRF), says that the coronavirus may be new, but the most effective means of prevention are not.

According to OMRF, Dr. Prescott, a physician and researcher, says, "The best ways to protect yourself are the simple ones you hear every cold and flu season: Wash your hands as often as you can stand, and keep them out of your eyes, nose and mouth."

He adds, "Alcohol-based sanitizers also destroy the virus. Just make sure they contain at least 60 percent alcohol. The virus spreads through tiny viral droplets, which pass from one person to another through mucus or saliva. Infected people transmit them by coughing, sneezing, talking or breathing."

"If you can smell what someone ate for lunch, you're probably inhaling what they're exhaling, including droplets." And you certainly want to keep ample distance if someone is exhibiting cold or flu symptoms."

Whenever possible, Prescott recommends maintaining personal space. "But there's no need to wear a mask, as they haven't been shown to guard against droplet infection," he said.

The virus also survives on surfaces for a significant period of time. "That means you can infect yourself by touching that surface and then putting your hand in your nose, mouth or eyes," said Prescott.

In cases of severe infection, doctors administer supportive care, primarily oxygen therapy. They also use antibiotics to prevent secondary infections.

"While there are currently no treatments approved specifically to treat the condition,

remdesivir, an investigational antiviral drug not yet approved the FDA, has shown promise in animal models of other serious coronaviruses," said Judith James, M.D., Ph.D., an immunologist and vice president of clinical affairs at OMRF.

According the Tulsa Health Department (THD), the THD, along with Oklahoma State Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are closely monitoring this outbreak. Local public health experts in Oklahoma are communicating with and educating health care providers and other public health partners about the current situation. Infection control and isolation protocols are already in place to prevent the spread of illness in Oklahoma. THD, in collaboration with state and federal partners, is monitoring all travelers who return to Tulsa County from China. Travelers are contacted by health officials and monitored for 14 days following their departure from China. These individuals are restricted from public settings including work, school and health care settings.

With Spring Break, it is important for travelers to remain aware of travel advisories in countries where the virus is widespread. The CDC advises against all non-essential travel to China, South Korea, Italy and Iran. Travelers returning from these countries should self-isolate for 14 days and report any signs and symptoms to a health care provider. All cruise travel should be avoided.

Updates on COVID-19, including health tips, fact sheets, case counts, and rumor control are available on the Tulsa Health Department website.

## New Digital Tool Brings Medical, Mental Health History to Life

Neuroscientists from the Laureate Institute for Brain Research (LIBR) have created a mobile health application for visualizing the social, medical and mental health history of individual patients.

The tool, called the 'Tulsa Life Chart' or 'TLC' for short, uses information provided during a survey to create a web-based graphic representation of an individual's life. The result is a one-page interactive image that visually communicates meaningful events occurring across the life span.

The tool makes it easier for clinicians to process the life history of a patient, which is important for the diagnosis and treatment of medical and mental health conditions.

For example, the TLC can help clinicians determine onset and time course of key symptoms, guide the focus of psychotherapy interventions, and give patients and family members greater insight into the impact of life events on medical or mental health symptoms.

In a recent study published in the journal *JMIR Mental Health*, the researchers used the TLC to examine the life histories of 500 individuals diagnosed with a spectrum of mental health conditions, including mood, anxiety, eating, and substance use disorders and their healthy counterparts.

Participants completed the TLC with an interviewer, who asked a series of structured questions about their life experiences at different ages. This included questions about positive and negative experiences, schools they had attended, jobs they had held, important friendships and family members, hobbies, and mental health treatments they had received, among others. Their information was transformed into a one-page electronic and interactive graphic that conveyed the unique aspects of their lives. Afterward, participants were asked to describe their experience using the TLC and whether they would recommend it to others.

The researchers found that negative early life events were more commonly reported by individuals with psychiatric disorders. In particular, individuals with depression and anxiety disorders reported experiencing decreased mood starting as early as elementary school, which is much earlier than the young adult age when these disorders are usually diagnosed. However, for individuals with substance use disorders, decreased mood was not observed until young adulthood when such disorders are often diagnosed.

Surprisingly, individuals with eating disorders reported greater social support despite an increased incidence of negative events as early as middle school.

Study author and clinical psychologist Dr. Robin Aupperle said, "Our results are not only important for providing insight into these mental health conditions, but they also provide a way to help make sense of what individual patients have experienced. For example, if a patient has experienced comparatively more negative life events than their peers, but reports greater social support, this may enhance insight into their current symptoms as well as their strengths that may support resilience."

Participants reported favorable user feedback with the TLC, with most finding the experience to be pleasant and helpful for understanding their mental health. Several participants specifically noted that the TLC helped them to change their life perspective by reflecting on how resilient they have been in the face of challenges. There were also some negative aspects reported, mostly relating to how much time the process took, and some discomfort with sharing sensitive information with a stranger.

"The TLC provides a quick and easily reviewable 'fingerprint' of a patient's relevant psychosocial experiences that could be useful for mental health clinicians, patients and family members during diagnosis and treatment," said Dr. Sahib Khalsa, psychiatrist and co-author of the study. "This fingerprint could be used to establish a clear record that travels with the patient and be used to help providers better understand their unique history. It remains to be seen whether it can improve clinical utility, perhaps by saving a clinician's time or by improving the quality of care."

To address these questions, he says, future studies are needed. An additional challenge is integrating the tool into electronic health records and obtaining buy-in from health systems to deploy it.

In the meantime, the researchers continue to improve the TLC. Most recently, they have created a self-guided version that has dramatically reduced the completion time, from an average of 2.5 hours down to about 50 minutes. The team is looking into ways of further reducing this time by incorporating information from publicly available databases and optimizing user experience by obtaining feedback from patients and practitioners.

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## EDUCATION

# Tulsa Tech Instructor Honored with Engineering Award

Teachers make the difference. It is a saying that rings true each and every day at Tulsa Tech, where instructors work to find new and creative ways to engage students. Creativity is one of the reasons Elaine Clark, an instructor at the STEM Academy, was honored with the 2020 Tex Richardson Engineering & Science Guidance Award.

The award, established in 1992 and named in honor of a longtime educator, recognizes teachers and engineers in Oklahoma who demonstrate exceptional service in guidance activities.

"Tex Richardson was a tireless and enthusiastic promoter of learning, especially in STEM-related fields," Clark said. "To be given an award that recognizes educa-

tors who exemplify his same ideals is both humbling and highly rewarding.

"I want my students to know that they can learn whatever it is I am teaching them," Clark said with pride. "They are not in my class by mistake and they have what it takes to be successful in my class and other classes they may choose to take."

The importance of STEM in classrooms across the nation is growing and Tulsa Tech is devoted to helping students become leaders in their field while meeting the needs of industry partners.

"To me, there is nothing more enjoyable than being in the classroom with my students," Clark said with a smile. "They inspire me, invigorate me and give me hope

for the future."

The STEM Academy provides students the skills they need to enter the highly-competitive engineering field. Students in Pre-Engineering learn how to design and build distinct creations using the latest software. Students also tackle real-world problems and present their cutting-edge ideas to industry partners.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) are a critical part of Tulsa Tech's mission to educate people for success in the workplace. Careers in STEM-related industries are growing at a nine percent rate according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. That is nearly double the rate of all other professions combined.

Clark encourages students

to take on new challenges like FIRST Robotics competitions, Tulsa

Regional STEM Alliance camps, VEX Robotics, and many more activities. She is the second consecutive Tulsa Tech instructor to earn the award after Teddy Wyatt was honored last year.

Clark and Wyatt, along with 2013 winner, Maemi Dildy, have all helped thousands of future engineers succeed in the classroom and the workplace.

"The very best part of the academy would have to be the students," Clark said. "They are bright and clever young people who are eager to learn and who thrive on the challenges of our hands-on, problem-solving environment."



Vanessa Azier, Tulsa Tech

**TEX RICHARDSON AWARD WINNER:** STEM Academy Instructor Elaine Clark shows off her 2020 Tex Richardson Award with Lemley Memorial Campus Director Shea Ferrell. Clark is the third Tulsa Tech instructor to win the award given to educators in engineering.

# Cascia Hall Student to Attend Tanglewood Summer Institute

Cascia Hall Junior Travis Guillory has been accepted to Boston University's Tanglewood Summer Institute, a premier summer music program that trains young talented musicians through intensive study. Only a select number of students from around the world are accepted.

In preparation, Guillory and his teacher, Candy Coonfield, have been working tirelessly on vocal technique and vocal literature. Travis has already been successful in numerous vocal competitions this year featuring a variety of music genres. Along with learning new

music and continuing to improve vocal technique, he will also be required to work on sight-singing and music theory in preparation for this summer's intensive study.

The vocal program, "Young Artists Vocal Program," is headed by famed mezzo-soprano Penelope Bitzas. It is structured after the well-known conservatory model of training and strives to develop healthy vocal technique, performance technique, and overall musicianship.

