

AUG 2024

# THE SHAWNEE JOURNAL



**KINWIKIISFWA**  
*August "long month"*



# YA'SASILAWIIYAKWE

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To view all scheduled events, visit [shawnee-nsn.gov/calendar](http://shawnee-nsn.gov/calendar) or scan here with your phone's camera:



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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 and YouTube 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),

Your Shawnee Tribe has many accomplishments to report in the coming weeks. I know that the many people diligently working for all of our citizens are bursting at the seams, ready to share what we have accomplished this year. We will hear many exciting plans and news when we gather for our annual meeting in September.

This past year has been a banner year for our Higher Education Awards program. We have had a record level of participation from our citizens who are taking advantage of the financial assistance offered by the Tribe. Chief Roy recently reminded me of conversations he and I had many months ago about how it is not just about providing “checks” to pay for education. It’s our job to make sure our people are successful. We are currently developing a plan to measure the effectiveness of educational assistance and other tribal programs. We want to see successful Shawnees in all aspects of society, whether in academic institutions, political agencies or offices, as well as other public and private institutions.

The Shawnee language team has had another year of incredible achievements—they will soon unveil their new home base and recording studio location just east of Miami. The new recording facility has been made possible largely through a donation from a partner company with which this team has worked for over three years. Their collaboration has been a major undertaking, and once it’s finally released, it will ultimately put Shawnees in front of an audience of thirty-five million people across the globe. I want to repeat that: thirty-five million pairs of eyes and ears will be seeing and hearing about the Shawnee people, our history, culture, and language. Stay tuned for complete details very soon.

The expansion of the Golden Mesa Casino is well underway. Barring any weather issues, I hope by the end of 2025, we will have about twice as many games on the floor and the best hotel in the panhandle. The additional revenues provided by the expansion will continue to feed the carefully measured growth in tribal programs.

I also want to update our people on some of the legislative efforts in which the tribe is involved. A federal bill to establish a Truth and Healing Commission to investigate federal boarding school policies and document testimonies from survivors is closer to passage than ever before. Contact your congressional delegations and encourage them to ensure the passage of Senate Bill 1723 and House Resolution 7227. The tribe is also having conversations with the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority regarding tribal tags on Oklahoma turnpikes, and our lawyers are drafting a compact that serves our Shawnee citizens to send to Governor Stitt. While I am fairly certain that the Oklahoma governor will not like our proposal, I certainly intend to bring it forward with the friends we have built within the Oklahoma Senate and House.

One last item to ensure you are aware of: we are seeing an ever-increasing amount of families contacting us regarding children being taken into custody by state agencies. Oftentimes, the jurisdiction does not know to contact our Indian Child Welfare Office when this occurs. On other occasions, we see deliberate obstruction by parties who would rather ignore federal law than contact the Shawnee Tribe so that we can ensure our kids remain close to their families, whether that be the child’s aunties, uncles, grandparents, or cousins. If you hear of a child in state custody in any state, please let our ICW Director Stephanie Hailey or myself know so that our court can intervene and protect our children from being sent to foster care systems or adopted out-of-state by predatory placement companies.

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

Ben Barnes  
Chief



**SECOND CHIEF  
ROY  
BALDRIDGE**

hato caaki wiyeefa (Hello, everyone)—

In this month’s report I will try to report on the many issues affecting our tribe today and the steps we as a council have taken to protect and ensure our tribe’s sovereignty today and in the future.

Since my last reporting, Chief Ben Barnes, Treasurer Mark McDowell, Councilor’s Corey Winesburg, Keni Hood and I attended the National Congress of American Indian’s Midyear Conference. After receiving reports from several federal agencies such as the U.S. Treasurer’s Office, we divided, attending and participating in Task Force discussions regarding Economic Development, Indian Child Welfare, U.S. Budget, Tax and Finance, Census, Boarding School Truth and Healing, Missing and Murdered Indian Persons, Farm Bill Updates, Tribal Digital Sovereignty and Food Sovereignty/ Nutrition. After discussions, resolutions were proposed for a future vote. Those resolutions that later passed will be lobbied in Congress.

The following week, Chief Ben Barnes, Secretary Carolyn Foster, Councilor’s Diana McLean, Corey Winesburg, Keni Hood and I attended the Oklahoma Sovereignty Symposium in Oklahoma City. This is a conference that allows tribal government officials and citizens to learn issues that have the potential to present problems for tribes from federal, state, local and other tribal officials. Issues in the areas of Government-to-Government Relations, Compacts/Agreements, Business and Education, Criminal Law, Economic Development and Ethics were discussed. During the conference, Chief Barnes was invited to sit on one of the panels.

