

FEBRUARY  
2024

# THE SHAWNEE JOURNAL

SKIPIYEKIISFWA  
*February "sap month"*

# YA'SASILAWIYAKWE

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

"WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO"

**FEB  
1**

**HIGHER EDUCATION  
WINTER/SPRING DEADLINE**

NOTE: VO-TECH/CERTIFICATE STUDENTS  
MAY APPLY YEAR-ROUND

**FEB  
5**

**MONTHLY BUSINESS  
COUNCIL MEETING\***

MIAMI, OK

**FEB  
14**

**MENWI VALENTINE KIISEKI!**

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY! SEE PAGE 11 FOR A  
VALENTINE-THEMED VOCAB LESSON

**FEB  
19**

**TRIBAL OFFICES CLOSED**

IN OBSERVANCE OF U.S. PRESIDENTS' DAY

**MAR  
2**

**U.S. PRESIDENTIAL  
PREFERENCE PRIMARY**

MISSOURI REPUBLICAN PARTY

**MAR  
4**

**MONTHLY BUSINESS  
COUNCIL MEETING\***

MIAMI, OK

**MAR  
5**

**U.S. PRESIDENTIAL  
PREFERENCE PRIMARY**

CALIFORNIA, OKLAHOMA, TEXAS

**MAR  
10**

**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS  
TIME BEGINS**

**MAR  
19**

**U.S. PRESIDENTIAL  
PREFERENCE PRIMARY**

KANSAS

**MAR  
23**

**U.S. PRESIDENTIAL  
PREFERENCE PRIMARY**

MISSOURI DEMOCRATIC PARTY

**APR  
1**

**MONTHLY BUSINESS  
COUNCIL MEETING\***

MIAMI, OK

**APR  
1**

**DEADLINE TO REQUEST  
GRADUATION HONOR ITEMS**

2024 GRADS: KEEP AN EYE ON THE TRIBE'S WEBSITE  
FOR MORE INFO ABOUT HONOR ITEMS AND THE 2024  
SHAWNEE SCHOLARS BANQUET!

**MAY  
6**

**TRIBAL ELECTIONS  
CANDIDACY FILING  
PERIOD OPENS**

CLOSES JUNE 21

Don't see your local U.S. election  
info? Scan here with your phone to  
search Ballotpedia.



Note: At their regular monthly meeting on September 6, 2022, the Shawnee Tribe Business Council unanimously voted to adopt a new rule of parliamentary procedure for all meetings of the Shawnee Tribe Business and General Council, informally known as a "second reading." Title 1.09.090 stipulates that the Council may not act on new business during the same meeting in which said business is first introduced. In essence, tribal business must be introduced for a first read and discussion in one meeting, then the Council may take action in a subsequent meeting.

Dates & times for special meetings to accommodate the second read rule will be posted on the Tribe's website at [shawnee-nsn.gov/calendar](http://shawnee-nsn.gov/calendar)

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### NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

We recognize that digital communications via social media and the internet are not necessarily preferred by or accessible to every citizen of the Shawnee Tribe. As such, we will always strive to introduce new services & programs for citizens through the Shawnee Journal or other direct mailings to all Shawnee households before we broadcast them on our website or social media.

### FOLLOW US!

Follow the official Shawnee Tribe Facebook, YouTube and Instagram accounts @saawanooki.

### KNOW ANY SHAWNEES WHO'VE MOVED RECENTLY?

Let them know to update their address with our enrollment department so they continue receiving tribal news!

### PIYEETAACIMOOWENEEFA "LITTLE NEWS MESSAGES"

Get Shawnee Tribe news and updates once a month by subscribing to our e-newsletter. Sign up at [shawnee-nsn.gov/subscribe](http://shawnee-nsn.gov/subscribe) or scan here with your smartphone.



# KIWIITAMAAKONAAKI HOKIMAAKI

## MESSAGES FROM THE CHIEFS



**CHIEF  
BEN BARNES**

saawanooki, (Shawnee people),

As I settle back in to the full swing of things after the tribal elections and holiday season, I've been reflecting on my first term as Chief and the outlook I'm taking into 2024

At the outset of my term in 2019, the Tribe's new economic engine was in its first month of operation in Guyton; the cultural center was trying to find its rhythm in Miami, and weekly Shawnee language classes were underway across northeast Oklahoma.