The six-week program includes numerous private voice lessons with Boston University faculty and

guest artists, vocal coaching, choral work and performances, music theory classes, study and performance of opera scenes, masterclasses with famed professionals, music history classes, study of diction and IPA, the study of body movement and stage presence, and attending numerous professional concerts throughout the Boston area.

Along with participating in the final concerts of the summer, Guillory will also receive six hours of transferable college credit for his work. Once he has completed his summer study, he will join a list of distinguished Tanglewood alumni,



Courtesy photo

TRAVIS GUILLORY

including Harry Connick Jr, Joseph Kaiser, Georgia Jarman, and Paul Serna.

Cascia Hall is a Catholic, Augustinian college preparatory school

for students of all faiths in grades 6-12. Openings are currently available in some grades for the upcoming school year. Call 918-746-2604 for more information.



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# Creating an Individualized Success Plan

## Tulsa Tech's Career Academy Provides Ideal Learning Environment

Step into a classroom and you will see a lot of items designed to make students feel comfortable. Studies show that learning environment is critical to student success. In some cases, and for various reasons or circumstances, traditional high school does not always work. For those students, Tulsa Tech has a second chance called Career Academy.

"Coming here was different," Chyna Mickle, a graduate of Career Academy said. "It is a different atmosphere. You don't have all the demands and pressures from the outside."

Career Academy is designed to help at-risk students get the education they need. Studies have shown dropouts earn more than \$10,000 per year less than those with a high school diploma. Not only does the Career Academy provide an ideal environment for students to earn a diploma, it also trains for various career opportunities that can lead to successful future outcomes.

The program is not open to every student. Those wanting to take part must apply and be accepted. While the course work is the same as any high school, former students like Mickle say it's the instructors and

staff that make the difference.

"The teachers, you can tell they're here for you," Mickle said.

"The people will do everything in their power to help you. They will talk to you, listen to you and they make you feel like you are heard."

For Mickle, the change had a dramatic impact on her life. A change that even caught the attention of a counselor.

"Seeing her walk into the classroom today compared to just a few months ago, it just reinforces why I do what I do," Kori Moore, a counselor at the Career Academy said with a tear. "She (pointing at Mickle) looks like a completely different person from the inside out."

The program is about more than just academics. Over the last five years, the academy has had an annual enrollment of nearly 60 students, with an attendance rate near 90 percent. Building upon the foundations of responsible decision-making, self-awareness and relationship skills also helps to develop better social and emotional skills, leading to successful outcomes for all students.

"Because of the Career Academy, I feel my relationship with my mom has gotten better," Mickle said with a smile. "Coming here, I became mentally stronger and learned how to better resolve problems."

One way the academy works to cut through barriers one might find in a typical high school is with daily group lunches. The bonding experience, as Mickle called it, was one of the biggest differences she saw from her home high school.

"I liked lunch together because when you are in a high school everybody is divided into their own groups," Mickle commented. "Here we all came together and that would not normally happen."

Ultimately success in the program is up to each student. Mickle knew that this was her chance and she wasn't going to throw away her shot at success.

"Without this program, I wouldn't be where I am today," Mickle chimed in. "I may not have graduated from high school."

"It's about choices," Moore said. "Whether it's college or career we help students make a plan and find the plan that best fits their needs."

An added bonus upon completion of the program is that graduates walk across the stage along with all of their classmates during their home high school commencement ceremony.

If you are 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 [tulsatech.edu](http://tulsatech.edu).

### News From Tulsa Tech



By DR. STEVE TIGER  
Superintendent



Courtesy: Vanessa Azier/ Tulsa Tech

**HANDS-ON COUNSELING:** Career Academy counselor Kori Moore works with a student at the Career Academy. The academy serves at-risk students and helps them earn their high school diplomas while providing career training.

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## BIXBY NEWS

# Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence Honors Three Bixby H.S. Students as 2020 Academic All-State Scholars

The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence has announced the winners of the prestigious 2020 Academic All-State Awards honoring 100 outstanding high school seniors in Oklahoma's public schools. Students honored from Bixby High School are Tara Eldridge, Aidan Sudler and Jonah Wagner. The Bixby students were selected from 495 nominations statewide from 75 schools in 69 Oklahoma school districts.

The 2020 Academic All-State

class is the 34th to be selected by the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence. Since the award program's inception in 1987, some 3,400 high school seniors from 326 school districts have been named Academic All-State scholars. Three high schools will celebrate their first Academic All-Stater: Hooker High School, Oklahoma Virtual Charter Academy and Silo High School.

Each of this year's All-Staters will receive a \$1,000 merit-based scholarship and a medallion. They will be recognized at the foundation's 34th annual Academic Awards Banquet on Saturday, May 16, at the Embassy Suites Conference Center in Norman.

Cathryn Render, president of the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, describes the selection of the scholars as "Oklahoma's most rigorous academic competition." To be nominated for All-State, students must meet one of the following criteria: an American College Test (ACT) composite score of at least 30; a combined SAT evidence-based reading and writing and math score of at least 1370; or be selected as a semi-finalist for a National Merit, National Achievement or National Hispanic Scholarship.

This year's All-Staters scored an average of 33.9 on the ACT, with 15 recipients scoring a perfect 36. The students' average GPA was 4.20. In addition, 40 of this year's All-Staters are National Merit

semifinalists, and two are National Hispanic Scholar semifinalists.

Academic All-Staters are selected based on academic achievement, extracurricular activities and community involvement, as well as letters of recommendation and an essay submitted by each nominee. The selection committee, which is chaired by retired Tulsa attorney Teresa B. Adwan, works independently of all other foundation activities. The committee members are a diverse group of business, education and civic leaders, as well as past honorees.

The Academic Awards Banquet is open to the public, with admission priced at \$50. The awards ceremony will later be televised statewide by OETA, the Oklahoma Educational Television Authority. For more information, call the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence office at 405-236-0006, or visit the website at [www.ofe.org](http://www.ofe.org).

Founded in 1985, the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence is a statewide, nonprofit organization dedicated to recognizing and encouraging academic excellence in Oklahoma's public schools. Through its Academic Awards Program, the foundation has provided more than \$4.8 million in merit-based scholarships and awards to honor outstanding graduating seniors as Academic All-Staters and exceptional educators as Medal for Excellence winners.



Bixby Breeze photo

**ST. PATRICK'S DAY FESTIVAL:** The City of Bixby hosted the 2nd Annual St. Patrick's Day Children's Festival Sunday, March 15 at Bentley Park in the Keas Soccer Complex. Enjoying the event are, from left, Miss Bixby Sydney Bush, Kevin Dean and Julia Bush. The family friendly event was enjoyed by children and adults of all ages with Irish music, giant lawn games, bubble stations, craft stations, Safari Joe's exotic animals, food trucks, magic shows, balloon art, multiple inflatables, bounce houses, obstacle courses, and much more. Dean, a member of the Bixby Optimist Club, was also promoting his club's upcoming Green Corn Festival.

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## BIXBY SPORTS

# Spartan Kicker/Punter Headed to Lawrence to Play for Les Miles and the Kansas Jayhawks

By **MIKE MOGUIN**  
GTR Sports Writer

Chris Harris Jr. had success at Kansas over a decade ago, now another Bixby product hopes to follow suit.

Reis Vernon, the Spartans' kicker/punter chose Lawrence as his college destination in late January and signed early last month.

"Honestly, it felt like home," Vernon said. "I felt like coach (Les) Miles is an amazing head coach I want to play under. The academics were there for me, my parents would be able to make every game. It just had that home feeling. It just clicked for me right when I got on campus. It was kind of a done deal once I got there."

Vernon chose the Jayhawks over Oklahoma State and Nebraska.

What Vernon likes most about kicking is learning something new every time he goes out on the field. He has learned how to kick off through watching YouTube videos.

"I've watched college guys, NFL guys and I just take bits and pieces from them and then create my own sort of swing and style and that's probably what I love most about it," he said.

His favorite NFL punters are Tress Way (Washington Redskins) and Thomas Morstead (New Orleans Saints). Favorite college punter is soon-to-be teammate Kyle Thompson, who'll be a senior next season at Kansas. Vernon likes Daniel Carlson, who played collegiately at Auburn and

now with the NFL's Las Vegas Raiders, as his favorite kicker.

Vernon began playing football his sophomore season. He has played soccer and basketball in the past, but he decided to go all in on football by his senior year.

The lessons learned in kicking also helps Vernon in life, he said.