During my last reporting I had mentioned that Chief Barnes had been elected as Chair of the United Indian Nations of Oklahoma. In June, UINO held its spring conference in Miami, Oklahoma. Chief Barnes chaired the meeting that was attended by Secretary Carolyn Foster, Councilor Diana McLean and I. Outgoing Speaker of the Oklahoma Legislature Charles McCall spoke to the crowd that now includes 30 of Oklahoma’s 38 federally recognized tribes. A representative from the federal government also gave an update on the status of the Farm Bill Reauthorization. Joe Echelle,

Executive Director, Oklahoma Turnpike Authority spoke to and answered questions from the crowd. Mr. Echelle promised to continue open discussion with the tribal governments headquartered in Oklahoma.

One might ask, why is diplomacy and inter-governmental work important? I will say that tribes have been held to an unfair standard that continues today. There are 574 federally recognized tribes across the United States today. Although each of those tribes are different in some ways, all are held accountable to the actions of one. I will finish with one example. Several years ago, tribes received monies for consultation on tribal and former tribal lands. Those monies ended when one tribe raised fees to the point that it provided private companies to file complaints with the Federal Communications Commission. In the end, the courts ruled that the companies, while still being required to consult with tribes, were not required to pay unless they chose to. That ruling devastated many tribes across the country, ours included. It was because of that action that we had to suspend our education assistance and part of our school clothing assistance. Used in the complaint was information obtained from copying a livestreamed council meeting. Participating in conferences and working collaboratively with other tribal partners and government agencies allows tribes to better understand complicated issues which will in turn better protect our families.

niyaawe (thank you),

Roy D. Baldrige  
Second Chief



# THE SHAWNEE TRIBE BUSINESS COUNCIL



**SECRETARY  
CAROLYN RAE  
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**

# 2024 ELECTIONS & GENERAL COUNCIL WEEKEND SEPTEMBER 20-21

General council weekend will kick off Friday, September 20, with a ribbon-cutting and open house at the Shawnee Language Immersion Program's newly-acquired facility, community dinner and stomp dance in Miami. The annual meeting and 2024 election will be held on Saturday, September 21, at the Craig County Fairgrounds in Vinita. Door prize entry, catered lunch and refreshments will

## THE FOLLOWING OFFICES ARE ON THIS YEAR'S BALLOT:

- Secretary (4-year term)
- Business Council Seat 3 (4-year term)

## CANDIDATES FOR THE FOLLOWING OFFICES RAN UNOPPOSED AND WILL NOT APPEAR ON THE BALLOT:

- Second Chief (1-year term)
- Business Council Seat 4 (4-year term)

## VOTING DEADLINES & SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3

Deadline to request absentee ballot

### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

5:00 PM

Deadline to return absentee ballot

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

9:00 AM – 6:00 PM

Polls open (Early in-person voting)

Craig County Fairgrounds & Community Center  
Vinita, OK

7:00 PM

Community Dinner & Stomp Dance

Miami Tribe Council House  
2319 Newman Rd., Miami, OK 74354

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

8:00 – 11:00 AM

Polls open (Election Day)

Craig County Fairgrounds & Community Center

## IMPORTANT NOTE:

Due to Vinita's annual Calf Fry Festival, heavy traffic is expected near the rodeo grounds and annual meeting location on Saturday, September 21. Voters and meeting attendees should plan for delays. If possible, come into Vinita from the south on Rt. 66 and take Excelsior Ave to the fairgrounds to avoid the worst of the Calf Fry traffic.

For complete information about absentee voting, driving directions to the polls, and the latest Tribal Elections updates from the Election Committee, visit [shawnee-nsn.gov/elections](http://shawnee-nsn.gov/elections).

HERE:



Need direct assistance?  
Contact the Election Committee at [elections@shawnee-tribe.com](mailto:elections@shawnee-tribe.com) or call (918) 325-6341.



MAALAAKWAHI KE'NEEMEPE: LET'S LOOK CLOSER

# MEET THE CANDIDATES 2024

## CANDIDATES FOR BUSINESS COUNCIL SECRETARY

- Jana Edwards-Johnson
- Carolyn Rae Foster (Incumbent)

## CANDIDATES FOR BUSINESS COUNCIL SEAT 3

- Morris Bluejacket
- Drew Dixon
- Gregory Jones
- Elena Staubus

## UNOPPOSED CANDIDATES

- Roy Baldrige, Second Chief (Incumbent)
- Corey Winesburg, Business Council Seat 4 (Incumbent)



## JANA EDWARDS-JOHNSON + + +

HOMETOWN: MIAMI, OK  
 CURRENT CITY: MIAMI, OK  
 OCCUPATION: DIRECTOR OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES, EASTERN SHAWNEE TRIBE

Hato (Hello),

Thank you for the opportunity to introduce myself. I'm Jana Johnson (Holly-Ma-Peashe/Rabbit Clan), the mother of two incredible women, a grandmother, an advocate, and, most importantly, a Shawnee Citizen. I am deeply rooted in our community and understand the needs of our people. As a Phi-Theta Kappa graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Pittsburg State University and an educator of 24 years, I meditated and advocated for children with disabilities, their parents, and teachers.