I distinctly remember our pre-pandemic challenges in establishing the Shawnee Tribe Cultural Center. While Golden Mesa opened to a warm welcome from the panhandle community, the cultural center faced obstacles that slowed its progress. A persistent issue was travelers along I-44 stopping in primarily for the center's clean restrooms rather than a cultural destination. Another instance was the State Tourism Department's tone-deaf installation of tipi-shaped picnic areas blocking the view of our beautiful building from the highway. (Of the nine tribes headquartered in the Miami area, none of us historically lived in tipis.) Thankfully, we had a productive meeting with Lt. Governor Matt Pinnell and have since built a working relationship with Tourism.

Just a few months later, we were thrown into the stressful unknowns of COVID-19 and the operational & financial implications that pandemic shutdowns brought. While there were considerable silver linings of the pandemic, such as the advent of our Shawnee Language Immersion Program's virtual education initiative, the following two years were mostly defined by the Tribe's litigation against the U.S. Treasury for calculating CARES Act funding with a population figure of "zero Shawnee people" in their formula.

As many of you remember, I saw absolute red over the Treasury's affront on two counts— we are obviously not a nation of zero people, and the Tribe has a justified claim to every resource rightly due to us. The flagrant erasure at the federal level, juxtaposed with the recent successes this Tribe encountered in other areas, solidified what I see as my utmost duties as Chief.

I firmly believe tribal officials must prioritize their nation's resources and initiatives in ways that continuously increase the prosperity of individual citizens & families and the Tribe as a whole. Further, our values dictate that "resources" are far broader than financial wealth— we also have responsibilities to our ancestors, the land we have ancestral ties to, our systems of care and kinship with one another, and future generations.

After a successful settlement with Treasury in the summer of 2021, our staff developed and implemented over a dozen new, direct services to Shawnee people in 2022 and 2023. We prioritized these programs for their significant, immediate impact on citizens' lives, and we are committed to sustaining and refining them as time continues. The Higher Education Awards program has distributed over 1 million scholarship dollars as of last fall. The Fire Safe Tribal Citizens program recently saved one family's residence (page 7), and nearly \$3.6 million in direct support has been distributed so far in the latest round of COVID-19 Impact Assistance (see page 14 ).

The experiences of the past four years have taught us the importance of insisting on being seen and heard. We have demonstrated that erasure is not an option, and we must continue advocating for our rightful place in history and at the tables of power.

Shawnee history spans more than two dozen states and six international relationships. Today's Shawnee people are scattered across all 50 states and abroad. Recognizing this widespread dispersion, we must also acknowledge that initiatives to generate Shawnee representation and visibility take significant resources and must be methodical. The initiatives we invest in today are seeds planted for a future where our presence and contributions are recognized and celebrated nationwide.





## SECOND CHIEF ROY BALDRIDGE

I'm fully aware of those among us who are eager to see the Shawnee Tribe Cultural Center in Miami reopened as soon as possible. I am eager to see that day myself. As I mentioned before, I believe it is incumbent upon our leadership to act in the benefit of our people, even when those choices are difficult. So, when COVID closed this site, we took the opportunity to reimagine how this resource can be used to better highlight our culture and serve our people. I am excited about the future plans our team is putting together. At present, the entire language team is using the center as their homebase where they offer 13 classes a week to more than 170 Shawnees across the country. We have found eager Shawnees reconnecting to their Tribe and donating their precious time to more than just language classes, but it was the Shawnee Language Immersion Program that found them and brought them home.

I anticipate bringing forth very good news on both the cultural center and the Shawnee Indian Manual Labor School in Fairway, KS, before the next issue of this publication is delivered to you in May.

Please subscribe to our monthly digital communications at [shawnee-nsn.gov/subscribe](http://shawnee-nsn.gov/subscribe) if you have not already. As we move forward, let us remember the values we hold dear, understanding that we must leave room to welcome Creator's hand and timing in every plan we dream up.

niyaawe, hiini lehki (Thank you, that's all)

Ben Barnes  
Chief

hato caakiwiyeefa (Hello, Everyone)—

I hope that everyone was able to experience a wonderful holiday season. As we begin 2024, I would like to reflect on the achievements made by the Shawnee Tribal Government during 2023 in programs and economic development.

In the 2020 Annual Report, our programs consisted of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, NAHASDA Assistance (Native American Housing and Self Determination Act), Historic Preservation Program, Shawnee Tribe Tax Commission (vehicle tags), Childcare Development Fund Program (CCDF), Natural Resources and Environmental Program, Enrollment, and the Shawnee Language Program.