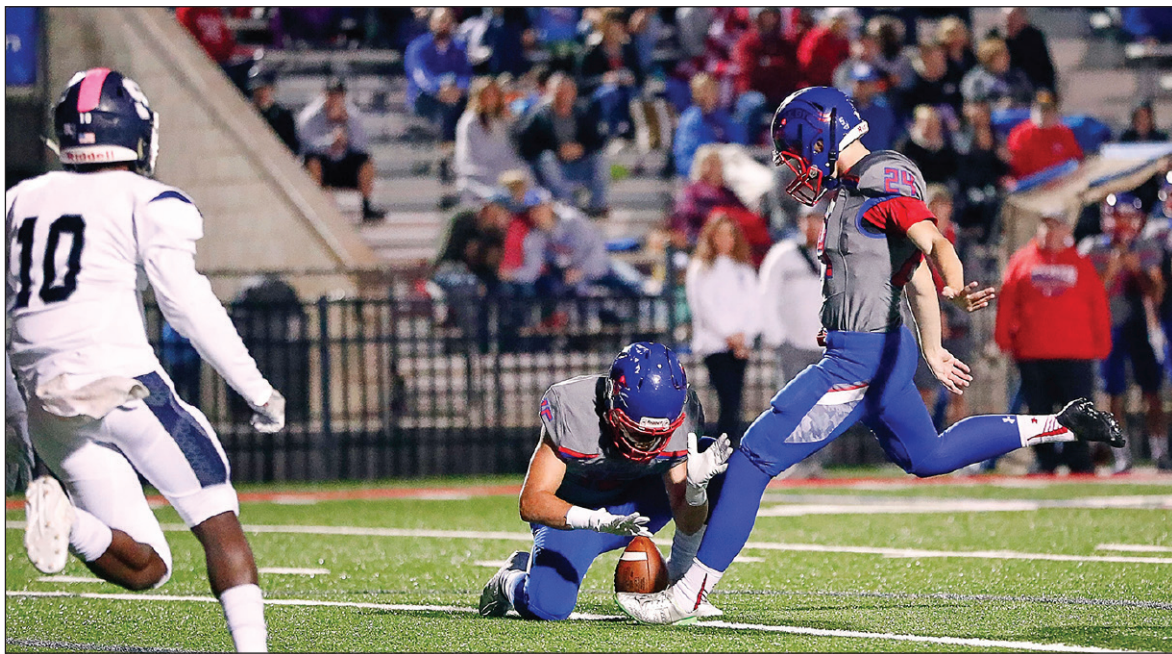
"The biggest one I had to learn was if you miss a kick or if you make a kick, you have to forget about it," Vernon said. "You always have to look to the next kick. Any failure or any kind of downfall in my life, I'm always going to be able to bounce back up from it. I'm never going to get too high or get too low. I only get one shot to do something right and there is no 'close.' You either did it or you didn't. That's the mindset I have always had when kicking. I feel that that will benefit me in life."

During his Spartan career, Vernon made 11-of-15 field goal attempts, his longest a 37-yarder, and was 100 percent on PATs.

Being part of the Bixby dynasty — two straight state titles and five in six years — has been incredible, Vernon said. "I really don't know what it's like to lose very much," he added.

Of course that will be a challenge in college since Kansas has often been in the Big 12 cellar and finished 3-9 in Miles' first season in 2019, but Vernon sees that changing.

"I think Les Miles has it in the right direction," he said. "I want to be a part of it. I think it is get-



**KU BOUND:** Bixby kicker/punter Reis Vernon will join the Big 12 Conference next season as a Kansas Jayhawk. He chose KU over Oklahoma State and Nebraska.

ting turned around for sure."

Meanwhile, reflecting back on Bixby, "Fortunately, we hardly ever had to punt. I was mostly kicking off and doing PATs. We had some guys out scoring. But it's been an incredible experience, I've loved every minute. A lot of these guys I played with this year as seniors. I've been playing some sort of sport with them since first grade, so it was kind of a sad season too, to know this was our last season together in anything. It was bittersweet overall.

Vernon loved playing in the Class 6AII state championship game, in which the Spartans won 40-36 against Stillwater for their second straight title and fifth in six years.

"I love playing in the state championship," he said. "It is probably one of my favorite games to play in. Everybody is pumped up. I hit a field goal in that game, I was perfect on PATs, got some big kickoffs, good punts, so it was a good game for me and we knew going into it that special teams

was going to play a huge role in that game. So it was really a good experience."

Vernon can see Bixby continuing as a perennial power.

"We have a great culture there," he said. "I think every year, the seniors have set a tone that the juniors and sophomores want to follow. I think this senior class has done a good job of setting a tone of what it's like to bring it everyday in practice and the weight room. I think it's going to be successful for a long time."

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## SPORTS

# Ken Trickey Film to Debut at Circle Cinema

By **TERRELL LESTER**  
Editor at Large

Ken Trickey was part basketball coach, part magician, all character.

He was P.T. Barnum reincarnated.

He had a super-sized, super-charged personality with a heart to match.

He might not have invented the game of basketball, but he did give rise to the entertainment aspect of basketball.

With his teams geared to running, shooting and scoring, he injected more verve, more kick into the game of basketball than anyone in Oklahoma before him.

When he arrived at Oral Roberts University in 1969, Oklahoma basketball was forged in the image of Henry Iba, the Iron Duke of defense and deliberate offense at Oklahoma State University.

Scores of 45-42 were common. Passing the ball was mandatory. Shooting the ball from 22 feet was nothing short of blasphemous.

That was Old School Basketball. Prudent. Purposed. Planned. Pre-Ken Trickey Basketball.

Ken Trickey Basketball was simple. Shoot. Score.

He brought with him a style of play he called the WRAG Offense. We Run and Gun.

It was avant-garde. It was a revelation. It was the new game in town.

Today, 51 years after unleashing that flurry of high-energy hoops onto the Oklahoma landscape, Trickey is the focus of a documentary film entitled "Praise the Lord & Pass Me the Basketball!" that captures the spirit and the personality of the coach and his ORU Titans.

The one-hour film, produced in Nashville by Bigscreen Productions with the guidance of Trickey's children, Kay Herring and Ken Trickey Jr., will premiere in Tulsa at the Circle Cinema, 10 S. Lewis Ave., at a date to be announced. It was originally scheduled for March 28 but was postponed due to the Coronavirus outbreak. A second premiere, in Nashville, is also upcoming.

A preview of Trickey and the Titans was on



Courtesy photo

**COACH AND SCRIBE:** Ken Trickey, left, and Terrell Lester, pictured in 2002. Lester was a sports writer for the Tulsa World in 1968 and covered the first game Trickey coached in Tulsa. They were close friends for more than 40 years.

display a year before his arrival on campus. In December 1968, Trickey and his Middle Tennessee State University team played Oral Roberts within its cozy multipurpose home facility known as The Little Round House.

ORU was competing in its fourth season of intercollegiate basketball, playing a schedule of mostly little-known programs such as St. Mary's of the Plains, King's College and Harris Teachers College, plus a few junior colleges and university junior varsity teams.

Middle Tennessee was a respected university, a certified basketball program, coached by the 35-year-old Trickey.

On that December night, Trickey's Middle Tennessee team slapped around the ORU Titans, shooting and scoring at will, prevailing 115-98.

Oral Roberts himself, as normal practice in those days, was courtside. He took note of the rollicking outcome, and the coach on the visiting bench.

When the 1968-69 season was completed, Roberts parted ways with the coach, Bill White, who had launched the university's



Courtesy photo

**PRAISE THE LORD AND PASS ME THE BASKETBALL:** Coach Ken Trickey is flanked by All-American guard Richard Fuqua, left, and recruit Glenn Buntin of Sand Springs in 1970 as they display ORU trophies.

program in 1965. Roberts immediately hired Trickey.

Over the next five seasons, 1969-70 to 1973-74, Trickey would convert ORU basketball from a footnote into a headliner.

He recruited talented players, skilled players, players who could and would weaponize the WRAG Offense.

He built a program that commanded the national spotlight.

His teams were statistical marvels. They led the nation in scoring, and in rebounding.

He guided the university through the transition from small-college NAIA to top-shelf NCAA membership.

He joined with Roberts to construct and open the Mabee Center in 1973.

In only his third season, he was at the helm when ORU was invited to the National Invitation Tournament.

In his fourth season, ORU was ranked fourth by Sports Illustrated in its preseason publication. There was a nationally televised game from the Mabee Center. ORU accepted a second-straight NIT invitation.

By year five, Trickey and ORU were legitimate members of college basketball's elite. The team earned weekly spots in the national polls and defeated established programs.

In March 1975, ORU was selected to participate in the NCAA post-season tournament. The field at that time consisted of 30 teams. ORU was not a member of a conference and was invited as an independent.

Such was the national respect for ORU that the Mabee Center was awarded a regional tournament, with the winner advancing to the Final Four.

That is what Ken Trickey accomplished in five seasons as head basketball coach at Oral Roberts University.

He took a nondescript, four-year-old basketball program and within five seasons transformed it into an upper echelon entity.

ORU fashioned a record of 118-23 in those five seasons under Trickey.

Twice, his teams averaged more than 100 points per game in a season. His other three teams averaged more than 93.

The NCAA three-point shot was more than a decade away. The NCAA had issued a ban

on dunking basketballs in 1967.