Today, I am the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma's Director of Health and Social Services, Vital Statistics/Enrollment, and Tribal Tags. In this role, I manage a multi-million-dollar budget and oversee vital services crucial to the tribal community's well-being.

I developed and implemented policies and procedures and wrote an Administrative Fraudulent Policy as a board member, Budget Manager, and Board Member for the Elder Crisis Committee Program.

*In 1-2 sentences, please explain your reason(s) for seeking election.*

As a Shawnee citizen, a strong voice on the Business Council is crucial to addressing citizens' concerns and ensuring we are well-informed. Constitutionally, we have a right to information that impacts the citizens and tribal sovereignty.

*If elected, what personal qualities will you bring to the Business Council?*

As your Shawnee Business Council Secretary, I will use my advocacy, leadership, organization, and mediation skills to promote and vote for forward-thinking programs and legislation that will benefit ALL Shawnee citizens.

My professional experiences, including serving as Chairwoman of the Shawnee Tribal Salary Commission and as a member of the Shawnee Tribe's Elder Advisory Committee, have given me opportunities to ask the hard questions.

I want to reassure you of my unwavering commitment to transparency and accountability. I will always represent you with honesty and integrity, ensuring your best interests are at the forefront of every decision. Your concerns will be heard, and I will be a strong voice for all Shawnee citizens because your vote will be mine as your elected representative on the Business Council.

*If elected, what issues affecting Shawnee citizens do you intend to prioritize the most?*

Over the last few years, I have attended every monthly Business Council meeting and continue to address the need for programs for our elders, children, and families. Programs to ensure citizens have the opportunity to live in a safe environment in which their basic needs are met. Additionally, promoting the diversification of our business portfolio and Shawnee citizens with small businesses. These beliefs are the core of my candidacy for Shawnee Business Council Secretary.

*If a citizen has further questions for you, what is the best way for them to contact you?*

Your valuable input will guide my decisions as your Business Council Secretary. I am always open to hearing your thoughts and concerns. Please email me at johnsonje226@gmail.com or call or text at 918-605-9711 to discuss any topics.

Niyaawe (Thank you)



**CAROLYN RAE FOSTER (INCUMBENT)**

**HOMETOWN:** LENAPAH, OK  
**CURRENT CITY:** LENAPAH, OK  
**OCCUPATION:** RETIRED; WILL ROGERS HEALTH CLINIC

I'm running for re-election as Secretary for the Shawnee Tribe Business Council. I'm a descendant of Martha A. Long Shufeldt Story. I was given my Shawnee name by Victoria Daugherty, our last official tribal historian; I am Turtle Clan. I have served as Secretary of the Shawnee Tribe Business Council since 2017 and have served as an at-large member on the Business Council since being appointed in 2011. I have served on the Enrollment Committee, attended monthly meetings, and volunteered where needed or when asked by our tribal leadership. During my time on the Council, I voted in favor of and supported all efforts in the legal case against the U.S. Treasury, which resulted in CARES funding for our tribal citizens. I have participated in numerous tribal government conferences and events, including the Oklahoma Tribal Sovereignty Symposium, Bridging the Gap and United Indian Nations of Oklahoma (UINO) conferences.

*In 1-2 sentences, please explain your reason(s) for seeking re-election.*

I am especially proud of the new tribal programs we have been able to provide our citizens over the last three years. If re-elected I hope to continue building tribal funded programming and working hard to meet the needs of our Shawnee citizens.

*If re-elected, what personal qualities will you bring to the Business Council?*

The personal qualities I bring to the Business Council are my commitment to the Shawnee Tribe and its citizens now and in the future. Caring for and preserving our culture, language, history, tribal lands, and ceremonial grounds is important to me. Having worked in the health care field, if re-elected, I hope to continue to be the Shawnee Tribe representative serving on the boards at both the Northeastern Tribal Health Systems and the Claremore Indian Hospital.

*If re-elected, what issues affecting Shawnee citizens do you intend to prioritize the most?*

If re-elected, my two main priorities will be to identify new opportunities to assist our tribal elders and improve health care. Additionally, the initiatives I will continue to support and focus on are Missing and Murdered Indigenous People, as well as mental health and social issues for home-bound people.

*If a citizen has further questions for you, what is the best way for them to contact you?*

The best way to contact me is by email: [cfoster@shawnee-tribe.com](mailto:cfoster@shawnee-tribe.com)



**MORRIS BLUEJACKET** + + + +

**NICKNAME:** "BLUE"  
**HOMETOWN:** BLUEJACKET, OK  
**CURRENT CITY:** BLUEJACKET, OK  
**OCCUPATION:** RETIRED

Bluejacket Oklahoma has been my home since childhood. It's where I was raised, attended school, and proudly raised my own family. It remains the place I still call home. For over 42 years, I have dedicated myself to public service, gaining extensive experience in city, county and state government. I served as the mayor of Bluejacket for over 20 years, spent over 12 years in state security, and held various roles within our communities, including emergency management, safety director, and floodplain manager.