Since then, we have added programs covering Behavioral & Mental Health, Victims Services, Burial Assistance, Education Assistance, Homeowner Assistance, Emergency Home Repairs, Low Income Water Assistance, Indian Child Welfare, a Workforce Reimbursement Program, and an Elder Reimbursement Program.

We will continue to expand the abovementioned programs through the grant funding process and profits received from Shawnee Development. We will do so while working to ensure that all programs are sustainable, so that we will never have to experience the closure of certain programs due to lack or reduction of funding.

Some of us still remember a recent past in which we had to suspend funding for education assistance after losing funding from TCNS (Cell Tower) consultations. During 2023, we were also able to retire our debt on the Golden Mesa Casino, negotiate a refinancing agreement that will expand our casino floor, add a hotel and an RV park.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 6.





Using ARPA funds, we were able to purchase several office buildings, one of which will house dedicated Business Council Chambers with audio-visual capabilities so that we can continue increasing the level of transparency we operate under, as was requested at a recent Tribal (General) Council.

In closing, I would like to say that new ideas for programs are always welcome, so feel free to contact me or your council members with any questions or suggestions you may have. Contact forms are available for each of us at [shawnee-nsn.gov/business-council](http://shawnee-nsn.gov/business-council).

niyaawe (thank you),

Roy D. Baldrige  
Second Chief



THE SHAWNEE TRIBE  
**BUSINESS COUNCIL**



**SECRETARY  
CAROLYN  
FOSTER**



**TREASURER  
MARK  
McDOWELL**



**SEAT 1  
JOHN  
SPARKMAN**



**SEAT 2  
DIANA  
McLEAN**



**SEAT 3  
SCOTT  
SECONDINE**



**SEAT 4  
COREY  
WINESBURG**



**SEAT 5  
MONTY  
COOMBES**



**SEAT 6  
LEE  
BLUEJACKET**



**SEAT 7  
KENI  
HOOD**

# MAALAAKWAHI KE'NEEMEPE:

## “LET’S LOOK CLOSER”

### FIRE SAFE TRIBAL CITIZENS PROGRAM SAVES QUAPAW HOME

**“IF IT HADN’T BEEN FOR THE SMOKE DETECTORS, WE WOULD HAVE BEEN IN TROUBLE.”**

In early December, Ted Tate's attic furnace caught fire while he and his family soundly slept. Thankfully, Mr. Tate had received smoke & carbon monoxide detectors and a fire extinguisher through the Fire Safe Tribal Citizens Program one year prior.

“It was about 12:30 in the morning, and I smelled something, but I didn't know what it was, and then, the smoke alarms went off. I seen the smoke coming out of the vents and went up in the attic, and the furnace was on fire. I ran everybody out, and my wife brought the fire extinguisher to me to put the fire out. And it was minimal damage. I was able to catch it fast enough that it didn't catch the house on fire. I've always had smoke detectors, and I put them where it's supposed to be. But whenever I seen the [Fire Safe] program, I added smoke detectors and replaced my older ones. And the one that caught it, I hadn't had any in those extra spots. Signing up for Fire Safe is definitely something that I recommend everybody do because it can be the difference between having a home and not having a home. It's no cost to you, and you can save your home and your family by just filling out an application.”

Fire Safe Tribal Citizens assistance is available to all Shawnee citizens 18 or older. This program is financed through the tribe's American Rescue Plan Act BIA Tribal Housing Improvement Funding.

Visit [shawnee-nsn.gov/housing](http://shawnee-nsn.gov/housing)  
or scan here with your phone's camera:



# WEEMEYAKWE:

## REENVISIONING THE SHAWNEE INDIAN MANUAL LABOR SCHOOL

### “WHERE WE COME FROM”

In 2022, Stephen Warren, Ph.D., taught a history course titled “Engaged Scholarship in the Humanities” at the University of Iowa. Six of his twelve students focused on researching the Shawnee Indian Manual Labor School in Fairway, KS. They transcribed captions, photographed the display cases, and developed a preliminary plan for redesigning the exhibit. As part of their research, the students visited Shawnee people and the site itself, and they presented their projects and ideas for re-envisioning the site to the tribal leaders in December 2022. Below is a Q&A with Dr. Warren, and on the opposite pages are highlights from the students’ work.

*Thank you, Dr. Warren, for taking time to inform our citizens about this course and your students’ experience. What prompted the course?*

**Dr. Warren:** Going to archives and reading old documents is fun for me, but I have found that I can interpret those documents more effectively by getting to know the descendant communities. I wanted to design a class that introduced students to this model of engaged research.

