

Legislative leaders address members of press association at annual event



**Senate Pro Tempore
Greg Treat**



**Senate Minority Leader
Kay Floyd**



**House Minority Leader
Cyndi Munson**



**House Speaker
Charles McCall**

Members of the Oklahoma Press Association met at the State Capitol in Oklahoma City February 9 for the annual OPA Legislative Summit.

More than 75 members attended the event that provides an opportunity to discuss issues with legislators.

OPA President Zonelle Rainbolt, executive editor of Wesner Publications, welcomed members to the event before turning the podium over to OPA Executive Vice President Mark Thomas who reviewed a list of bills that could affect the newspaper industry.

Members were then provid-

ed an opportunity to visit their legislators.

Speaking to OPA members in the afternoon were House Speaker Charles McCall, House Minority Leader Cyndi Munson, Senate Pro Tem Greg Treat and Senate Minority Leader Kay Floyd.

Education reform and lowering inflation costs will be a focus of the upcoming legislative session, said leaders on both sides of the aisle.

McCall said the House will be looking strongly at education and taxes.

McCall said he wants to increase parental choice for education but was noncommittal on legislation for school vouchers.



Meeting with Representative Brian Hill, right, at the State Capitol on Feb. 9 are Ryan Horton, Choctaw Times; Jayson Knight, Tuttle Times; and Jacob Sturm, Mustang Times.

Munson said her Democratic caucus opposes a “voucher scheme” as well as a merit pay system for teachers that was proposed by Superintendent of Education Ryan Walters.

Floyd said her caucus is supportive and committed

to protecting students and teachers.

Treat said that all legislators agree that it’s not acceptable for Oklahoma to be “near the bottom of educational outcomes.”

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

PAGE 3 OPA receives two membership applications

PAGE 4 2023 Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame inductees

PAGE 9 Lee Enterprises to help cover Indigenous news

From the President

By Zonelle Rainbolt

Executive Editor, Wesner Publications • OPA President 2022-2023



FEBRUARY has been a busy month for OPA members with two important dates on the calendar.

The first date was the annual OPA Legislative Summit on Thursday, February 9. After meeting briefly as a group, OPA members were encouraged to have short meetings with their legislators. This was our opportunity to let them know the issues we care about and, maybe more importantly, demonstrate how vital OPA members are to keep the news accurate and in front of their constituents. The OPA staff does an excellent job of providing members with newspaper front page displays to take to legislators to showcase the importance of news coverage. Lawmakers appreciate those pages and often keep them prominently displayed in their offices, reminding visitors of how news coverage remains very important.

February 13 was the deadline for the Oklahoma Press Association Contests and Awards! This is a fantastic way to be recognized for your hard work and discover how your news organization stacks up to publications of similar size. The contest was open to current OPA Legal Newspapers, General News Media and individual members – including members who have just recently joined and have paid their annual dues in full by the contest entry deadline. There are nine divisions in the contest. In addition to two divisions for Daily and Online-Only members, there are five divisions for Weekly members plus separate divisions for semi/tri-weekly members and college news media organizations. I hope all of you made a submission in at least one category. Looking at the entries at the annual meeting is always a highlight for me.

We continue to receive applications for membership to OPA and are excited about the knowledge and experience these new members will bring. It is encouraging to see our organization continuing to grow and thrive. You, as individual news organizations, provided the forward-thinking necessary to keep OPA strong and vital when you approved the new membership categories and the OPA staff continues to do an outstanding job ensuring we have the news and resources we need to provide Oklahomans with all the news.

Board members will meet in April for a planning session for the 2023-2024 year. While we have a number of ideas we want to discuss, we would also welcome your input for ways to help OPA provide you with services that would make your jobs easier.

The year is off to an awesome start and I am excited to see what the future holds for us. As always, the OPA staff and I are available for questions and assistance and would love to explore new ideas with you. We are available by phone, text and email and look forward to hearing from you!

OPA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For more information on upcoming events, visit okpress.com/events

Thur., March 2, 2023

1:00 - 2:00 PM, \$35

Online Media Campus Webinar **HOW TO RUN AN EFFECTIVE SALES CALL EVERY TIME!**

Learn the best practices on how to better plan, do and review your sales calls to improve your win rates. Presented by Daniel Grissom.

Thur., March 9, 2023

1:00 - 2:00 PM, \$35

Online Media Campus Webinar **BUSINESS NEWS AS AN EVERYDAY BEAT**

Business news deserves extra attention and this is a great opportunity to explore everyday business coverage. Presented by Jim Pumario.

Thur., March 16, 2023

3:00 - 4:10 PM, \$59

Newspaper Academy Webinar **IMPROVING DESIGN TO INCREASE READERSHIP & REVENUE**

Kevin Slimp will discuss new design styles vs. old design styles; creating cleaner pages; using up-to-date fonts; and much more.

Thur., March 30, 2023

1:00 - 2:00 PM

OMC Webinar, \$35

6 SALES TACTICS YOU NEED TO DO IN 2023

This training is for sales leaders at all levels and will help construct a solid sales strategy you can enhance and build upon throughout the year! For more info or to register see https://onlinemediacampus.com/inspire_events/6-sales-tactics-you-need-to-do-in-2023/

Thur., May 4, 2023

11:30 AM

OKLAHOMA JOURNALISM HALL OF FAME INDUCTION

Ten journalists and two lifetime achievement award winners will be honored at the 53rd annual luncheon and induction ceremony. To purchase tickets, \$35 per person, see <http://htokjournalismhalloffame.com/rsvp/>

Fri. & Sat., June 9-10, 2023

OPA ANNUAL CONVENTION

Mark your calendar to attend the 2023 Convention at the Grand Casino Hotel & Resort in Shawnee, Oklahoma.

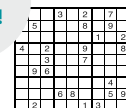
“ I didn't know you had this! ”



- PRINT & DIGITAL SPEC ADS
- ARTICLES & RECIPES
- PUZZLES & HOROSCOPES
- SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS
- CUSTOMER REQUESTS
- FREE WEBINARS

& so much more

FREE TRIAL OFFER!



METRO

CREATE. SELL. PROFIT.

800-223-1600

service@metro-email.com

metrocreativeconnection.com

Visit metrocreativeconnection.com to see all we offer!

OPA receives two new member applications

The OPA Board of Directors tentatively approved two applications for OPA membership at its meeting on Feb. 9. Written protests to either application must be received by March 11, 2023.

The Oklahoma Media Center has applied for a strategic partner membership. The application states the non-profit's mission is to support and strengthen Oklahoma's local journalism ecosystem and spur innovation through statewide collaboration. The project manager is Rob

Collins and the organization is based in Enid.

Gloria and Wayne Trotter applied for a retired membership. The Trotters were longtime publishers of the Tecumseh Countywide News & Sun until their retirement in 2017. Both are also past presidents of the OPA.

A protest to either membership application may be sent to the attention of OPA Executive Vice President Mark Thomas at mthomas@okpress.com or faxed to (405) 499-0048 or mailed to Mark

Thomas, Oklahoma Press Association, 3601 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73105.

Any current member filing a written protest will be entitled to be heard by the Board of Directors at its next scheduled meeting.