*In 1-2 sentences, please explain your reason(s) for seeking election.*

I am running for council seat #3 to help ensure our tribe progresses forward and makes meaningful contributions to our collective future. With dedication and vision, I aim to serve the Shawnee people with integrity and purpose.

*If elected, what personal qualities will you bring to the Business Council?*

If elected to the Business Council of our tribe, I will bring a strong work ethic, a deep commitment to community values and a collaborative spirit. My proven leadership skills, integrity and ability to foster positive relationships will help ensure our tribes initiatives are innovative and inclusive.

*If elected, what issues affecting Shawnee citizens do you intend to prioritize the most?*

I believe we must prioritize the care of our elders and children, ensuring they receive the utmost support and respect. At the same time, we should strive to provide the best quality of life for our entire tribe. Additionally, securing our financial future must be a top priority, so we can sustain and enhance our tribal community for generations to come.

*If a citizen has further questions for you, what is the best way for them to contact you?*

My email; [mdbluejacket57@gmail.com](mailto:mdbluejacket57@gmail.com). My cell number (918) 244-1452





## DREW DIXON + + + + +

**HOMETOWN:** QUAPAW, OK  
**CURRENT CITY:** MIAMI, OK  
**OCCUPATION:** SELF-EMPLOYED

Hato! My name is Drew Dixon, Waawiyapiyeeskaka (Turtle clan). I currently reside in Miami with my fiancé Hailey Easton. I'm the son of John and Kristi (Mate) Dixon. My great grandmother was Edna Mae Daugherty. I'm a 2010 graduate of Quapaw High School and a 2016 grad of NEO A&M with an Associates of Arts in Natural Resources Ecology and Management. I'm currently self-employed. For the previous 14 years I have been a volunteer Firefighter/EMT for the town of Quapaw. After connecting with and participating in our ceremonial dances the last several years, it has left me wanting to do more and give back to our tribe.

*In 1-2 sentences, please explain your reason(s) for seeking election.*

Watching the growth of our tribe, especially in the last several years, has inspired me to leave my impression on that continued growth.

*If elected, what personal qualities will you bring to the Business Council?*

Working in healthcare and emergency services for the last 7 years, I genuinely care for and about people; our people. Being of service is truly an honor and a privilege. As an EMT, I pride myself on being an advocate for patients under my care. As a patient advocate it is my duty to speak up for the voiceless. Along with patient advocacy comes compassion, humility and empathy. I believe as a leader, you should always be open to criticism. Criticism viewed in a positive aspect can spur us to do better and be better. There is always room for improvement and the moment we quit trying to improve, is when we quit growing. I believe we should be open, honest and transparent. If elected, one quality that you can always expect of me is when the time comes to roll up your sleeves, I will be the first to get my hands dirty.

*If elected, what issues affecting Shawnee citizens do you intend to prioritize the most?*

A top priority should be our elders. I feel it is our duty to look after them after they have cared for us for so many years. Further developing emergency assistance, healthcare and housing programs for our elders are a few things I intend to advocate for. Secondly is our young people. We will look for ways to inspire them to more collectively take advantage of educational opportunities to set them up for success in life. Not only pushing for college attendance but we should be promoting trade schools and work programs with the same enthusiasm. I'm forever grateful for the work and support given to our language program. Seeing the leaps and bounds of progress made from the days of language class being held at the Ottawa grounds is inspiring. Keeping our language alive and growing helps keep our identity and ceremonies going. I feel we should continue to make every effort possible to keep that forward movement. To fund all of this we should be looking at other avenues of economic growth besides our casino. Economic diversity would allow us to provide more career opportunities for our tribal citizens.

*If a citizen has further questions for you, what is the best way for them to contact you?*

The best way to reach me is via text or call at 918-541-6362. Or I can be found on Facebook as Drew D Dixon.



## GREGORY JONES + + + + +

**HOMETOWN:** WELCH, OK  
**CURRENT CITY:** FAYETTEVILLE, AR  
**OCCUPATION:** DIRECTOR OF NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENT SERVICES

I'm Gregory Jones, and I work in Native American Higher Ed, I am dedicated to empowering students and fostering inclusive academic environments. Originally from the Bluejacket, Welch area. I received my bachelor's degree from Pittsburg State University, and I am currently pursuing my master's degree in Native American Leadership with an emphasis on Education. I now live in Fayetteville, AR with my wonderful wife Morgan where I am the Director of Native American Student Services at the University of Arkansas. I am a passionate advocate for Native American communities, and I strive to create opportunities for Native youth. My goal is to ensure that all citizens have the resources and support they need to thrive. In my spare time, I enjoy hunting and fishing with family and friends.

*In 1-2 sentences, please explain your reason(s) for seeking election.*

To bring fresh perspectives & innovative solutions to address the challenges our community faces, prioritizing economic growth and education. My goal is to be an advocate for all citizens & work towards a brighter future.

*If elected, what personal qualities will you bring to the Business Council?*

If elected, I will bring strong leadership, a collaborative spirit, and a commitment to citizen communication to the business council. My experience in strategic planning and my dedication to fostering relationships will be instrumental in driving positive change.