Still, Trickey's WRAG Offense was the ultimate in basketball entertainment.

In short order, he became a celebrity of the first rank.

He was in demand as a public speaker. Fans crowded around him before, during and after games. He was a media favorite.

He was funny, handsome, outgoing.

He produced entertaining basketball teams, populated by crowd-pleasing operatives such as Richard Fuqua, Larry Baker, Eddie Woods and Haywood Hill.

On many occasions, during spirited action on the court, Trickey could be found conversing with fans in the stands.

Assistant Coach Terry Scott recalled a 1973 pregame talk from Trickey, addressing his team while preparing to write a scouting report of the University of Houston on a chalkboard.

"Oh, never mind," Trickey said. "We're better than they are."

ORU then went out and defeated Houston, 118-108.

Trickey was a player's coach, consistently turning the focus toward his roster of athletes, giving each the room in which to grow and flourish.

Greg Davis, a member of the 1970-73 Titans, said recently: "Coach Trickey was an inspiration to us all."

Baker, who played alongside Davis, said of Trickey: "He loved us. He was a master of putting people together from different backgrounds."

Trickey appreciated offensive basketball like few others. He never met a shot he didn't like.

"The only difference between a good shot and a bad shot is if it goes in or not," he used to say.

The title of the documentary, which includes interviews with nearly two dozen former players and assistant coaches, was borrowed from a *Sport* magazine headline "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ball to Fuqua."

Trickey died at the age of 79 on Dec. 4, 2012, 44 years and two days after he and his Middle Tennessee team introduced Tulsa to the WRAG Offense.

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# Pole Vaulting Great's Story Told in Tulsan's Book

## ORU Track Coach Joe Dial Highlighted by Doug Eaton

By GLENN HIBDON  
GTR Sports Writer

For nine years, Marlow native Joe Dial was the greatest pole vaulter in the land, breaking the American record nine times and briefly holding the world indoor mark. He soared higher and higher and higher. Still, it wasn't enough.

"What's so funny is I never jumped as high as I knew I could," said Dial, the Oral Roberts University track and field-cross country coach since 1993. "I was so poor growing up and if I broke the American record I would get \$2,500 from Nike. If I broke the world record I got \$5,000.

"Breaking the American record was easy and in my mind why shouldn't I break the American record over and over and get more money? My biggest regret is that I never jumped as high as I could. I should have jumped higher."

Maybe so, but the Oklahoma State graduate had a career to write home about. Dial, 57, finished with a best clearance of 19 feet, 6 1/2 inches and won the bronze medal at the 1989 Indoor World Championships in Budapest, Hungary. A book was recently published to highlight his exploits and he retired as the crown jewel of a family that lived and breathed pole vaulting.

The runway to legendary status began for Dial at the tender age

of five in Gatlin, a small town between Marlow and Duncan. Dial's brother Rex was already a state champion and won the Meet of Champions. When Rex broke his pole one day, coach Melson gave half of it to Joe.

"My dad, Earl Dean Dial, taught me to vault in the front yard," said Joe. "He was No. 1 going into the state meet, but he broke his arm in a car wreck and didn't get to jump. In 1924, my grandpa won gold medals in the long jump, high jump, shot put and discus. He was the all-around champion and my grandma gave me his medals when he passed away. They were made of real gold."

The family athletics dynasty had begun and the pedigree proved vital. Son Tommy Dial holds the Oklahoma Class 6A state record, nephew Josh secured the 5A state meet record, nephew Bruce was No. 1 nationally in high school in 1993 and niece Dena Dial was a two-time All-America at ORU.

"Bruce wanted me to coach him when I was in town and Claude Roumain, the ORU coach at the time, said 'if you get him to come here I will give you a job,'" said Dial, whose wife Shawna is now one of his assistant coaches. "When I started here I didn't have any assistants. I was overwhelmed with 70 kids on the team. I needed help and she volunteered. She didn't know anything about track."

Today Mrs. Dial handles all business aspects and travel arrangements of the program and even recruits.

"I couldn't have done it without her," insisted Dial, married to his track and field soulmate for 33 years.

The coach has had more than his share of trials and tribulations since arriving on the ORU campus. The program almost dissolved in the early 2000s due to a financial crisis. He didn't even have a track and field complex until 2017 and chronic back pain and eight surgeries nearly cost him dearly. The school still does not give full scholarships for track.

"Track has changed over the years. Schools now give full scholarships plus \$500 to \$1,000 a month," Dial said. "ORU doesn't do that. That makes for a little unfair advantage. We had to start over (15 years ago when the program almost died). The cuts almost killed us, but we're right in the middle of rebuilding. I need another couple of recruiting years like I've had the last couple of years and we'll be right back in the hunt."

Helping in the reconstruction is the state of the art complex ORU built for the program. Gone are the days when Dial was forced to load his team into a pickup truck and head to Jenks for practice sessions. This season ORU will play host to the state's premier high school invitational meet and



Courtesy photo  
**THE SKY'S THE LIMIT:** Tulsa author Doug Eaton, left, and Joe Dial with Eaton's interesting coverage of the athletic career of Joe Dial.

a college event that will include Oklahoma, Kansas and other regional powers.

Dial and his team have long been studies in extremes. On the plus side, he was a four-time Oklahoma high school champion, four time NCAA titlist and the national prep track athlete of the year in 1981. As a coach, Dial tutored 50 All-Americans, won 18 Mid-Continent Conference meets and had two athletes sweep NCAA championships.

All of that came with a touch of irony.

"I've had eight lower back surgeries," Dial said. "I thought I would have to quit coaching. I was in too much pain and it had gone on for years. I was close to retiring because I had to take pain medicine and injections all the time. I kept rupturing my discs."

"I had those eight surgeries in a year and a half. Then I went to see Mike Peterson, a chiropractor, and he helped me with physical therapy. He worked on

me twice a week and it started breaking up all the scar tissue. Each week I kept getting better and better and I was able to stop taking medicine. I've got a new lease on life and I feel great now."

Dial must have relied on the courage and strength he found as a yearling pole vaulter and perhaps a little divine inspiration to soldier on through adversity. To him, it's still all a mystery.

"I don't know why I was good at vaulting. I don't how I did it," he said. "I was little, a tiny thing. I always had good speed and the support of my father. My dad coached me and it (pole vaulting) seemed to come a little easier to me."

No matter the event, Dial succeeded. He long jumped 23-5 1/2 to win a state title at Marlow, ran the 100-yard dash in 10.0 seconds and legs on both the 400 and 1,600 relay teams.

Considering Dial's achieve-  
(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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# Bishop Kelley Seniors Headed to OSU and Army

## SPORTS

By **MIKE MOGUIN**  
GTR Sports Writer

Zach Middleton and Cori Lewis have been close friends since second grade.

It sure was a plus for the Bishop Kelley football skill-position duo with the success they had in high school, helping the Comets to playoff appearances. Now seniors, Middleton and Lewis are college bound for Oklahoma State and Army respectively. They, along with other gridiron athletes across town as well as the country, signed letters of intent on national signing day.

Their favorite moment with Kelley came when they hooked up on a 60-yard halfback pass their junior season that proved to be the game-winner in a 34-33 victory.

"I completely remember it in my mind when I threw a touchdown pass to Cori to win the game," said Middleton, who played running back and cornerback on defense. "We were then on defense. They (McGuinness) got a couple of good plays, then we shut them down on their last series and we got the ball back. That was by far my most memorable game."

"When he threw the ball, I remember catching that (halfback pass) and running and you could just hear the crowd," said Lewis, a wide receiver who also played safety on defense. "Like the moment I catch it and then when I run through the end zone I turn around and see my teammates running towards me. It's just like a big moment, I had the whole team involved."

Middleton, 5-11, 190, is known as a confident, strong, fast and hard

worker at his position.

"I think I outwork most people on the field," Middleton said.

What led him to the Pokes is nothing new.

"It's the environment there. When you're there, you just feel like you're at home," Middleton said.

A good impression was made too.

"All the coaches are real people. They're not going to sugar coat anything," he said. "Everything they say to you is the truth. They don't sweet talk you and tell you lies."

"It's an easy decision because it is a well-known football program and it's an hour up the road for my parents and family to come up and watch me too. It's not a big haul for them to get there," said Middleton, who chose OSU over Iowa State and Army.

A favorite NFL running back of the Cowboy signee is Dalvin Cook of the Minnesota Vikings.

"He is so quick," he said. "His cuts are insane, but I am also a Vikings' fan so I may be biased," he said laughing. "But I also followed Dalvin Cook when he was at Florida State. That's who I try to emulate in the game."

Middleton hopes to give the best of his ability to provide for OSU. "I want to win a Big 12 Championship," he said.

Lewis is known to be explosive as a receiver.

"I play smart and I have to use that to my advantage and see what I can do with it," he said.