Information and application forms for OPA's membership classifications may be found at okpress.com/join. Lists of current members may be found at okpress.com/members.

Kathleen Guill announced as new managing editor for The Altus Times

The Altus Times recently named Kathleen Guill as its new managing editor.

Guill is a 2016 graduate of Cameron University. She has worked for the Frederick Press-Leader since June 2016, where she began as a reporter and photographer before moving up to editor.

Kevin Hilley, who has been editor of the Altus Times since July 2020, is taking over the

role of office manager and will continue reporting on some local events and photographing sports.

"I am excited to continue working with Kevin [Hilley] to cover Jackson County," said Guill.

Hilley's career includes reporting and editing the Atoka County Times and the Antlers American.

"Having Kathleen as editor

is going to really invigorate our readership at the Times," said Hilley. "It's going to be great."

Josh Umholtz, publisher of the Altus Times, said he's excited about the changes.

"I'm beyond excited to witness the impact these two will inevitably make in their new positions," Umholtz said.

The Oklahoma Publisher

ISSN 1526-811X

Official Publication of the
OKLAHOMA PRESS ASSOCIATION

OPA OFFICERS

President

ZONELLE RAINBOLT
Wesner Publications

Treasurer

DAVID STRINGER
The Lawton Constitution

Executive Vice President
MARK THOMAS

OPA DIRECTORS

JOHN DENNY MONTGOMERY
The Purcell Register, Past President

SHAUNA BELYEU
The Eufaula Indian Journal

SHEILA GAY
Woodward News

SUZIE CAMPBELL
Countywide & Sun

MISTI RINEHART
Tulsa World

ERIN DYER THOMPSON
El Reno Tribune

MARK CODNER
The Newcastle Pacer

OKLAHOMA PRESS ASSOCIATION
3601 N. Lincoln Blvd.,
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-5499
(405) 499-0020
Toll-Free in Oklahoma: (888) 815-2672
www.OkPress.com
news@OkPress.com
www.Facebook.com/OKPress

**SUBSCRIBE TO
THE OKLAHOMA PUBLISHER
\$12 PER YEAR**

THE OKLAHOMA PUBLISHER (USPS 406-920) is published monthly for \$12 per year by the Oklahoma Press Association, 3601 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73105-5499. Periodicals postage paid at Oklahoma City, OK.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE OKLAHOMA PUBLISHER, 3601 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73105-5499.

You've Got Questions!

- Can I photograph minors without consent?
- Can police deny access to records by issuing a press release?
- Should I alter my archives when a person demands it?
- Can I report inaccurate testimony given in open court?
- What are the laws about liquor advertising?

These are questions answered by the attorneys for the OPA Legal Services Plan members in recent months. OPA members always need timely legal advice on issues related to publishing.

You should join OPA's LEGAL SERVICES PLAN!

See www.OkPress.com/LSP or contact Mark Thomas
at (405) 499-0033 or toll-free in Oklahoma 1-888-815-2672 today!



Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame announces Class of 2023 inductees

Ten longtime journalists, the president of the Oklahoma Association of Broadcasters and the first Black woman in the Oklahoma City broadcast market will be among those honored at the 53rd annual luncheon and induction ceremony of the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame.

The induction ceremony will begin at 11:30 a.m. Thursday, May 4, in the grand ballroom of the Nigh University Center at the University of Central Oklahoma.

"The 2023 induction class shows the quality of journalists who have spent most of their careers in Oklahoma," said Director Joe Hight, who is also UCO's Edith Kinney Gaylord Endowed Chair of Journalism Ethics and a OJHOF member since 2013. "This continues as Oklahoma's highest journalistic honor because of that quality."

The 2023 induction class will be Bill Braun, a courthouse reporter for 33 years at the Tulsa World; Andrea Eger, an education and investigative reporter for the World; Joey Goodman, a longtime sportswriter and sports editor for The Lawton Constitution; Walter "Skipper" Harrison, a longtime journalist, editor and author before his death in 1961; Chris Lincoln, a sports director, network play-by-play announcer and sports production company owner; Don Mecoy, who just retired as managing editor for The Oklahoman; Dee Morales, a freelance national network reporter and producer who was among the first group of TV women reporters in Oklahoma; Chuck Musgrove, longtime managing editor of KFOR-TV; Myron Patton, sports talk show host and sports director at KOKH Fox 25; and Amy Raymond,

a copy editor, designer and director at The Oklahoman before her death in 2021.

"First and foremost, the Selection Committee considers their qualities as a journalist. That combined with their other accomplishments distinguish them as future hall of fame members," Hight said.

The 2023 Lifetime Achievement honorees will be Vance Harrison, the president of the Oklahoma Association of Broadcasters, and Joyce Jackson, the first Black woman journalist on Oklahoma television and now publisher of Shades of Oklahoma magazine.

"Vance and Joyce have served Oklahoma journalism in so many ways. It is our honor to add them to the growing list of Lifetime Achievement honorees," Hight said.

All 12 honorees will become members of the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame, which now has inducted nearly 500 members since its beginning.

A 12-member selection committee, mostly hall of fame members, chose this year's class and Lifetime Achievement honorees from nearly 85 nominations.

Invitations to the induction luncheon will be sent by the first of March, and reservations at \$35 each must be made by April 20. More information on the reservations will be posted soon on the hall of fame website at okjournalismhalloffame.com.

The Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame was founded in 1971 by former UCO Journalism Chairman Dr. Ray Tassin and Dennie Hall, with both serving as directors. Hight is the fourth director and succeeded Dr. Terry Clark. All members are featured on the hall of fame website. Past honoree plaques are on display at the hall of fame on the third floor of UCO's Nigh University Center.

Oklahoma J



BILL BRAUN

Bill Braun (1952-) spent almost his entire career at the Tulsa World. After graduating from the University of Oklahoma in 1974, he became a general assignment reporter at the Newkirk Herald-Journal. In 1976, he joined the Sherman (Texas) Democrat and later The Lawton Constitution. He started at the World in 1981 and spent 33 years covering every major trial at the Tulsa County District Court until he retired in 2014. In 2015, he received the Liberty Bell Award, the Tulsa County Bar Association's highest honor for non-lawyers. He also has received the AP/Oklahoma News Executives Carl Rogan news award and the Marshall Gregory Award from the Oklahoma Education Association.



DON MECOY

Don Mecoy (1960-) started at The Oklahoman in 1986. He worked every newsgathering desk at the newspaper, with stints as city editor, business editor and managing editor. A University of Oklahoma graduate, he has won awards for writing news, features and headlines. He served as a director of the Oklahoma Press Association for four years until leaving the industry in 2023. Perhaps his proudest journalistic accomplishment was when he was the only one of 12 media witnesses to properly quote a condemned man's last words ("assalamu alaikum," not "I'm still awake"). As he says, "Sometimes you gotta make one more phone call."