*If elected, what issues affecting Shawnee citizens do you intend to prioritize the most?*

My top priorities for our tribal nation would include preserving and promoting cultural heritage, improving access and quality of tribal programs, and advocating for sovereign rights for tribal citizens.

*If a citizen has further questions for you, what is the best way for them to contact you?*

Email me at gregkj34@gmail.com. Citizens can also reach me through Facebook messenger.





## ELENA STAUBUS

HOMETOWN: STILLWATER, OK  
CURRENT CITY: TAHLEQUAH, OK  
OCCUPATION: SURGICAL TECH STUDENT

My name is Elena Staubus and I am a 26 year old recent graduate of Oklahoma State University. I am currently living in Tahlequah to attend surgical tech training. While attending OSU, I served as the vice president and then president of the Graphic Design Club. When I was selected to provide art for exhibit at OSU, I chose to depict the Shawnee clans on a painting which hung at the Edmon Low Library. I enjoy the outdoors, especially spending time camping at our Shawnee Grounds in White Oak. It's an honor for me to run for business council, to carry out the legacy left by my Coco, Shirley Staubus and my Great Uncle Scott Secondine, who served for so many years. These elders, along with many others, truly laid a solid groundwork to prosper The Shawnee Tribe. It's my intention to protect and carry on this tradition.

*In 1-2 sentences, please explain your reason(s) for seeking election.*

I am seeking election because I feel that it is important that young people become involved in tribal affairs, and it would be a great privilege to serve the Shawnee people. I will seek input from my constituents, and bring passion to my role.

*If elected, what personal qualities will you bring to the Business Council?*

If elected I will bring the perspective of a younger generation, as well as a desire to better the conditions of all Shawnee citizens. My time in academia has fostered my desire and research skills to fully understand every angle of an issue before making decisions. My background in design, provides me outside the box thinking, another skill I bring to serve the business committee.

*If elected, what issues affecting Shawnee citizens do you intend to prioritize the most?*

If elected, my priorities will be ensuring quality care for our elders and creating opportunities for our young people. Our elders are one of our most precious resources, as our culture only exists because of the knowledge and practices they have passed down to the younger generations. It's my desire to capture stories, oral histories, and tribal customs from elders, that can contribute to our cultural and language preservation. Our young people are also vital to the preservation of our culture. Our sovereign status will be strengthened by increased involvement of our young people and their exposure to historical knowledge and language we can capture from our elders. By affording our young people greater opportunities, we help ensure the future of our tribe. If we can provide training and education to our citizens, then those same citizens will be able to use those skills for not only personal success, but to also serve the tribe and their communities.

*If a citizen has further questions for you, what is the best way for them to contact you?*

Citizens can contact me at [elena@staubus.com](mailto:elena@staubus.com)

# GOLDEN MESA CASINO EXPANSION UPDATE

Construction work on the Golden Mesa Casino expansion is progressing and currently on track for completion in the summer of 2025.

"Weather is always a challenge in the panhandle, but our construction team continues to push forward to meet the projected completion date," said Shawnee Development President Chris Floyd. "The site has recovered quickly from the flooding rains in the panhandle last [month]."

As of June 2024, all new foundations are in place, and structural framing on the tower of the new 100-room hotel is progressing, with the entire first floor framed and decked. The construction team continues to make progress on exterior walls, sheathing, and roofing while the design team works on plans for the new high-limits area in the casino expansion.

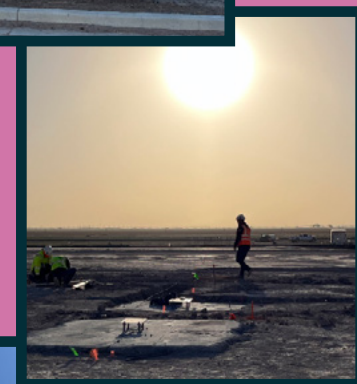
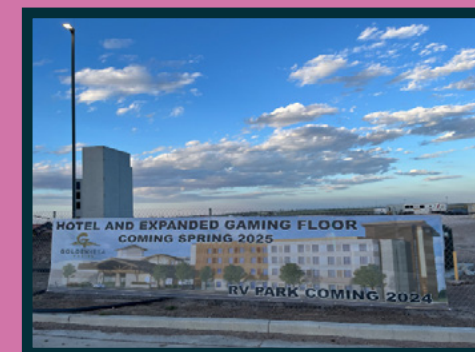
"Shawnee Development is working closely with our architectural and construction teams to ensure the expansion of our gaming facilities and new hotel will not only be beautiful and enjoyed by our patrons but will also be something our Shawnee people will be very proud of," said Cassie Harper, Shawnee Tribe Chief of Staff and Secretary of the Shawnee Development Board of Managers. "The property will offer a unique resort experience that reflects the natural beauty and landscape of the Oklahoma panhandle."