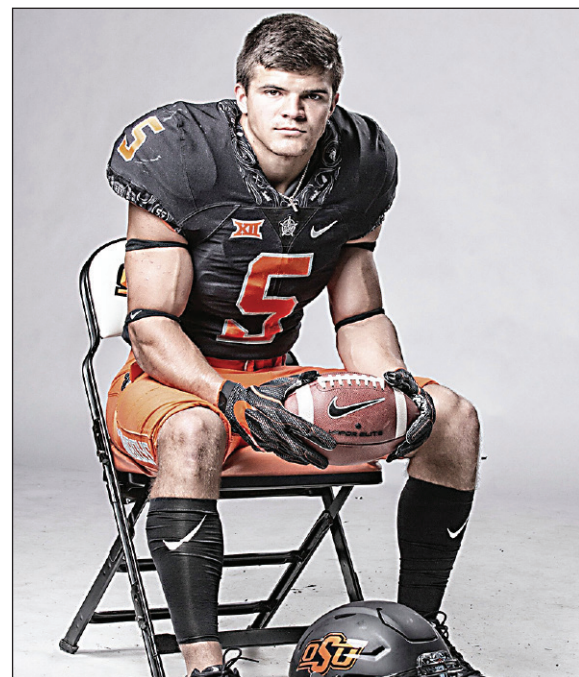
Family ties played a role in Lewis' decision to go to West Point (N.Y.).

"When (Army) offered me, it was always in the back of my mind. I then talked with my grandpa and he served in the Army and he inspired me to make my final decision."

Lewis, 5-9, 170, chose Army over Northern Illinois, Western



ZACH MIDDLETON



CORI LEWIS

Iowa and Central Oklahoma. He will play running back at Army. He played that spot before high school and the Black Knights rely on a ground attack.

"Army has the triple-option, so I'll be used as a slot running back," Lewis said.

The NFL receiver he likes to watch is Stefon Diggs, who also plays with the Minnesota Vikings. "By far, he has the best routes," Lewis said.

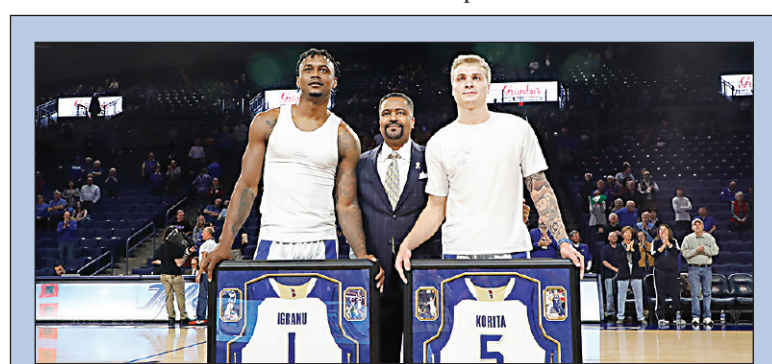
Lewis is hoping to play immediately as a freshman, but if not, by his sophomore season and through-out.

"That's the goal," he said. "Then I hope to make it to the NFL. If not, then I hope to get my engineering degree and minor in business and serve for five years and be an engineer in the Army. Then after

those five years, I can choose where I want to go."

Lewis said he looks forward to

when the Black Knights play OU at home next Sept. 26. He said it will be super fun.



HARRY LENTZ for GTR Newspapers

**SALUTING SENIORS:** Tulsa Golden Hurricane seniors Martins Igbano and Lawson Korita were honored at the final home game this season Feb. 29. With them is Frank Heath, who was recently named the American Athletic Conference Coach of the Year. Igbano has been named Sixth Man of the Year.

## Joe Dial a Record Breaker

(Continued from page 15)

ments, University of Tulsa Law School graduate Doug Eaton decided his saga should be told and it was in the recently released "The Sky's The Limit – The Joe Dial Story" from Gold Medal Publishing. The book took years to complete and was worth the wait.

"I met Doug six or eight years ago and it took that long before I was ready to do the book," Dial said. "I met him at a Jenks football game and he told me he would really like to write about me sometime. I told him I didn't feel like I was ready and I put him off. I finally told him I was ready to do it (in 2016)."

"I thought it would be something quick, but we met pretty much every Wednesday for a year. It took an entire year to do it, but it was fun. We ended up doing four book signings and did the last one at Marlow on

the Fourth of July last year."

Dial said the book covers his life from age five to the present. Country star Garth Brooks and all-time great pole vaulting champion Sergey Bubka penned forewords. Dial said he and Eaton will donate all profits with his going to an orphanage in Paraguay.

Now the little country boy from the dusty plains of Oklahoma has a little time to reflect on a career that transformed him into one of the state's greatest athletic success stories. And he has the book to prove it. His legacy is certain although he considers it a bit tarnished.

"There was no jumping as high as I could have and that's one regret I can't do anything about now," he said. "I'll just keep coaching because I believe in what ORU stands for, the whole person and developing kids. I still enjoy doing that."

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## DINING OUT IN GREATER TULSA

# Blue Dome Market a Newcomer to Downtown Tulsa

### LOCAL DINING

By **BLAKE AUSTYN**  
Contributing Writer

Blue Dome Market Restaurant and Bodega, 211 E. 2nd St. in downtown Tulsa's Blue Dome District, held its grand opening weekend on March 7 and 8. The restaurant "softly" opened a week earlier.

The space was originally occupied by Lambrusco's Deli.

The restaurant and bodega is owned by Robert and Donna Merrifield of Polo Grill fame, located in Utica Square. They have owned and operated Polo Grill since 1983. The Merrifields have recently embarked on a number of other local projects: Calo Latin Grill & Taqueria, located in the Adams Building at 4th Street and Cheyenne Avenue; Polo Lounge, located adjacent to Polo Grill with a separate menu; and Tucci's, 1344 E. 15th St., which the duo took ownership of in 2019.

Blue Dome Market Restaurant and Bodega offers a menu that spans breakfast through dinner, and the hours match that. The menu is reasonably priced, starting with the Blue Dome Slaw Dog priced at \$3.86 and the Blue Dome Market Burger at \$3.97. It also consists of entree items like meatloaf and chicken fried steak that average \$10, sandwiches, and breakfast skillet and burritos.

The restaurant features a full bar plus its bodega that sells wine and beer as well as snacks and home decor and drinking accessories.



**JUST OPENED:** Blue Dome Market Restaurant and Bodega, 211 E. 2nd St., opened in downtown Tulsa's Blue Dome District. The space was originally occupied by Lambrusco's Deli. The restaurant and bodega is owned by Robert and Donna Merrifield of Polo Grill fame.

The restaurant follows the self-serve model of ordering at the counter, with food being delivered to your table and drinks self-serve.

We visited on a Saturday afternoon, between lunch and dinner-time.

I chose to start with the Black Bean Tenderloin Chili - it was filled with black beans and meat with a nice flavor. It wasn't piping hot, but it still tasted delicious.

We then selected the Reuben sandwich and the Tuna Salad Croissant.

The Reuben can be ordered as a half or full size. I opted for the full size. The sandwich came filled with corned beef and sauer-

kraut plus swiss cheese on grilled rye, with your choice of sauce or horseradish on the side.

The bread was very thinly sliced, and the meat was not at all fatty—as many Reubens are. This all made the sandwich very light and easy to eat, which was a nice surprise.

The Tuna Salad Croissant, made up of tuna salad, red onion, romaine lettuce, and with the option of half or full size, proved to be another light menu option. It was delicious and fresh, with the red onion providing some nice flavor.

Further information regarding the restaurant can be found on its Facebook page.



**RESTAURANT AND BODEGA:** Blue Dome Market Restaurant and Bodega, 211 E. 2nd St., features a full bar plus its bodega that sells wine and beer as well as snacks, home decor and drinking accessories. Its menu features items that span breakfast through dinner.



**FOOD CHOICES:** The Black Bean Tenderloin Chili and the Reuben at the Blue Dome Market Restaurant and Bodega in downtown Tulsa.

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## THE ECONOMY

# Center of Excellence for Advanced Technology Opens at MidAmerica Industrial Park in Pryor

Oklahoma's MidAmerica Industrial Park hosted a ribbon cutting and open house for the Park's new workforce Center of Excellence in Pryor in February. The Center, a space dedicated to technology, training and career opportunities, is the product of a vision cast to ensure that companies at MidAmerica have access to a quality workforce and job-seekers have opportunity. The Center provides access to advanced technology to assist its companies with research and development and product development.

In organizing the structure, MidAmerica took the approach of a multi-tenant facility instead of working with a singular entity.

"We wanted a consortium model that leveraged the expertise of our partners that, when working together, created a tailored approach to workforce development," said Dave Stewart, MidAmerica Chief Administrative Officer.

To meet the workforce training and development needs, MidAmerica has partnered with Northeast Tech's business and industry team to assist with the creation of applicable and relevant training programs. Leveraging the knowledge of experts from MidAmerica companies' programs are designed for specific purposes and outcomes. Incumbent employees, job seekers and prospective employees can develop in-demand technical skill sets. From Industrial Maintenance to Advanced Manufacturing Technologies, Northeast Tech meets the need.