*What were the two groups focused on in their research and re-imagining of the SIMLS?*

**Dr. Warren:** Group #1 assessed the current exhibit with the goal of updating the content and adding Native American perspectives to create a balanced narrative. The first step in this process was simply collecting what is already there. We then used the content to think about how we might improve the experience of museumgoers from all walks of life. Group #2 was instructed to create a model of a digital exhibit/website that provides an immersive, interactive experience at the SIMLS. This group had to think about how the target audience, people from all over the Kansas City metro area, engage with a digital museum exhibit.

*And what were some of their biggest takeaways?*

**Dr. Warren:** The students noticed the age of the exhibit and the generalized focus on Native Americans. Museum exhibits cost money. It is not uncommon for exhibits to be more than 30 and sometimes 50 year old as a result. Small, underfunded museum exhibits, like the one at Shawnee Indian Manual Labor School, need to be updated to reflect the best practices in history and museum studies. The community-engaged element of the course helped students understand that the Shawnee survived boarding schools and are part of vibrant, living cultures. A revised museum exhibit might reflect the past history of boarding schools as well as the present and future of Native Americans in the larger Kansas City community. The students highly appreciated time with Shawnee people, especially shucking corn and shelling beans at White Oak with Dolly Haney and Lynette White. The students worked hard, knowing that their work would be judged by y’all! But I think that is the beauty of community-engaged teaching. Professional scholars and students should have to share their work with the communities that they research and write about.

### ABOUT DR. WARREN

Dr. Stephen Warren is Professor of History and American Studies at the University of Iowa. His research and teaching reflect a decades-long commitment to community engaged scholarship. Together with Chief Benjamin Barnes, he co-authored “Salvaging the Salvage Anthropologist: Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin, Carl Voegelin, and the Future of Ethnohistory,” in *Ethnohistory* (April 2018) as well as a co-edited volume (with Chief Barnes):





*Replanting Cultures: Community-Engaged Scholarship in Indian Country (SUNY, 2022).* He has also published a single-edited volume, *The Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma: Resilience through Adversity* (Oklahoma, 2017). His own history books include *The Shawnees and Their Neighbors, 1795-1870* (Illinois, 2005) and *The Worlds the Shawnees Made: Migration and Violence in Early America* (North Carolina, 2014). In 2009, Warren was a consultant and commentator on the WGBH/American Experience documentary, *Tecumseh's Vision*.

- “The children who endured at the Shawnee Indian Manual Labor School are not named in the museum exhibit.” (Kozar & Zilkey, page 11) The names and tribal affiliations of the children who attended the SIMLS deserve to be included in a revised exhibit. Some pictures of Native American children derive from the Carlisle Academy in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.
- “Lack of acknowledgment of how Shawnee people were adaptable and contemporary throughout the SIMLS museum contributes to primitivism, in which a person or a culture is conceptualized as less complex or modern, therefore portraying Shawnee people as unrefined, unorganized, or inept.” (Kozar & Zilkey, page 15)

[Source: Amanda Kozar and Michala Zilkey, “Correcting the Narrative of the Shawnee Indian Manual Labor School: Starting with the Frame,” University of Iowa, 2022.]

CONTINUES ON PAGE 10.

**BELOW ARE JUST A FEW OF STUDENT GROUP #1'S FINDINGS ON THE CURRENT INTERPRETIVE EXHIBITS AT THE SHAWNEE INDIAN MANUAL LABOR SCHOOL**

- Initial analysis displayed themes of problematic use of “tradition”, lack of recognition of individual Shawnee people, comprehensive lack of information about Shawnee agricultural practices, descriptions of relocation that do not unpack “western settlement”, and acknowledgement of ideological differences behind Shawnee people and settlers, such as gender roles (Kozar & Zilkey, page 7)
- “Specific information regarding Shawnee agriculture and foodways is available. Shawnee culture and people are not monolithic. Political opponents such as Black Hoof and Tenskwatawa agreed the Shawnee people are bound by language and culture, not leaders or political affiliation. However, this is also not represented within the SIMLS museum exhibit. General labels as differentiators such as “Ohio Shawnees”, “Missouri Shawnees” or “Black Bob’s Band” deserve further attention so that the museumgoer understands the differences within and between Shawnee Communities. (Kozar & Zilkey, page 16)

Correcting the Narrative of the Shawnee Indian Manual Labor School:  
Starting with the Frame