Lifetime Achievement Award Winners



VANCE HARRISON

(1953-) graduated from Cornell University in 1975 with a degree in Political Science. He began his career in 1978 at WXRT-FM in Chicago. Ten years later, he became general manager of KOMA-A/F and KRXX-FM KMGL-FM (Oklahoma City) from 1988-2004. Concurrently he was

the managing partner of Sooner Sports Properties (University of Oklahoma Athletics Multi-Media Rights Holder) and oversaw radio stations in Tulsa. Since 2007 he has been the president of the Oklahoma Association of Broadcasters advocating for all radio and television journalists in Oklahoma. He was inducted into OAB's Hall of Fame in 2019.



JOYCE JACKSON

(1944-) is regarded as Oklahoma television's first Black woman journalist. She started at KOCO-TV in 1970 and was a producer/talk show host and reporter. She graduated from Central State University in 1982. She also was a radio talk show host and editor of the

Capital City Courier in Springfield, Ill. After more than a decade in news, she was public information officer, communications director and executive communications administrator in the Oklahoma and Illinois corrections departments. She was a National Institute of Corrections media consultant (1988-2009). In 2015, she began publishing Shades of Oklahoma magazine. She was inducted into the Oklahoma Black Journalists Hall of Fame in 2009.

Journalism Hall of Fame 53rd Anniversary Class



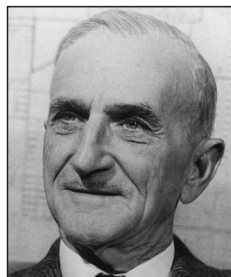
ANDREA EGER

Andrea Eger (1976-) is an education and investigative reporter at the Tulsa World and a graduate of the University of Oklahoma. After joining the World in 1999, she distinguished herself with award-winning investigations that sparked criminal charges against an athletic director and numerous child sexual predators, leadership changes at school districts and state agencies, and parole revocation for a notorious convicted murderer. She also received accolades for exposing a series of unnatural deaths in veterans' nursing homes and questionable financial practices at Epic Charter Schools, which Oklahoma's state auditor later declared the largest abuse of taxpayer funds "in the history of this state."



JOEY GOODMAN

Joey Goodman (1951-) joined the sports staff of The Lawton Constitution in February 1972 covering high school basketball. He soon was elevated to full time and in 1986 was named sports editor leading the department until 2018. He lists efforts to improve cooperation between the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association and state media outlets as one of the highlights of his long career. In 2019, he was one of the first three state media members honored with the OSSAA Media Appreciation Award. Other honors include Oklahoma Press Association column writing (2003) and best sports sections in 2003, 2004, 2005, 2010 and 2014.



WALTER HARRISON

Walter Harrison (1888-1961) was known as "Skipper." Born in Kentucky and an Iowa State College graduate, he worked for the Sioux City Daily, Des Moines Register, San Francisco Bulletin and Call, Winnipeg Tribune, and Minneapolis Tribune. Harrison was managing editor of The Daily Oklahoman/Oklahoma City Times (1916-1946) and president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors before becoming a KOMA radio news commentator while editing the weekly magazine Free Speech. He became part owner/manager of KTOW radio in 1948 and served on the Oklahoma City Council (1949-1957). Harrison was board chairman of Britton Printing Co. and owned the North Star, an Oklahoma City weekly, until his death.



CHRIS LINCOLN

Chris Lincoln (1947-) has excelled in all aspects of sports broadcasting in his 45-year career. He was sports director from 1974-1981 at KTUL TV while also hosting coaches shows for OU, OSU, TU and ORU. He was a network play-by-play announcer for ABC/ESPN. In 1981, he was co-founder of Winner Communications that became the largest independently owned sports production company. Chris became "Voice of The Thoroughbreds" in logging over 10 million airline miles covering the horse racing industry worldwide. After Winnercomm's sale in 2006, Chris returned as KTUL sports director from 2007-2012. He continues as producer and host of Oklahoma SportsScene.



DEE MORALES

Dee Morales (1950-) was among the first group of women TV reporters in Oklahoma. She was born in Manchester, England and attended St. Gregorys College and Oklahoma City University. Dee was an award-winning reporter at KWTU with AP/UPI awards and an Emmy nomination for a documentary on teenage births. She became a field producer with ABC news in 1995 and covered national news in a five-state region for World News Tonight and Good Morning America. She also freelanced for NBC News, Inside Edition, MTV, Crime Watch Daily, Al Jazeera and BBC News. Dee lives in Oklahoma City and still freelances for news and sports.



CHUCK MUSGROVE

Chuck Musgrove (1964-) has a passion for truth. He believes as journalists we have a responsibility to hold those in power accountable and a duty to keep people informed when life or property is threatened. For three decades, the KFOR managing editor has kept his team on a steady course. As a photojournalist, Chuck covered everything from doghouse fires to the fall of the Soviet Union. In 1994, Chuck left the street to take the managing editor position. The Oklahoma City bombing, deadly tornadoes and the tragic deaths of four of his co-workers has made him the journalist we see today.



MYRON PATTON

Myron Patton (1962-) graduated from the University of Oklahoma in 1984. He launched his first on-air duties in 1988 and was the market's only live morning show sportscaster. That led to KOCO's weekend sports anchor. In Shreveport, La., he became the main news anchor at KSLA-TV. After returning to Oklahoma in 2007, he became the state's first Black sports director or main anchor at KOKH Fox 25. Add sports talk radio jobs at Sportsradio 640, 1400 KNOR and CBS Sports Radio to his career full of sports. Beyond his many honors, he has covered the biggest sporting events. And he did it using the highest standards of journalistic ethics.



AMY RAYMOND

Amy Lanee Raymond (Greene) (1976-2021) worked her entire career at The Oklahoman. A Kansas native, she left high school a year early and earned a biology degree in 1997 from Oklahoma Christian University, where she was The Talon editor. She was a reporter during her internship/early years at The Oklahoman before finding her passion as a copy editor and designer. A tireless worker with a brilliant intellect, she was the award-winning chief copy editor, layout and design director, training and implementation director, project manager, nightside managing editor, night news director and digital news editor/lead planner. She married writer and editor Ken Raymond in 2004. They met at the newspaper.

Oklahoma Press Association

Legislative Summit

February 9, 2023

Oklahoma State Capital



Todd Brooks and Sarah Brooks from The Comanche Times with Sen. Chris Kidd.



Katrina Crumbacher, Michael Palacios, Nate Fox, and Valerie Scott from 15th Street News at Rose State College pose for a photo.



Mike Sherman and Lionel Ramos from Oklahoma Watch with Sen. Michael Brooks.



Elizabeth Ridenour from Muskogee Phoenix visits with Rep. Neil Hays in his office at the State Capitol.



Johnny McMahan and Sheila Gay from Woodward News pose for a photo.



Matt Montgomery and Philip Reid from Weatherford Daily News with Rep. Rusty Cornwell.



Rod Serfoss from Clinton Daily News, Zonelle Rainbolt from Wesner Publications, and Mark Codner from The Newcastle Pacer enjoying a chat.

Mangum Star debuts “What’s Snapping”



The Mangum Star is encouraging readers to submit photos for a new feature it’s calling “What’s Snapping.”

The feature aims to visually capture the community’s attention by highlighting the most interesting and engaging images, said Brad Gilbert, editor of The Mangum Star. Gilbert selects the weekly image from a variety of sources including local photographers, staff

photographers and reader submissions.