Another strategic partnership has

been formed with Action Group Staffing, the anchor tenant in the Center, to provide ease of access to employees and to jobs. AGS is an excellent partner providing employment services for employers and job-seekers. AGS implements innovative staffing solutions that include employee training, alternative worker pipelines and transportation services.

MidAmerica has partnered with Cherokee Nation Aerospace and Defense in the establishment of an advanced manufacturing program aimed at educating and training workers on high-end manufacturing technology and processes. Not only will the Resource Center provide education and training services, but will also be accessible to MAIP companies for research and development and product development purposes.

Featured equipment within the program includes:

- Haas CNC Machines: VF-2SS w/TRT100, Haas ST-15Y, Haas ST-10, Haas Minimill
- Mitutoyo Coordinate Measurement Machine
- Markforged 3D Printers : Onyx One (x2), Mark Two (x2)
- Bigrep ONE Large Volume 3D Printer
- Kioke 4' X 8' Plasma Cutter

Finally, the Center is also the home of the Mayes County FIRST Robotics team (MCROBO) and Pryor High School's Advanced Manufacturing Program. These programs provide area high school students the opportunity to learn

valuable skills in computer aided drafting, electromechanical technologies, controls programming as well as critical soft skills. The robotics team competes in regional competitions with other teams from across the country.

MidAmerica is only getting started with the new Center and has plans in place to further develop its offerings. New programming will be established, including an automation and control technology laboratory that will replicate the latest technology applications.

While the Center officially celebrated its grand opening on February 25, it has been buzzing with activity on a daily basis.

"We are very excited about what the future holds for the new center and the careers that it will impact for local workers," said Stewart. "We will continue to create high-end training programs and form strategic partnerships to further strengthen the opportunities at the Center."

### About MidAmerica Industrial Park

MidAmerica Industrial Park is Oklahoma's largest industrial park. More than 70 firms are located within the industrial park including operations of seven Fortune 500 companies. The park was founded in 1960, when the Federal government sold most of the former Oklahoma Ordnance Works to a public trust, the Oklahoma Ordnance Works Authority. It covers 9,000 acres.



Courtesy photo

**CUTTING THE RIBBON:** David Stewart, MidAmerica Industrial Park's Chief Administrative Officer, cuts the ribbon as members of the MAIP's board of trustees participate.

## Loans Available to Small Firms Impacted by the Coronavirus

The U.S. Small Business Administration is offering low-interest federal disaster loans for working capital to Oklahoma small businesses suffering substantial economic injury as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

This funding will be provided by the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act that was recently signed by President Trump.

To qualify for the program, the state must submit documentation of business losses for at least five businesses per county.

If approved, an SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan assistance declaration will make disaster

loans of up to \$2 million available to small businesses and private, nonprofit organizations to help alleviate economic injury caused by COVID-19.

According to the SBA, these loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that cannot be paid because of the impact of COVID-19. The interest rate is 3.75 percent for small businesses without credit available elsewhere and 2.75 percent for nonprofits. Businesses with credit available elsewhere are not eligible for this program.

For more information and to submit a form, visit [ok.gov/OEM](http://ok.gov/OEM).



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# Solar Power Gaining Momentum in Oklahoma



In 2012, my book entitled “America Needs America’s Energy: Creating Together the People’s Energy Plan” reviewed several forms of energy, including solar. On pages 76-77 of the book, solar energy is highlighted. Pros and cons were presented. The pros included solar energy is secure, solar energy is normally reliable in certain areas of the country, and solar energy is clean. The cons listed were solar energy can be costly to produce and solar energy is largely financed by government incentives.



By MARK A. STANSBERRY

Eight years later, after the book was published, I recently had a discussion with a good friend who is in the solar energy business, J.W. Peters. He and his business partner, Kevin Jones, are the principle owners of Solar Power of Oklahoma.

Jones and Peters were recruited to start installing rooftop solar for a few out-of-state sales companies. They decided that they needed to become more directly involved with the solar industry in Oklahoma.

“When determining the name of our organization, Solar Power of Oklahoma seemed to be the most straight forward and inclusive name we could come up with,” according to Peters.

“Most of our residential customers will see a payback period of roughly eight years, which is about 12.5 percent ROI when you factor in the year over year increase in the electrical rate increases,” he said.

“Over the last 10 years, utility rates have increased 3.4 percent per year. It is normally shocking

for our customers to hear exactly what that means for them on their electric bills.

“With that being said, most customers opt into one of our solar financed programs with interest rates as low as 3.99 percent. With these finance programs, most of our customers see loan payments that are lower than their current electric bills,” he noted.

“This is a great solution for most of our customers due to the fact that they have already budgeted their electric utility bill into their normal monthly budget. Once we have shared all the facts with our potential customers, we let them make some decisions about their electrical future.”

Here are some facts provided by Solar Power of Oklahoma: solar power is the most abundant energy source on Earth, solar panel costs have fallen 99 percent since 1977, solar energy is cheaper than fossil fuels, and solar power panels can last 40 years or more.

Here are some facts about solar in Oklahoma: national ranking is 45th (in 2018), 4,770 homes in Oklahoma are solar powered, 0.99 percent of the state’s electricity is solar, Oklahoma is potentially the 6th best solar producing state, the total solar investment in the state is \$52.41 million, prices have fallen 36 percent over the last five years and the growth projection is



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479 MW over the next five years.

In the months ahead, I will continue to provide facts on solar as well as other forms of energy. As consumers of energy, we must drive the process, evaluating how we can best leverage our natural resources here at home to ensure long-term energy independence and security. America needs America’s energy!

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

## PSO Moves Forward with Wind Energy Development

The Oklahoma Corporation Commission (OCC) has approved a settlement agreement that allows PSO to move forward with a plan to add 675 megawatts (MW) of wind energy to serve customers. The plan calls for PSO to own a share of three Oklahoma wind farms known collectively as the North Central Energy Facilities.

The settlement was reached in

December 2019 between PSO, the Public Utility Division Staff of the OCC, Oklahoma Attorney General’s Office, customer groups and other parties.

“Approval of this agreement will allow our customers to have their energy needs met with affordable, Oklahoma wind energy and will add significant investment in our state,” said Peggy Simmons, PSO president and chief operating of-

ficer. “We are grateful to all the parties whose willingness to collaborate led to the settlement and to the Commission for their approval of the agreement.”

The proposed North Central Energy Facilities are to be located in portions of seven counties in north central Oklahoma – Alfalfa, Blaine, Custer, Garfield, Kingfisher, Major and Woods. The three wind farms represent

a nearly \$2 billion investment in Oklahoma. PSO’s 45.5 percent ownership share of the 1,485 MW project is projected to save PSO customers more than \$1 billion, net of cost, during the time the wind farms are in service.

PSO’s partner in the proposal is sister company Southwestern Electric Power Company (SWEPCO). Regulatory approval is pending for SWEPCO.

## Chamber Officials Comment on COVID-19

Mike Neal, president and CEO of the Tulsa Regional Chamber:

“We at the Chamber are closely monitoring this rapidly developing situation. It’s a time of uncertainty for area businesses, but we’re confident in the leadership of our city, county, state and federal governments to ensure the health and safety of northeast Oklahoma families. The Chamber is in close coordination with our regional health care providers, and we have total confidence in their preparedness and response plans.

“Likewise, area businesses have done an excellent job preparing their employees for potential impacts from COVID-19. We encourage our members to be proactive, exercise an abundance of

caution, and heed the advice of medical professionals at the Tulsa Health Department, Oklahoma State Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control. Our community and nation have been challenged before, and we’ve proven our resilience. We expect this situation will be no different.”

Bill Murphy, senior vice president of economic development:

“The Chamber remains committed to supporting Tulsa-area businesses, no matter the circumstances. From remote working to temporary closures, COVID-19 is impacting local companies. While we are fortunate to have strong momentum from a very robust regional economy these last several years, it’s too early to know what the

long-term economic implications will be. The Chamber is ready and willing to help businesses prepare for potential long-term impacts in the weeks and months to come.”

Ray Hoyt, president of Tulsa Regional Tourism:

“As the situation evolves, we are working with local and national event planners to ensure their future events are safe for our community and their attendees traveling to Tulsa. Our team is in close contact with local partners, including area venues and hoteliers. They are all implementing preventive measures to ensure visitor safety and health remain their top priorities. Currently, no Tulsa-area venue or hotel has closed due to COVID-19.”

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# USA BMX Names Shane Fernandez Chief Strategy Officer

USA BMX officials have announced the selection of Shane Fernandez as the chief strategy officer and owner's representative of USA BMX/ BMX Canada, president of USA BMX Freestyle and chairman of the USA BMX Foundation. Fernandez



SHANE FERNANDEZ

assumes his duties in Tulsa as BMX's lead representative during the construction of its new corporate headquarters, the National BMX Hall of Fame and the Hardesty Family Track, which will open in 2021.