Shawnee Development and Golden Mesa Casino continue to receive positive feedback from the City of Guymon and community members regarding the Phase II expansion project at Golden Mesa.

"There seems to be renewed excitement in the community due to the influx of construction workers and activity, along with a promise of new gaming and entertainment options," said Floyd.

Over the course of the project, there will be between 400 and 500 construction workers at the job site.

"It's been an honor to watch Shawnee Development and all the various teams involved in this project bring forth an exciting time of growth, opportunity, and progress for the Shawnee Tribe," said Chief Ben Barnes. "Golden Mesa Casino represents a Shawnee Tribe accomplishment we all should hold in high esteem."





## WEEMEYAKWE: WHERE WE COME FROM

# SHAWNEE FLOUR CORN ADAPTING TO THE IMPACTS OF COLONIZATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE



IMAGES OF SHAWNEE RED CORN, GROWN BY BRETT BARNES

One of the most important crops grown in Shawnee villages before removal westward was *lokhaana taami* (flour corn). This corn variety, rich in vitamins and minerals, was used to make flour, which was instrumental in providing food for saawanooki (Shawnee people) through the winter months. It was also significant in ceremonial use. Historical displacement, paired with the impacts of climate change and cross-pollination, have resulted in years of failed attempts to grow *lokhaana taami* in Oklahoma as Shawnee ancestors would have known it in their time. The tribe has begun taking steps with university partners to cultivate this corn closer to the Shawnee homelands.

“Historically, when Shawnees were being removed, no one told our corn that it was to be moved (from the Ohio Valley) to Oklahoma,” said Chief Benjamin Barnes. “Shawnee corn was bred in Appalachia and along the waterways that feed the Ohio River, it was never meant to be grown in Oklahoma.”

Flour corn crops planted by the tribe in Oklahoma have been lost due to climate impacts, including extreme heat and flooding from frequent torrential rains during the spring planting. In 2023, northeast Oklahoma heat indexes rose to over 115 degrees Fahrenheit, causing significant health impacts to both our people and plant relatives. In December 2023, the Shawnee Tribe began discussing a collaboration with members of the

Agriculture Department at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to assist in growing the Shawnee white flour corn in central Illinois, closer to its historic range. The tribe is hopeful about the future of collaborating with the University of Illinois. Beyond the white flour corn project, the University offers a Tribal Nations Scholarship providing in-state tuition for Native American students enrolled in any federally recognized tribe.

The tribe is also working with the Institute of Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) and the Bureau of Indian Affairs Branch of Tribal Climate Resilience to share Shawnee stories and this university partnership in the second volume of the Status of Tribes and Climate Change (STACC) Report. Climate impacts and actions centering *lokhaana taami* will be featured in this national report to bring awareness to this issue and to raise concerns around tribal intellectual property when it comes to the genomic data of culturally significant seeds. An additional Shawnee narrative will be included in the report, centering on the Shawnee Language Immersion Program and discussing how language revitalization fosters tribal citizens’ relationships with cultural resources, including corn, and how those relationships have been impacted by colonization and climate change. It will focus on the role of Shawnee youth in rekindling these relationships and revitalizing the language for generations to come.

“Shawnee people have managed to maintain our cultural practices through adversity,” said Joel Barnes, Director of the Shawnee Language Immersion Program. “With the agriculture and climate issues of the past to present day, the fact we have our seedstock today shows the resilience of Shawnee people.”

Established in 1992 at Northern Arizona University, the Institute of Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) works to strengthen tribal capacity and sovereignty in environmental management through culturally relevant education, research, partnerships and policy-based services. Upon publishing, the STACC report will be available on ITEP’s website and will serve as a useful tool for tribal nations to learn from one another and consider new partnerships and approaches to climate adaptation. It can also be a supporting document when applying for grants and other project resources to further climate adaptation and cultural preservation efforts.

A link to the full STACC Vol. 2 Report will be available at [shawnee-nsn.gov/news](http://shawnee-nsn.gov/news) once it has been published by ITEP later this summer.



PROPOSED COVER ART FOR STACC VOLUME II: "SISTER SPIRITS." A GOUACHE PAINTING BY KYLIE WANATEE (AGE 19, ROSEBUD SIOUX TRIBE).



# TA'SAAWANWAATOWEEYAKWE:

THE LANGUAGE CORNER / "WHERE WE SPEAK SHAWNEE"