Amanda Kozar

Michala Zilkey

Dr. Steve Warren

HIST 6410

“Decentering white Euro-American histories in the museum is essential in the decolonial praxis. Values of truth telling, transparency, accountability, collaboration, and honoring Indigenous authority are all areas that must be employed to create decolonial change” MacDonald, p. 15

**FINDINGS FROM GROUP #2'S RESEARCH ARE DISPLAYED IN THEIR DIGITAL EXHIBIT "SURVIVING ERASURE: SHAWNEE INDIAN MANUAL LABOR SCHOOL HISTORY REIMAGINED."**

Their exhibit attempts to provide a more truthful retelling of the site's time as a manual labor school and draws on oral histories from Shawnee tribal citizens, Indigenous scholarship, expertise from partners, and history from experts in the field.

Scan here with your phone's camera to visit.



**IOWA** Surviving Erasure:

Brewerton wrote: **The Survivors**

"The building...consist of thin, long, two-story brick houses, not very substantially built, and from present appearances, considerably in need of repair. As a summer residence they might be moderately comfortable, but as a winter one, and particularly in severe weather, they are, owing, I should say, to the shiftless way in which things appear to be managed, a **most undesirable home**. The arrangement too, for persons lodging there, are bad, as the boarding house proper is some fifty yards distant from the dining room, or rather, kitchen, in **which the inmates take their meals**. The children's schoolhouse and dormitories are open to the same criticism, being about twice that distance from the main building..."



Attic of the East Building, circa 1939. The SIMLS used the attics of the East and West buildings as student dormitories. Photo courtesy of the Kansas State Historical Society.

# MENWI VALENTINE KIISEKI!

(HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!)

BELOW ARE VARIOUS WORDS FOR KIN IN  
SAAWANWAATOWEEWE. PRACTICE USING  
THEM AND WISH YOUR LOVED ONES A  
HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY THIS YEAR!

niceenina - *my sibling (same gender as speaker)*

nooksiima - *my sibling (different gender than speaker)*

nime'soom'fa - *my grandfather*

no'koom'fa - *my grandmother*

nipasitooma - *my husband*

niiwa - *my wife*

no'fehi - *dad*

nikifehi - *mom*

ni'kaanaki - *my friends*

For access to more Shawnee Language practice materials, including flash cards  
and more, visit [shawnee-nsn.gov/SLIP](http://shawnee-nsn.gov/SLIP) and register for SLIPstream today!



# RETIRED TRIBAL VEHICLE FINDS NEW HOME

## 15-PASSENGER VAN GIFTED TO GROVE VETERANS RITUAL TEAM



Last year, the Tribe retired a 15-passenger van from use. Rather than placing the vehicle up for sale, the Business Council found a worthy beneficiary in the Grove Veterans Ritual Team.

The Grove Veterans Ritual Team's eleven members, including the Shawnee Tribe's own Herb Adams (US Army, 1st Infantry Division), travel extensively throughout the area surrounding Grove, OK to give final rites at the burials of fallen veterans. Team members perform a 21-gun salute and flag folding, play taps, and collect & provide the shells from the salute to each veteran's family.

The group performs their duties rain, sleet or shine, often going to two funerals in a single day and up to four in a given week. Recently, the Ritual Team began fundraising to purchase a new transport van, as they were outgrowing their vehicle and needed a replacement. In December, the Shawnee Tribe Business Council was asked by the Ritual Team to consider supporting their fundraising efforts with a modest contribution. Hearing that the Team needed a van that met the exact specifications of the vehicle sitting in the Tribe's garage, Business Council members were swift and unanimous in a decision to gift the van to the Ritual Team.

The van will have a seat removed and a storage box added to store rifles, bugles and flags. Tribal staff quickly turned the van around for maintenance, and the Officers of the Tribe will meet with the ritual team in early February to officially turn over the keys.



# ICYMI: WA'FEM'TEKWI IN WASHINGTON, D.C. + + + + +

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Check out these images from Second Chief Roy Baldrige's trip to Washington, D.C., for the 2023 U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree lighting ceremony!



Chief Baldrige with the U.S. Forest Service's Woodsy Owl and Smokey the Bear.



Chief Baldrige and Forest Supervisor Shawn Cochran.



Chief Baldrige (R) with Dr. Homer Wilkes, USDA Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, and U.S. Forest Service Chief Randy More.