Fernandez holds a lifelong passion for competitive off-road cycling, motorcycle racing, and BMX freestyle. He has organized and led several sanctioned bicycle and moto-trials events in Oklahoma, Arkansas, and on his private track.

"During the last six years, we have experienced Shane's leadership first hand on varying capacities as USA BMX navigated the process of bringing our headquarters from Arizona to the heart of downtown Tulsa," said BA Anderson, CEO for USA BMX/BMX Canada. "He has a unique and diverse skill set to transform big ideas into reality. This is a critical move on our part as Tulsa becomes the hub for expanding the impact of our sport and as BMX continues to evolve."

Prior to joining USA BMX, Fernandez served as president of the Southwestern Region at Nabholz Construction. He has more than 25 years of executive leadership experience in both small business and corporations focused in STEAM-related industries such as architecture, engineering, construction and art. Additionally, Fernandez brings significant fundraising experience, totaling more than \$30 million in non-profit and polit-

ical arenas. He is also a founding member of two nationally acclaimed non-profit organizations.

"Sports transformed my life as a competitive youth and continued as an outlet during my adulthood. USA BMX provides a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for me to combine my personal experience with my professional career," Fernandez said. "BMX racing continues to rise in prominence as a national and international sanctioned sport. The impact of BMX racing has resonated with me my entire life. I am elated to join this team where our mission is dedicated to deploying the same impact to others."

Most recently, Fernandez served as the 2019 chairman of the Tulsa Sports Commission and played a role in the successful recruitment of the international Iron Man competition to Tulsa during the next three years.

"It's no surprise that USA BMX found the leader to bring innovation and growth to their U.S. Operations right here in their new hometown," said Ray Hoyt, president of VisitTulsa and the Tulsa Sports Commission. "Shane brings a personal passion for the sport and possesses an exceptional resume of diverse leadership that makes him the perfect choice to represent this international brand from Tulsa."

Fernandez serves as a trustee and committee chair of the Tulsa Community Foundation, the second largest community foundation in the United States with \$4.2 billion in assets. He was also named Minority Business Champion for the states of Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana by the White House and US Business Council.

## BUSINESS & PEOPLE NOTES

The Tulsa Regional Chamber announced the appointment of **Andrea Pemberton** as executive director of Tulsa's Young Professionals (TYPROS). Pemberton's first day in the role was March 2.



PEMBERTON

Pemberton most recently served for two years as TYPROS program manager. In her new position she is responsible for developing and implementing strategies to attract and retain young talent to the Tulsa region, supporting civic engagement initiatives and helping develop Tulsa's next generation of business and community leaders.

"We are tremendously excited to have Andrea in this role," said Mike Neal, president and CEO of the Tulsa Regional Chamber. "As TYPROS marks its 15th year, Andrea is the ideal person to lead the organization, and we look forward to seeing her talent and energy in action."

Pemberton's previous professional experience includes serving as an AmeriCorps member with City Year Tulsa, as well as serving as a math teacher at Tulsa Honor Academy. Pemberton is also a Fulbright scholar, having researched in Israel.

"I'm excited and grateful for the opportunity to serve as TYPROS executive director," said Pemberton. "I look forward to working alongside TYPROS members and partners to strengthen our program initiatives and develop opportunities for increased community impact."

Pemberton holds a Bachelor of Anthropology degree from the University of Oklahoma, and she is pursuing a Master of Organizational Dynamics degree from the University of Oklahoma-Tulsa.

### About TYPROS

Founded in 2005 as a program of the Tulsa Regional Chamber, TYPROS is one of the largest young professionals organizations in the country. The mission of TYPROS is to attract and retain young, creative talent to the Tulsa region, while also developing the next generation of leaders and enhancing Tulsa's sense of place. TYPROS programming offers young Tulsans opportunities for networking, professional development and civic engagement.

For more information, visit typros.org.

AVB Bank President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Ted Cundiff, proudly announced that **Donnie Cox** has joined AVB as president of the Broken Arrow market. Cox will be responsible for oversight of AVB's junior commercial and consumer lending initiatives, as well as managing bank special assets.



COX

Cox has more than 30-years of banking experience in both commercial and consumer/retail environments, with extensive knowledge of operations and lending.

Cundiff said, "Donnie is going to be an integral part of AVB Bank's strategic growth. He has substantial insight into commercial and consumer lending and is very familiar with the Tulsa Metro and surrounding markets." Cundiff continued, "Bankers with experience...such as what Donnie possesses, don't come along too often, and we were certainly thrilled to have him join our team."

"Broken Arrow is a wonderful place to live and work. I am thrilled to be a part of this community and join AVB, a strong and vibrant community bank," stated Cox. "Since before statehood, AVB has been committed to this community, and I look forward to contributing to the future success and growth of this bank...and our continued commitment to seeing our customers and community succeed and grow."

A graduate of Oologah High School, Cox went on to study at Oklahoma State University, before receiving his Bachelors in Business Administration - Finance, from Northeastern State University.

He is a graduate of the Southwest Graduate School of Banking, where he was recognized for leadership distinction and held the class officer position of treasurer.

He and his wife, Gayla, along with their three children, Taylor, Tyler and Taryn, call Broken Arrow home.

Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum has named **Michelle Brooks** as the **City of Tulsa's director of communications**. The hiring comes on the heels of her appointment as the interim director of communications, while serving in her role as the deputy director of communications and mayoral press secretary. She will take her post effective immediately.



BROOKS

"Michelle Brooks is one of the best in the country in the field of public communications, and I am grateful she has agreed to serve the City of Tulsa as our new Director of communications," Bynum said. "Whether it is in leading crisis communications during events like the May 2019 flood or in the everyday work to provide Tulsans with the information they need, Michelle is universally respected for her talent and will be a great leader of our Communications Department moving forward."

A champion of various projects and communications efforts, some of Brooks' most renowned work includes leading the Joint Information Center (JIC) for the 2019 Tulsa flood and the 2017 midtown tornado. Some other key projects and communications strategies she led include A Better Way for Tulsa, Tulsa Sobering Center, the 1921 Graves Search and the roll-out of Tulsa's 311 system, to name a few.

She holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in Marketing from Oklahoma State University and is accredited in Public Relations by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). She is also the only person in Tulsa that is certified as a Master of Public Information Officer by the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security/FEMA.

Brooks currently serves on the Tulsa chapter boards of the Association for Women in Communications and Public Relations Society of America. She was recently recognized by PRSA Tulsa as 2019's Young PR Professional of the Year.

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# Mid-Century Blue Cross-Blue Shield Building Listed on National Register of Historic Places

What does a mid-century modern high-rise office building look like when it is not a curtain wall structure? If you guessed the Blue Cross-Blue Shield Building at 1215 S. Boulder Ave., you are right. The original BC-BS building is strategically located just inside the inner dispersal loop where the Broken Arrow Expressway sinks below street level. Conveniently, it has parking lots to the north and south.

It is hard to imagine the original building at 40,000 square feet was only three stories when built in 1954. Long time Tulsa architect, Joe Koberling, must have had a plan for a high-rise design. In 1967, a nine-story addition was begun to create a full 12 stories again credited to Koberling. Finished in 1969, it was one of his last major projects. The exterior is seamless with no discernable difference between the original and the addition. Few remodeled buildings achieve this.

The building's expansion coincides with the growth of its insurance company owner. In 1960, federal employees were given an option for an Employee Health Benefits Program. In 1965, Medicare was established which effectively lowered the number of customers 65 years of age and older.

Faced with a very distinctive yellow-tan brick, the Blue Cross-Blue Shield Building is a composite frame structure. Horizontal bands of windows

occur on the west and south elevations. The window bands wrap the southwest corner and terminate at a projecting brick wall. Limestone sills complete this fenestration.

## On Architecture



By ROGER COFFEY, AIA

Projecting concrete sunshades enhance these windows. At the top floor, the sunshade for the floor below is incorporated into a projecting balcony with a light steel railing.

The massing of the main building entrance on Boulder at the northwest corner is emphasized with a modest projection which continues vertically the full building height. This element is framed with limestone

pilasters. Between these and below a large projecting canopy (art deco in character) are a pair of double entry doors with a dark red granite surround. Above the doors is a bas-relief PWA type sculpture panel which depicts people engaged in health care related work and includes BC-BS emblems.

Above the canopy, the brick at the entrance element has a corbeled geometric design in transom panels between windows. Within the entrance is a modest sized lobby with a 24-inch square terrazzo checkerboard floor and rose-red marble walls. Three elevators with brass doors and dark wine-colored marble surround fill the east wall.