# HAACIMOOWENA

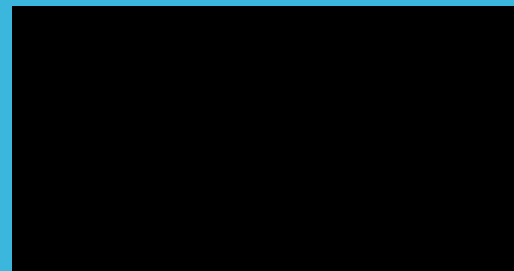
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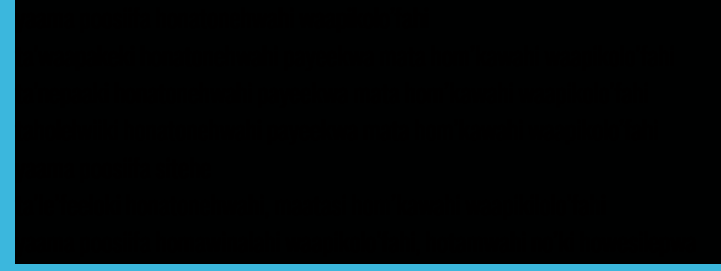
Now that we are most of the way through the first year of our Master-Apprentice program, we wanted to share some of our work. Each week, we focus on a new concept, and we had a lot of fun during our story unit. ke'ki'kimoofocki [students] and keeke'kimiweecki [teachers] alike wrote short stories in saawanwaatoweewe [Shawnee language], designed to be simple for ease of understanding. Read some of the simple stories below!



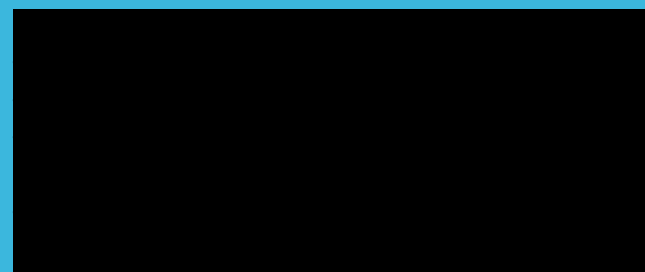
**MIKALA HILL**



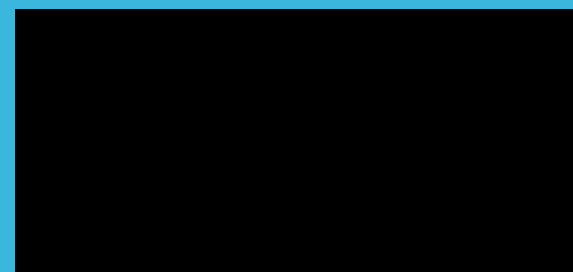
**MARSHA MEYER**



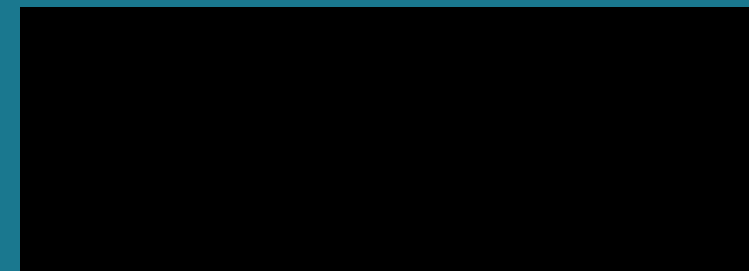
**MARGARET SEWELL**



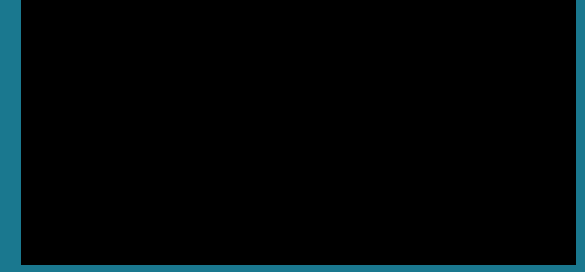
**RYAN CONWAY**



**DANIEL CITY**



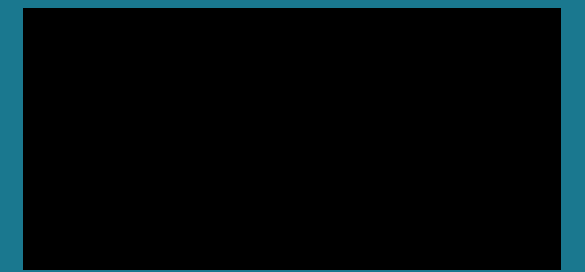
**DILLON DEAN**



**CORAL AVERY**



**LINDSEY JENNINGS**



**ANDREA CONWAY**



**STEVE ROACH**



TO READ THE ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF THESE STORIES, LOG INTO SLIPSTREAM, THE ONLINE LEARNING PLATFORM FOR SHAWNEE LANGUAGE!



Need to register for SLIPstream? Email [shawneelanguage@shawnee-tribe.com](mailto:shawneelanguage@shawnee-tribe.com) with your request.



UPCOMING EVENT AUGUST 24-25

# OU SCHOOL OF DANCE TO HOST ITS THIRD FIVE MOONS DANCE FESTIVAL HONORING NATIVE AMERICAN BALLERINAS FROM OKLAHOMA



WEITZENHOFFER FAMILY COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS  
**SCHOOL OF DANCE**  
The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA

## THIS YEAR'S EVENT HIGHLIGHTS THE LEGACY AND HERITAGE OF YVONNE CHOUTEAU (SHAWNEE)

The third dance festival honoring the renowned Native American ballerinas from Oklahoma known as the Five Moons will be held August 24-25 with events at the University of Oklahoma Norman campus and First Americans Museum in Oklahoma City.