Tribal staff & Chief Baldrige with wa'feem'tekwi (bright, shiny tree) on U.S. Capitol lawn.



(L to R) U.S. Forest Chief Randy Moore, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Tonya Tipton, Second Chief Roy Baldrige

# COVID-19 IMPACT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM UPDATES

The application for COVID-19 Impact Assistance opened in mid-August of last year, and the Tribe began processing payments in October. Since then, **72%** of all estimated eligible citizens have successfully received their one-time payment of \$1,500 through the program.

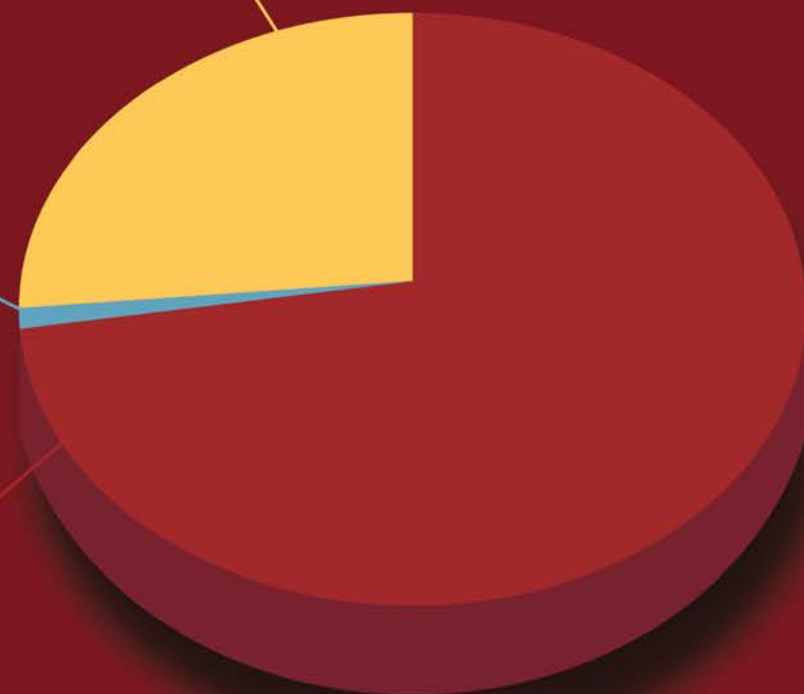
## INELIGIBLE APPLICATIONS

There are an estimated **3,450 eligible citizens**. As of mid-January, tribal staff have processed **2,420 total applications** and have mailed payments to the approved applicants totaling **\$3,571,500** in direct financial relief.

## APPROVED APPLICATIONS

More than 800 citizens may be eligible for COVID-19 Impact Assistance but have not yet applied. Be sure to submit your application before the July 1, 2024 deadline! Find eligibility information and apply online at [shawnee-nsn.gov/covid-relief](http://shawnee-nsn.gov/covid-relief), or contact program staff for assistance at [covidrelief@shawnee-tribe.com](mailto:covidrelief@shawnee-tribe.com) / (918) 542-2441, ext. 2007.

## NO APPLICATION SUBMITTED



# ELDER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



**NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS!**

Visit [shawnee-nsn.gov/elders](http://shawnee-nsn.gov/elders)  
or scan here with your phone's camera:



Through this new program, the Shawnee Tribe will provide funds to assist with expenses incurred in the general welfare of elder citizens and purchases of eligible elder care items. Tribal citizens 65 years of age or older qualify for this benefit. The citizen's income, location, or dual citizenship are not used to determine eligibility.

Expenses such as the following are considered eligible for reimbursement:

**Medical & hygienic items, supplies, and equipment:**

- Prescription and over the counter (OTC medications)
- Ambulatory products (wheelchair, cane, walker)
- Eyeglasses
- Dentures

**\*Utilities, taxes, and insurance:**

- Mortgage or rent
- Electric, natural gas, propane, water, or trash service
- Phone or internet bill
- Property tax
- Health care or life insurance
- Homeowner, renter, or auto insurance

**\*\*Groceries**

**Home Maintenance:**

- Lawn care
- Handyman services

**\*MUST BE IN CITIZEN'S NAME OR BE ABLE TO ESTABLISH RESIDENCY**

**\*\*EXCLUDES ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, CLOTHING, AND COSMETICS**

FEB

# THE SHAWNEE JOURNAL

2024



**SHAWNEE TRIBE**  
**29 S HWY 69A**  
**MIAMI, OKLAHOMA**  
**74354 U.S.A.**

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