“What’s Snapping is a unique way for readers to stay informed about their community,” Gilbert said. “The feature is updated every week so readers can look forward to new and captivating images on a regular basis.”

What’s Snapping provides a great opportunity for community readers to have their photographs and images featured in the newspaper, Gilbert said.

Cunningham joins the Clinton Daily News

Drew Cunningham is the new sports editor at The Clinton Daily News.

Cunningham, originally from Muskogee, will be covering high school sports from around the area in addition to sports on the local, state, national and worldwide level.

After graduating from high school, Cunningham attended

the University of Central Oklahoma where he studied design.

Cunningham said he is looking forward to writing about and taking photos of local sporting events.

“I am really excited about the opportunity here,” he said. “I am excited for this new chapter and cannot wait to bring sports content to the community.”

Member Snapshots



Cheyenne Star Editor and Publisher Melanie Anspaugh’s work is long from being done after selling ads, writing news, doing the composition and sending it to the printer each week. Once all that is complete, she makes the two-hour round trip to retrieve the bundles of printed newspapers so she can label and sort them for mailing.



While the Mountain View News is the written history of the community, the lobby of its office also has local history and some of the once used tools of the newspaper trade on display. Leon Hobbs (pictured) and his wife Jyl have been publishing the Kiowa County newspaper since December 1979.

OG&E PHOTO CONTEST



El Reno's Spencer Davidson eyes the mat as he throws Broken Arrow's Josh Farguhur to his back.

Photo by GLEN MILLER, El Reno Tribune, December 17, 2022



Panthers Braeden Palmer (14) and Garrett Patterson (13) get physical pawing after a rebound.

Photo by JASON TURNER, Choctaw Times, December 14, 2022

DECEMBER 2022 DAILY,
SEMI- AND TRI-WEEKLY

WINNER:

**GLEN
MILLER**

El Reno Tribune

DECEMBER 2022
WEEKLY WINNER:

**JASON
TURNER**

Choctaw Times

*The OGE Photo Contest
was judged by a member of the
Oklahoma Journalism
Hall of Fame.*

View all winning photos
and contest rules at

**OkPress.com/
OGE-Photo-Contest**

**Enter and Win
a \$100 Check from
OGE ENERGY CORP.**

For more information
about the photo contest,
visit [okpress.com/
oqe-photo-contest](http://okpress.com/oqe-photo-contest)

At OG&E, we **do more** than energize a power grid.
We honor our commitment to **strengthen our communities.**

OG&E
We Energize Life

© 2021 OGE Energy Corp.

Lee Enterprises partners with ICT to support Indigenous news

The Tulsa World is adding a reporter to its newsroom in a new partnership with one of the leading news organizations focused on covering Indigenous communities.

Lee Enterprises and ICT, formerly Indian Country Today, will share reporters in Tulsa and Rapid City, South Dakota, where Lee owns the Tulsa World and Rapid City Journal. The partnership is designed to produce enterprising coverage of Indigenous people and issues in those two regions.

The work of these reporters will appear on their respective print and online publications, Lee's other 75 news publications in 26 states, indiancountrytoday.com and ICT's daily broadcast.

ICT is owned by IndiJ Public Media, an independent nonprofit, multimedia news organization with headquarters in Phoenix, Arizona, and bureaus in Alaska and Washington, D.C.

There are nine tribal nations in South Dakota and 39 tribal nations in Oklahoma. The hope of this partnership is broadening the understanding of Native people in these regions.

The reporters will work on stories focused on Indian issues, histories, cultures and federal Indian policy.

"We are so pleased to begin this partnership," said Karen Michel, Ho-Chunk, president of IndiJ Public Media and ICT. "This is about creating opportunity. We need more Native journalists in order to tell a

richer story. And by partnering with existing newsrooms we can serve our readers better and faster."

Jason Collington, editor of the Tulsa World, believes this new position allows the Tulsa World to provide readers with more depth on Indigenous communities and how they are affected by issues.

"When you let journalists do their work, they play a role so everyone knows what's really going on," he said. "It's a role that is vital for the leaders to make the best decisions possible. The Tulsa World has done a lot of reporting in this area over the decades but this new reporter will help us be more comprehensive."

Jourdan Bennett-Begaye, Diné, ICT's editor, added:

"This partnership shows Lee Enterprises' commitment and investment in covering Indigenous issues, peoples and nations accurately and fairly."

Jason Adrians, Lee Enterprises' vice president-local news, believes this partnership reflects Lee's continued efforts to provide the most important and impactful local news content to diverse communities.

"It's an excellent opportunity to deepen our coverage of Indigenous communities in Oklahoma and South Dakota, as well as grow our roster of talented local journalists," he said.

The job postings for the Indigenous affairs reporters at both locations are available online at lee.net/careers.

Megan Torres is the new owner of The County Times

The County Times, a newspaper in Comanche County, is under new ownership.

Venius Dobson, who has owned the newspaper since 2011, announced that her

daughter, Megan Torres, has taken over the weekly newspaper. Dobson's nephew, Chris Ballard, will continue working there.

"They will continue the tradition of sharing 'The

Positive Side of Comanche County' that was established by Tommy Hawthorne," said Dobson.

"After 1,300 papers and Tuesday deadlines, working at the paper for 25 years and

owning it for over 11 years, there will always be a part of me looking for 'The Positive Side of Comanche County,'" she said.



STRATEGIC PARTNERS

CHICKASAW NATION MEDIA RELATIONS

Loné Beasley
580-559-0921
loné.beasley@chickasaw.net
chickasaw.net

eTYPE SERVICES

Thad Swiderski
512-687-9055
thad@etypeservices.com
etypeservices.com

GRAND RIVER DAM AUTHORITY

Justin Alberty
918-256-5545
justin.alberty@grda.com
grda.com

METRO CREATIVE GRAPHICS

Jennifer Steiner
800-223-1600
jsteiner@metro-email.com
metrocreativeconnection.com

OGE ENERGY CORP.

Christi Woodworth
405-553-3698
woodwoco@oge.com
oge.com

OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION SERVICES

Jody Harlan, Comm. Director
405-203-1318
jharlan@okdrs.gov
oklahoma.gov/okdrs.html

ONE GAS

Jason Cleary
jason.cleary@onegas.com
oklahomanaturalgas.com

OKLAHOMA ASSOCIATION OF ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES, INC.

Chris Meyers
405-478-1455
cmeyers@oaec.coop
oaec.coop

OKLAHOMA BAR ASSOCIATION

Janet Johnson
405-416-7000
janetj@okbar.org
okbar.org

OKLAHOMA STATE SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION

Christy Watson, Comm. Director
405-528-3571
christyw@ossba.org
ossba.org

Keystone Gusher new name of Drumright paper

The weekly newspaper in Drumright has changed its name from The Drumright Gusher to The Keystone Gusher.

The name change reflects the expanded coverage of the newspaper, said J.D. Meisner, owner and publisher.

Meisner purchased the Drumright Gusher in 2020 — and then came COVID-19.

“Garnering enough advertising revenue from the local business community to keep the Gusher afloat was a failing proposition,” Meisner said.