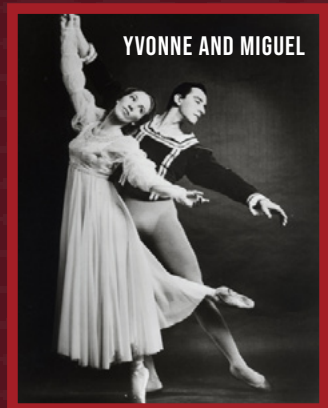
The five ballerinas— Yvonne Chouteau (Shawnee), Rosella Hightower (Choctaw), Moscelyne Larkin (Peoria/Eastern Shawnee), Maria Tallchief (Osage) and Marjorie Tallchief (Osage)—each led trailblazing careers in the dance world during the 20th century.

The Five Moons Dance Festival aims to inspire the community's interest in learning more about these remarkable women's accomplishments and to provide a platform for female-identifying choreographers from historically underrepresented populations to present their work, thereby contributing to the future of female leadership in dance. This year's festival, presented in partnership with the Shawnee Tribe, will highlight OU School of Dance founder Yvonne Chouteau and celebrate her artistic legacy and Shawnee heritage.

The schedule boasts a full line-up of educational, cultural, and social events on Saturday, August 24, in Norman and Oklahoma City, including an art market, panel discussions, and stomp dance. The festival will culminate in a special dance performance on Sunday, August 25, in the Reynolds Performing Arts Center at the University of Oklahoma.

### SATURDAY EVENTS INCLUDE:

- > Lenaweeki Hokiishatoonaawa\* Art Market at Jacobson House Native Art Center, open from 12:00 to 6:00 PM, featuring artists from the Five Moons' tribal nations
- > Panel discussions with tribal leaders, scholars, artists, and family members of Yvonne Chouteau and composer Louis Ballard (Quapaw)
- > A stomp dance at the First Americans Museum in memory of Troy Little Axe, Sr., and James Squirrel—two celebrated Shawnee leaders and longtime coordinators of the annual student stomp dance at the University of Oklahoma



The Sunday matinee program features performing groups such as American Ballet Theatre, Oklahoma City Ballet, Tulsa Ballet, and students from the OU School of Dance. Elisa Harkins (Cherokee/Muscogee) is this year's featured artist and composer, performing an excerpt from her celebrated evening-length work *Radio III*.

The Shawnee Tribe is offering free charter bus travel to the festival from Miami and Tulsa, as well as overnight accommodations in Norman, OK, on a first-come, first-served basis.

\*"Indian people made it"

For the complete schedule and more info, visit [shawnee-nsn.gov/five-moons](http://shawnee-nsn.gov/five-moons), scan the QR code below or call tribal headquarters for assistance.



# ICYMI: SPRING EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

## TRIBAL STAFF PARTICIPATED IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING WITH VAN & TAMMY BENSON OF MOTIVE MATTERS IN MAY.



## TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION STAFF TONYA TIPTON AND ERIN PADEN PARTICIPATED IN A PANEL DISCUSSION ABOUT A HISTORIC EXHIBIT AT NEO A&M COLLEGE IN MIAMI. ST. CLAIR'S DEFEAT REVISITED IS UP UNTIL DECEMBER 1, 2024, IN KAHNE HALL.





GRADUATION ACTIVITIES WERE IN FULL SWING, WITH CHIEF BARNES ADDRESSING NATIVE STUDENTS GRADUATING FROM NEO A&M COLLEGE IN MAY AND DR. EVAN WHITE GIVING A KEYNOTE ADDRESS TO SHAWNEE GRADUATES AT THE ACHIEVEMENT BANQUET IN JUNE.



COMMUNITY MEMBERS GATHERED FOR A DINNER & STOMP DANCE ORGANIZED BY THE LAUREATE INSTITUTE FOR BRAIN RESEARCH'S KIPIYECIPAKIGIPE RESEARCH TEAM AND COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD.



TRIBAL LEADERS TRAVELED TO XENIA, OH, FOR THE GRAND OPENING WEEKEND OF GREAT COUNCIL STATE PARK.



IN MID-JUNE, THE CHIEFS AND FOUR MEMBERS OF THE SHAWNEE TRIBE BUSINESS COUNCIL ATTENDED THE TWO-DAY SOVEREIGNTY SYMPOSIUM ORGANIZED BY THE OKLAHOMA CITY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW.



MEMBERS OF THE UNITED INDIAN NATIONS OF OKLAHOMA GATHERED AT BUFFALO RUN CASINO ON JUNE 18 FOR THEIR QUARTERLY MEETING.





AUG

# THE SHAWNEE JOURNAL

2024



**SHAWNEE TRIBE**  
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MIAMI, OKLAHOMA  
74354 U.S.A.



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