The Blue Cross-Blue Shield Building was listed on the National Register in 2016. A revolving five story high sign has since been removed from the roof. But at night a band of bright blue



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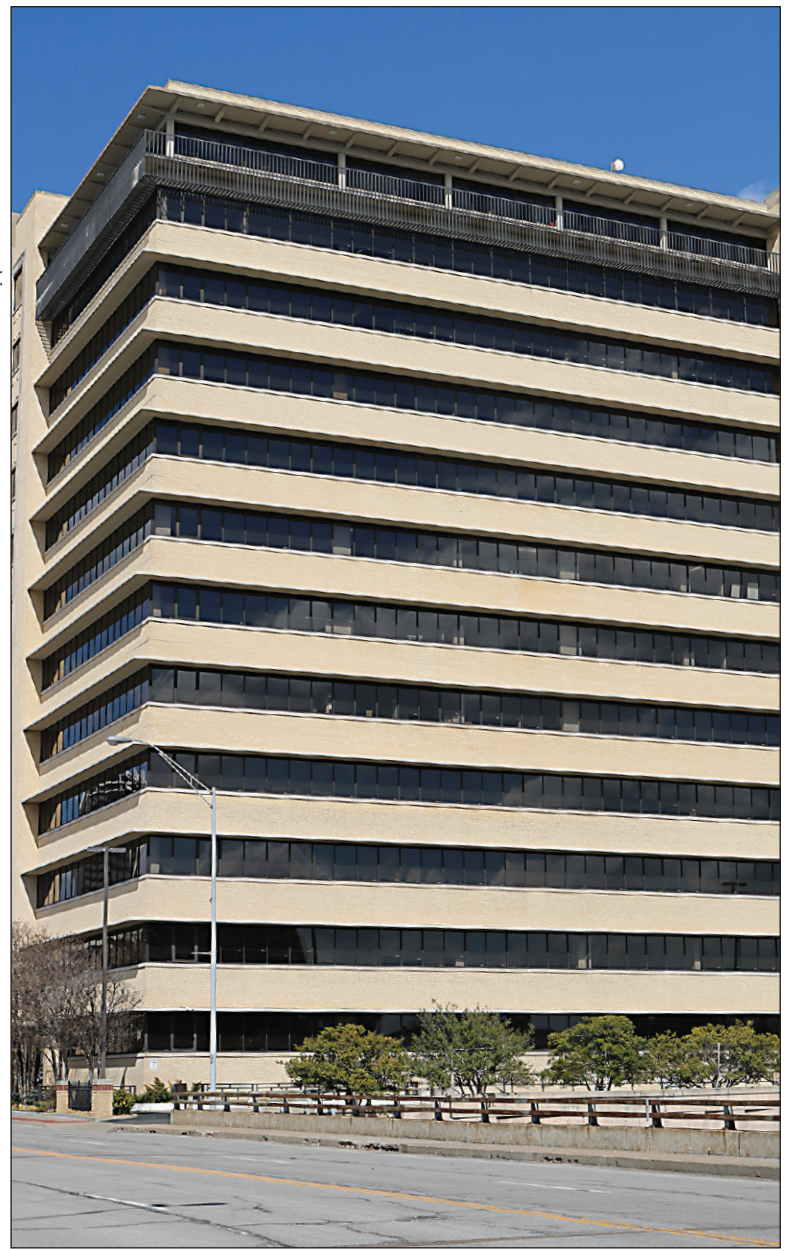
**IMPRESSIVE STRUCTURE:** The Blue Cross-Blue Shield Building on Boulder Ave. viewing from the southwest. Horizontal bands of windows occur on the west and south elevations.



**IMPRESSIVE ENTRANCE:** The Blue Cross-Blue Shield logo remains a tradition at the 1215 S. Boulder Ave. location.

neon surrounds and highlights the top of the building.

In 2011 Blue Cross-Blue Shield sold the building to First United Methodist Church and consoli-



**FRONTAL VIEW:** The front of the Blue Cross-Blue Shield Building faces west onto Boulder Ave. The horizontal window bands wrap the southwest corner and terminate at the projecting brick wall.

## Tulsan Presented with Quilt of Valor for 21 Years of Service

Sherrill Womeldorff of Tulsa was awarded a quilt during the March 6 meeting of the Grand Lake O' the Cherokees Quilt Guild in Grove.

Peggy Evans, who presented the program "A Revolution in Quilts," also talked about the Quilts of Valor Foundation, whose mission is to cover service members and veterans touched by war with comforting and healing quilts.

When she learned of Wom-

eldorff's 21-year service in the Navy and Naval Reserve, she awarded the hand-made quilt to him on behalf of the Quilts of Valor Foundation. The presentation and standing ovation took Womeldorff by surprise.

During an emotional talk about his experiences in the service, he expressed his deep gratitude for the award. As Ms. Evans wrapped him in the quilt, she thanked him for his service.



Courtesy CHARLES CANTRELL

**AMERICAN HERO AWARDED:** Peggy Evans of the Cherokee Quilt Guild presents Sherrill Womeldorff with a Quilt of Valor for 21 years of service.

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FAITH

# Sister M. Therese Gottschalk, SSM, Remembered For Great Service at St. John Ascension Hospital

Courtesy CAITLIN POND  
Ascension St. John

It was with a heavy heart that Ascension St. John announced the passing of Sister M. Therese Gottschalk, SSM. She passed away Feb. 24 in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. She was 88.

Sister Therese served as a leader at Ascension St. John in Oklahoma and with the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother for 38 years. A memorial mass was held in Oshkosh.

In addition, a local remembrance service and Catholic Mass celebrating her life was held in Tulsa.

Sister M. Therese Gottschalk was born in 1931 in Bavaria, Germany, the second of 14 children. She entered the Congregation of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother at the age of 21. She moved to Milwaukee in 1953 and earned a pharmacy degree from Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska in 1960. After graduation, she operated the pharmacy for a new 150-bed hospital in Roswell, New Mexico, for eight years. Sr. Therese left this position to obtain a Master of Science in Hospital Administration from Saint Louis University.

Known for both her commitment to the Mission of Catholic healthcare and her business acumen, Sr. Therese became an assistant administrator of St. John's Hospital in Tulsa (later St. John Medical Center) and its School of Nursing in 1970, serving in this role for two years. As part of her duties, she worked with other assistant

administrators to operate the hospital and to design a new hospital tower. Sr. Therese returned to Roswell for two years to serve as hospital administrator, and returned to Tulsa after being named St. John's hospital president in 1974. Upon her return, the hospital underwent a \$40 million construction project to build the North Tower, now called the J.A. Chapman Tower. The 603-bed tower was dedicated February 22, 1976. Sr. Therese became chief executive officer of St. John Health System in 1982 and served through 2010.

Sr. Therese was always at the forefront of expanding services to meet the growing needs of the community, especially those living in poverty and most vulnerable. During her career, she supervised the building of the Mary K. Chapman Health Plaza, the Bernsen, Kravis, Holliman and Wheeling buildings, and purchase of the Robert W. Davis Tower in Tulsa. Also during her tenure, St. John Health System expanded to include St. John Sapulpa, Jane Phillips Medical Center, St. John Broken Arrow and St. John Owasso. St. John also opened clinics in Sand Springs, Sapulpa and Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, and helped create OMNI Medical Group, a primary care physician group now part of Ascension Medical Group St. John. During her tenure, Regional Medical Laboratory was also established.

Thanks in large part to Sr. Therese's vision, Marian Health System was founded in 1989, loosely combining the healthcare

activities of the three Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother provinces: Wisconsin, New Jersey and Oklahoma/Kansas. Sr. Therese served as president and chief executive officer of the Marian Health System from that time until it joined Ascension on April 1, 2013. Sr. Therese then served as senior executive advisor to the president and chief executive officer of Ascension Health and Executive Vice President of Ascension. She also continued to serve on the boards of the former regional systems of Marian Health System: Ministry Health Care, St. John Health System and Via Christi Health. She also served as an inaugural member of the Ascension Wisconsin Board of Directors until June 2019.

Through the course of her faith-filled life of service, Sr. Therese achieved many honors and recognitions. She was a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives and was recognized with its Regent Award in 1995. She served as president of the Tulsa Hospital Council from 1982-1983, the American Hospital Association Governance Committee, and served on the boards of the Catholic Health Association and the Oklahoma Hospital Association.

In 1984, she served as the Oklahoma Hospital Association Board of Trustees chair. She received the OHA W. Cleveland Rodgers Distinguished Service Award in 1999, was awarded the Association for Women in Communication 2009 Newsmaker Award,



SISTER M. THERESE GOTTSCHALK

was awarded the Award of Merit in 2010 from OHA and held an honorary doctorate of humane letters from the University of Oklahoma. She was inducted into the Tulsa Historical Society's Hall of Fame in 2011.

On Sept. 25, 2019, Sr. Therese left Oklahoma and Ascension St.

John to retire in Oshkosh. The City of Tulsa Mayor, G.T. Bynum, proclaimed that day Sister M. Therese Gottschalk Day for her remarkable service resulting in the legacy of compassionate healthcare for the City of Tulsa, especially for those who are sick, poor and vulnerable.

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