At the beginning of 2021, Meisner realized the Gusher was not going to make it on its own.

After doing some market research, he expanded coverage to the Mannford community, which hadn’t had its own newspaper for years.

“The Mannford community opened their hearts, their

minds and their checkbooks to enable the Gusher to provide coverage to area youth, keep them informed about the ins and outs of city hall and the school board, and let them know what’s happening on, in and around Keystone Lake,” Meisner said.

And that led to the decision to add Keystone to the Gusher’s name.

Coverage of local communities still includes Drumright as well as towns in and around Mannford and the Keystone Lake area.

“Here at Cimarron Valley Communications,” said Meisner, “we have embraced our role of providing news and sports coverage to the Keystone Lake area and the pay-off for our readers is that the Mannford community now has a newspaper and the Drumright community still has a newspaper.”



**THEY DIDN'T CHOOSE
TO LIVE WITH
SECONDHAND SMOKE.**

When kids are exposed to secondhand smoke in a car, the health risks increase. Kids in other states are protected, but in Oklahoma, smoking in cars is still legal.

Where do you stand?

Join the fight to protect Oklahoma kids.

TOBACCO STOPS WITH ME.com

A Program of
 **TSET**

Pineda returns to Ardmoreite



Michael Pineda, a former staff writer for The Ardmoreite, has rejoined the publication.

Pineda brings over 20 years of experience in journalism, including five years in Ardmore where he reported on

city and county government. During his career, he worked at newspapers in Ardmore, Duncan, Yukon and Baytown, Texas.

“My passion has always been community journalism and I am excited to catch up with old friends and make some new ones along the way,” Pineda said.

In addition to focusing on city and county government, Pineda will also report on crime and school districts.

“We are so happy to have Michael back with us,” said Drew Butler, editor of The Ardmoreite. “His addition will allow us to provide even more focused and local coverage.”

We've got some explaining to do

By John Foust
Greensboro, NC

People usually say “no” to things they don’t understand. It’s a salesperson’s job to help prospects understand what he or she is selling. What makes media choice A better than choice B? What’s all this talk about target audiences being better than general audiences? Doesn’t that mean fewer buyers? If a business has been successful for a long time, why spend money on advertising?

You’re probably not worried about these things, but more than a few of your prospects are. There’s a natural tendency to think our prospects are keeping up with what we’re saying, when in reality, that may not be the case. We have to get in step with them before we can expect them to get in step with us.

Christopher, a veteran ad salesperson, told me about an

unusual misunderstanding with a prospect. “When he called to say he wanted to discuss his advertising outlays,” Christopher said, “I immediately thought about the budgeting process. As the conversation progressed, I realized that we were on two completely different wavelengths. He was referring to ad layouts, not ad outlays. We can laugh about it now, but at the time, it took a few minutes before I was able to adjust to the situation.”

Think of a camera. When you use the setting to focus tightly on a photo subject, the background is blurred. Sometimes, we concentrate so much on the center of attention – the person on the other side of the desk – that we lose sight of the things that might be blurred to them.

Here are a few ideas which may help:

1. Think of different ways

to explain things. Have plenty of examples in your toolbox. In one case, an analogy might be your best choice and in another, a demonstration may be most appropriate. “Even when I use a map or a chart, I explain the information as simply as possible,” Christopher said. “A picture may be worth a thousand words, but a picture with no explanation is not worth much in a sales presentation.”

2. Break it down into small pieces. Don’t bombard the other person with everything at once. Build your case one point at a time. What good is point number three, if they don’t understand points one and two?

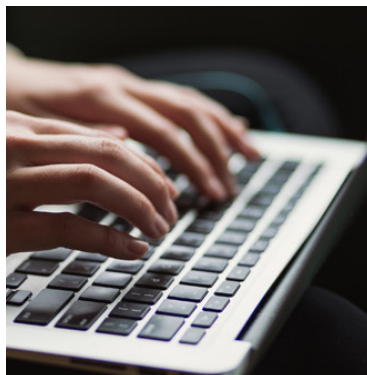
3. Check for clarity. Sure, your sales explanations are crystal clear to you, but how does the other person see them? Unlike a camera, there is no viewfinder in a sales

meeting. So, we use other techniques to see if anything is blurry to them.

The most reliable way is to watch for body language and ask questions: “How does this look so far?” “When others see this chart, they often have questions. Does anything come to mind?” “Before we go any further, let me ask if this kind of information is what you need at this point?”

Good selling is a matter of becoming a professional explainer. By eliminating the blurred edges, you can help your prospects and clients see a much clearer picture.

© 2023 by John Foust. All rights reserved. John Foust has conducted training programs for thousands of newspaper advertising professionals. Many ad departments are using his training videos to save time and get quick results from in-house training. Email for information: john@johnfoust.com



Learn the best practices for Public Notices at
okpress.com/public-notice-training

The Oklahoma Press Association offers three videos that describe and illustrate the standards and best practices for publication of notices along with downloadable material.



SAVE THE DATE!
June 9-10, 2023

OPA CONVENTION
Grand Casino Hotel & Resort, Shawnee

Good writing, headlines compel readers to look



Looking Them Over

by Rod Serfoss
rserfoss@okpress.com

Headlined, “Growing up in the County Jail,” followed by a subhead, “Demolition triggers memories for sheriff’s child” was the beginning of a complete feature story package in *The Kingfisher Times and Free Press*. The well written story detailed the memories of when a child lived in the county jail with her parents from the age of nine to 14. Her bitter-sweet memories were sparked as she watched the 87-year-old Kingfisher County Jail being demolished. The headlines, story and use of both old and new photographs were all highlighted by a superb layout. Well done!

The “Weather Kid’s Forecast” in *The Ada News* is a reminder of how special it is for a youngster to have their talent recognized in the newspaper. The full color weather drawing next to the weather forecast was drawn by a 3rd-grade elementary school student. What better way to get youngsters interested in newspapers than to have their work being published for all to see. Remember, while everyone has their pictures on Facebook, it is a big deal when they appear in the newspaper.

Five local stories and two pictures showing 16 people on the front page of the *Henryetta Free-Lance* is a reminder that the more stories that are on the front page, the more likely people are to buy and read the newspaper. When looking at the Free-Lance, it is easy to see how a community is reflected through its newspaper.

A pair of things were attention grabbers in *The*

Cordell Beacon. When you see a headline “Oh Good Gravy,” you have to read the story to see what it is about. This creative and concise title was the perfect lure to get people to read a story about how rising food prices are affecting everyday people. In another edition there was a front-page picture of the Grinch trying to read the newspaper that he was holding upside down. “This is the worst newspaper I have ever seen!,” said the Grinch. “Everything is written upside down!” While this made us chuckle, it was also a reminder that most editors and publishers hear complaints from readers that make about as much sense as what upset the Grinch.

This might be a good time to interject the words of former Oklahoma Press Association President Charles Engleman. “Remember that people have to buy and read a newspaper in order to complain about what is in it,” said Engleman. “Instead of getting upset at them for being upset at us, we should thank them for being a customer!”

“We always want to hear your opinion,” writes the editor of the *McCurtain Gazette*. Readers are encouraged to “Call the Editor” after 5 p.m. weekdays and anytime on Sundays and sound off on any topic. They don’t have to give their name and “all responsible comments will be recorded and considered for publication.” Good job on finding a way to get people to engage with their local newspaper – and getting news tips in the process.

The town of Snyder should be proud to have a newspaper like the *Kiowa County Democrat*. Because of the way it promotes the town it would

[illegible][illegible]

Newspapers featured this month include The Cordell Beacon, The Kingfisher Times & Free Press, Henrvetta Free-Lance and The Ada News.

[illegible]

Tattle opens Bertha Frank Trague Mid-America Clinic with win over Pittsburgh.

Sports B1

The ADA NEWS

Serving the heart of the *Southern State* and *Chickasaw Nations* since 1904

Thursday, December 24, 2022 www.theadaneews.com \$1.75

2022 The Year in Pictures

Part 1,
January
through
April

By Richard Knecht
Staff Writer

The year has been a roller coaster ride for everyone. It has been a year of challenges and triumphs. It has been a year of change and growth. It has been a year of hope and despair. It has been a year of love and loss. It has been a year of life and death. It has been a year of everything.

Photo: Justin C. Thompson

How to become a school bus driver

By Kevin Lewis / Staff Writer

Applicants must be at least 21 years old, have a valid driver's license, and be a resident of the state. They must also pass a background check and a physical examination. The training program typically lasts for four to six weeks and includes both classroom and on-the-road instruction. After completing the program, applicants must pass a written and practical exam to become certified school bus drivers.

Chickasaw writer makes headway into the world of First American Advocacy

Special to the Tribune

Chickasaw writer and author, [Name], has made significant progress in her advocacy work. She has been instrumental in raising awareness about the challenges faced by Native Americans and has worked to secure funding for various programs. Her efforts have been recognized by the community and she continues to be a vocal advocate for her people.

New traffic signals along Main Street

The city has installed new traffic signals along Main Street to improve traffic flow and safety. The signals are now operational and are expected to reduce the number of accidents in the area.

Local business owner wins award

A local business owner has been recognized for their outstanding contributions to the community. The award was presented at a ceremony held at the city hall.

LOOK INSIDE FOR THE PRIZEWHEEL PUZZLE

SOLVE IT FOR A CHANCE TO WIN \$650

All submissions for the Prizewheel Puzzle will be accepted until 5 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 2, 2023. The puzzle is a 10x10 grid with numbers 1-10 in each row and column. The goal is to place numbers in the empty cells so that each row and column contains all the numbers 1-10. The puzzle is a challenge for many and is a fun way to test your logic skills.

Inside

Obituaries

Today High & Low

Weather

WINNER

be easy to think it serves a far bigger community than it does. In a recent six-page edition, there were 23 local news and sports stories, 10 pictures, plus several columns and stories of interest to readers in southwest Oklahoma!

Seeing the color comic section in the *Stillwater News Press* was a reminder

of the good ole days when I would get up early on Sunday morning and be the first to grab the “funny papers” out of the newspaper. It was fun to pause and enjoy seeing “Peanuts,” “Beagle Bailey,” “Blondie,” “The Born Looser,” “Frank and Ernest” and others. It was a reminder

Continued on Page 13

Looking Them Over

Continued from Page 12

that newspapers are still informative, entertaining and fun to read!

The Broken Bow News does a good job of encouraging people to submit photos to be published in the newspaper. An attention grabbing ad reads; "Have a cute photo to share? Bring your Reader Photo of the Day to the newspaper."

Big things often happen with the help of people who come from small communities. Plaudits to **The Thomas Tribune** for the story it published about a man from

Fay, a small community of less than 60 people located eight miles northeast of Thomas in Custer County. The story was about the work he does for NASA and his work on the Artemis 1 Mission project that recently completed a test flight as part of NASA's plan to send people back to the moon. Without the more than 100 newspapers covering the events in the small towns across Oklahoma, stories like this might never get told.

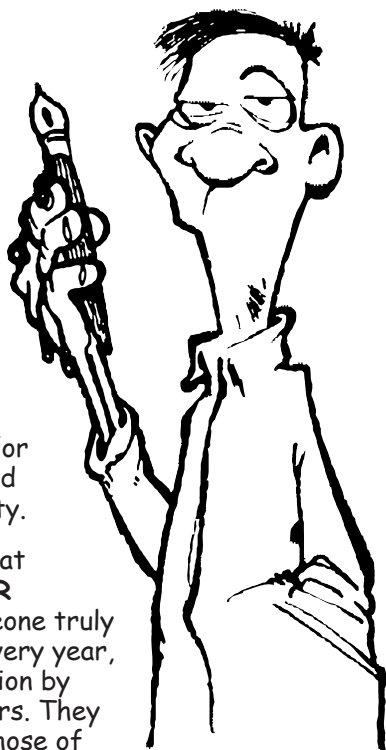
Rod Serfoss, longtime publisher of the Clinton Daily News, looks over OPA member publications for a monthly column, "Looking Them Over." To contact Serfoss, email rserfoss@okpress.com.

LEND US YOUR ERRS

Toiling in the fields of print journalism is often an unsung task. That's why we in the industry take it upon ourselves to recognize notable achievements through various sorts of awards.

One such award is OPA's annual **GRAND BLOOPER AWARD**, given each year to a newspaper for achievement above and beyond the call of duty.

In order to ensure that the **GRAND BLOOPER AWARD** goes to someone truly deserving each and every year, we beg your cooperation by sending us the bloopers. They can be your own, or those of someone you admire.



E-mail PDFs of bloopers to:
news@okpress.com

or mail tearsheets or photocopies to:

GRAND BLOOPER AWARD
c/o Oklahoma Press Association
3601 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73105-5499

Worth Mentioning

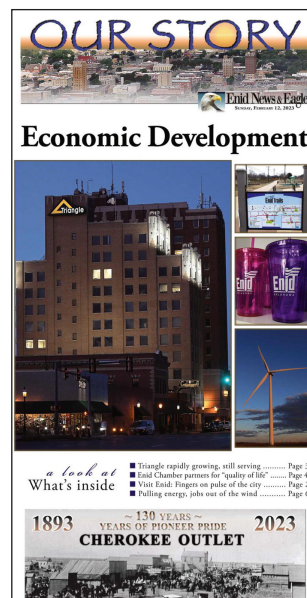
ENID NEWS & EAGLE PRODUCING 'OUR STORY'

The Enid News & Eagle is producing a series of special sections that will run in several Sunday editions through April.

Titled "Our Story," the series focuses on several topics of interest to Enid and Northwest Oklahoma.

The first section highlighted education in the community. Future sections will highlight economic development, Northwest Oklahoma ag and energy, health and wellness, faith, military impact, arts and entertainment and community service.

"We know our readers will find these sections interesting and informative," said Cindy Allen, publisher. "We hope everyone takes a little time to read about how individuals, businesses and organizations are meeting the demands of our future while celebrating the legacies of our past."



WEATHERFORD DAILY NEWS OFFERS OPPORTUNITY TO WIN 'DINNER ON US'

The Weatherford Daily News is bringing back its annual "Dinner on Us" campaign. The Daily News partners with local businesses to celebrate local restaurants during February and March. Shoppers enter at participating merchants for an opportunity to win a \$50 gift certificate in a weekly drawing. The promotion runs eight weeks with 20 winners each week of the giveaway. The goal of the campaign is to keep local restaurants thriving.



ALTUS TIMES LOOKING FOR BEST IN THE SOUTHWEST

The Altus Times is asking its readers to vote for the Best of the Southwest. The reader's choice contest gives winners

the chance for public recognition and acclaim in categories including commerce/retail/service and other businesses. A special section will be running Friday, Feb. 24, highlighting all winners. Contest winners earn bragging rights for a year, with a certificate made available to place in a prominent location in their business.



A look at FTP clients, new Mini, free art and more



Computer Notes

from the road
by Wilma Newby
wnewby@okpress.com

Cyberduck, Fetch and FileZilla are FTP clients that have served us for many years.

FTP stands for File Transfer Protocol. It's been our go to method of sending large page files over the Internet.

Fetch came out in 1989 as a leading FTP client on the Apple platform. It's one of the most reliable FTP client software programs available. At \$29 it's well worth the money and used at many newspaper offices.

Then in came FileZilla, first released in 2001 as open source for both Windows and Apple computers.

Next up was Cyberduck, released in 2002. The little duck has been a go to FTP client for many papers. It works on Windows or Mac.

Cyberduck is currently an open source program and free.

There are others, just not as popular. Secure FTP, Core FTP, Transmit and Forklift may be in our collective memory as FTP clients.

If your newspaper is having trouble with uploads try a different FTP client. Most now support many other transfer protocols like SFTP and many — like Dropbox, Microsoft OneDrive or Google Drive — connect to cloud storage, mostly in their pro models.

Computers with older operating systems should try sites that have backlogs of older versions of the programs.

Cyberduck, at <https://cyberduck.io/changelog/> goes back to 2004 versions of the program. The Fetch download page, <https://fetchsoftworks.com/fetch/download/>, goes back to version 4.3, which runs on very old system software.

The websites have the open source, free client versions of the programs. The App stores mostly have paid for versions.

Some versions of Apple system software seemed to block all FTP programs that were downloaded. FileZilla seemed to be the best at getting around this problem.

Many upload sites are going to SFTP protocol for uploading. Check for the exact protocol needed when setting up your bookmarks.

FTP is a great way to move files around the web but it is considered less secure since those big files could have viruses in them. Use virus checkers on files as they are downloaded.

APPLE RELEASES M2 MAC MINI

Apple has at last released the M2 Mac Mini. A low priced M2 computer from Apple has been long awaited by many newspapers.

Pricing starts at \$599 for the low end, \$799 for mid-

range and \$1299 for the high end model. These computers are not consumer upgradeable, meaning no hardware updates can be made after purchase.

The Pro Mac Mini comes with 16GB RAM and a 512GB hard drive. This could be a decent setup for papers right out of the box. Creative Cloud works well on all versions of the Mini and Microsoft Office 365 is set up for it as well. The Pro Mini has 4 thunderbolt 4 ports, fast WIFI 6E and Bluetooth 5.3. That's a lot faster than most of Oklahoma's internet but you're buying for the future. Adapters will be needed if you plan to use more than one monitor. You can buy a thunderbolt to HDMI cable for under \$20. Don't forget to factor in all the new cables needed to set up the monitor, mouse and keyboard.

FREE ART

The hunt for free art seems to be becoming a bigger issue since Google changed its site making paid results almost all that can be found when searching. Newspapers need to be careful not to reprint art without permission of its creator. If it says free, read the license and see what free means for that piece of art.

Pixnio.com has free images to download. Note the "Free to use" area on the upper right of the download window. Some

images are Creative Commons photos with restrictions.

VectorPortal.com has a good selection of free vector images. The files come zipped with a text document that tells how the art can be used.

Publicdomainpictures.net or pdclipart.org seem to be mostly free art. Still read the license and note the size of the art that is being downloaded; often it's very small and will not reproduce well.

Pixabay.com has many free photos for download and the site is clear about its license policy.

One place to get free art is a site known as canva.com. This is a web ad builder that offers many art files for free to be used to build ads. It's a bit more complicated to get the art off the site. It has to be placed on an ad and saved to a PDF file.

If your paper has a Metro Creative Connection subscription it's most likely all you'll need for art. It's generally larger newspapers that have these kind of subscriptions.

WINDOWS 10

As of January 31, copies of Windows 10 are no longer for sale at the Microsoft store. All support updates for Windows 10 ends in August 2025.

Boxes of Windows 10 are getting hard to find from good retail outlets like Best Buy or Office Depot/Office Max. Many third party sellers bought up the boxes to upsell online.

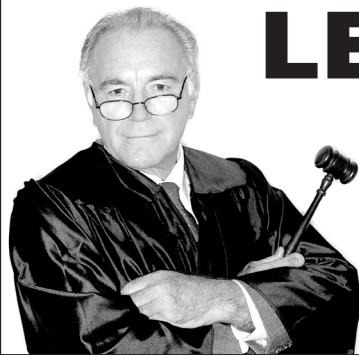
Updating a Windows 7/8 computer to Windows 10 is still an option with Microsoft but it requires a long download.

OPA Computer Consultant Wilma Newby's column is brought to you by the Oklahoma Advertising Network (OAN). For more information on the OAN program, contact Oklahoma Press Service at (405) 499-0020.

LEGAL ADVICE

is just one of the benefits of being a member of the Oklahoma Press Association's Legal Services Plan. Remove the worry of needing professional advice by enrolling today. For more information contact:

**OKLAHOMA PRESS ASSOCIATION'S
LEGAL SERVICES PLAN
1-888-815-2672 or 405-499-0020**



Please donate to the
**OKLAHOMA
NEWSPAPER
FOUNDATION**

*Donations to the
Oklahoma Newspaper
Foundation
will support its efforts
to improve the state's
newspaper industry and
quality of journalism.*

If you would like
to make a donation,
please send a check to:

**OKLAHOMA
NEWSPAPER
FOUNDATION**
3601 N. Lincoln Blvd.,
Oklahoma City, OK
73105-5499

*Remembering our
friends & colleagues
who died
the previous year.*

Robert M. 'Bob' Carpenter
Jan. 31, 2022

Susie Anna Harjo-Cliff
Jan. 29, 2022

Sandra Jane Jeter
Jan. 31, 2022

Virginia Browning Bradshaw
Feb. 9, 2022

DEATHS

**MEREDON FRANCIS
CABLE**, former owner and
publisher of The Lindsay
News, died January 17, 2023.
He was 87.

Cable was born May 28,
1935, in Newcastle. He was a
lifetime resident of Lindsay,
graduating from Newcastle
High School in 1954. He be-
came interested in the printing/
newspaper industry while
attending Okmulgee Tech.

Cable went to work for The
Lindsay News in 1955 and
remained there for 20 years.
When the newspaper sold
in 1975, Cable and his wife,
Lauvern Marion, bought the
commercial printing portion of
the business and operated it as
Cable Printing Company with
their son, Darrell Cable.

In 1983, the Cables pur-
chased The Lindsay News.

Meredon served as editor and
publisher until he retired in
2008.

Cable is survived by his
wife of 65 years, Lauvern; sons
Darrel Cable and wife Tammie
of Lindsay, and Jerry Cable
and wife Bonnie of Carencro,
La.; seven grandchildren; 13
great-grandchildren; and broth-
ers Wayne, Boyd and Leland
Cable.

JOHN R. HOKANSON, a for-
mer editor of the Pryor Daily
Times, died January 21, 2023.
He was 90.

Hokanson was born Oc-
tober 17, 1932 in Marquette,
Ks. After graduating from
high school, he joined the U.S.
Navy for four years and then
attended Kansas State Uni-
versity where he graduated in
1959.

He went to work at the Pry-
or Daily Times as a reporter
and later was named editor.

Hokanson later moved to
Norman and received a mas-
ter's degree from the Universi-
ty of Oklahoma.

He went on to work for the
U.S. Census Bureau and for
International Commerce in
Africa. He then joined the Civ-
il Aeronautics Board, which

later became a part of the
Department of Transportation.
He retired in 1988.

Hokanson is survived by
his wife, Rubie; son Darrell
Steffens of Broken Arrow;
and sister Lucille Mitchell of
Kansas City, Mo.

**JAMES 'JIM' GILBERT
ALLEN JR.**, who once
worked at the Enid News &
Eagle, died January 15, 2023.
He was 86.

Allen was born July 7,

1936, in Guthrie. He attended
school in Tecumseh. After
high school, he worked for
Halliburton and later OG&E.

He retired from OG&E in
his mid-50s and then worked
in the accounting/billing de-

partment at the Enid News &
Eagle until again retiring.

Allen is survived by sons
Jimmy Allen and Scott Allen;
four grandchildren and two
great-grandchildren.

**CHRISTINE MICHELLE
EDENS**, former city editor at
the Oologah Lake Leader, died
January 12, 2023. She was 57.

Edens was born May 12,
1966. She attended Mingo
Independent School and later
Owasso Junior High and High
School. After graduating,

she attended Oklahoma State
University.

In addition to her work
at the Oologah Lake Lead-
er, Edens also worked at the
Nowata Star. She won several
awards for writing and pho-
tography while working at the
newspapers.

She loved animals and
owned three horses as well as
several rescued dogs and cats.

Eden is survived by her
brother, Curtis Edens Jr. and
his wife Michelle and son
Kyle of Sand Springs; and a
nephew, Shawn.

OPA STAFF DIRECTORY

ADMINISTRATION

MARK THOMAS, Executive Vice President
mthomas@okpress.com, (405) 499-0033

JEANNIE FREEMAN, Accounting Manager
jfreeman@okpress.com, (405) 499-0027

SCOTT WILKERSON, Front Office/Building Mgr.
swilkerson@okpress.com, (405) 499-0020

MEMBER SERVICES

LISA SUTLIFF, Member Services Director
lsutliff@okpress.com, (405) 499-0040

ALEXIS MARTIN, Member Services
Coordinator
amartin@okpress.com, (405) 499-0035

ADVERTISING

LONDON COBB, Sales Director
lcobb@okpress.com, (405) 499-0022

CINDY SHEA, Advertising Director
cshea@okpress.com, (405) 499-0023

DIGITAL NEWS TRACKING

KEITH BURGIN, Digital News Tracking Mgr.
kburgin@okpress.com, (405) 499-0026

JENNIFER CATES, News Tracking Staff
jbeatley-cates@okpress.com

SHARON BEUCHAW, News Tracking Staff
sbeuchaw@okpress.com

CREATIVE SERVICES

JENNIFER GILLILAND, Creative Services Director
jgilliland@okpress.com, (405) 499-0028

AUSTIN ANDERSON, Creative Services Assistant
aanderson@okpress.com, (405) 499-0031

COMPUTER ADVICE

WILMA NEWBY, Computer Consultant
wnewby@okpress.com, (405) 659-0596

GENERAL INQUIRIES

(405) 499-0020, Fax: (405) 499-0048
Toll-free in OK: 1-888-815-2672

OKLAHOMA NATURAL GAS CONTEST WINNERS

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE DECEMBER WINNERS

Column: **BRIAN BLANSETT**, *The Lincoln County News*

Editorial: **MARK CODNER**, *The Newcastle Pacer*

DECEMBER EDITORIAL WINNER *(Excerpts from editorial. Read entire column at okpress.com/ong-contest)*

MARK CODNER, *The Newcastle Pacer*

Keep tax dollars out of private education

The people of Oklahoma may have voted Kevin Stitt back in the governor's office and Ryan Walters in as secretary of education, but they did not give them a mandate to put public tax dollars into private education.

We believe voters only said they want conservative leadership in state government. They did not say they want publicly funded private school vouchers. Both Stitt and Walters have said they support vouchers and they will make this a priority in their new terms. Stitt said he wants to get the public on board.

We say the public is not on board, especially in rural Oklahoma.

The question becomes: Why is there such a push by Stitt and Walters to spend public education dollars on private education?

Are we becoming so internalized and selfish that we've lost the importance of providing public resources to those in need?

The idea of taxation is to provide for the welfare of all, especially those who cannot provide for themselves. In the case of education, taxation is used to finance public sector expenditures to promote public advantage.

We don't believe there's a place for public-private partnerships when it comes to educating our children. The private schools have always been able to fund themselves. Those who have the monetary resources and don't want their child in a public school can send their child to a private school. Many times there are scholarships available. These schools also have a business model that has worked for them. They don't need public funding.

Even parents who have paid for their child's private education are saying they believe they should be paying for it themselves, and government funds should be going to public schools.

Stitt and Walters say they want to get the public on board. We say no! Keep our public schools strong by keeping tax dollars out of private education.

DECEMBER COLUMN WINNER *(Excerpts from column. Read entire column at okpress.com/ong-contest)*

BRIAN BLANSETT, *The Lincoln County News*

The graduate

Friday evening, we all stood as the Graduation March played.

The 220 about-to-be-graduates of OSU's Institute of Technology began their march through the door at the back of the hall and I searched the sea of black caps and gowns for one particular person.

Finally, I saw her: Kindra, whose face was beaming.

A mother of three who'd put her life and plans on hold for the sake of her kids and her family, she had gone back to school at 34 to pursue her dream of earning a college degree.

She started her journey not long after we got married in February 2020, just before COVID happened.

She'd wanted to finish a degree for quite some time, but the simultaneous opportunity and the reality of our lives had made it the right time to take the plunge.

As a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, she could get scholarships from the tribe, and she was still working for the Lincoln County News as a graphic artist and ad coordinator.

So she had money for tuition, books, gasoline and expenses, and she had flexibility to work at home on her own schedule.

There was also the fact that I was twice as old as she was

when we got married. The age gap never seemed to bother her as much as it did me, but there remained one awkward reality: most likely, I will walk on, as the Potawatomis say, long before she does.

She would need to have a career in place before that hour might come.

Now, she had the means to pay as she went without going in debt. She didn't have to worry about the bills at home being paid, and she had a supportive spouse and family. Everything was aligned correctly and it was time for her to take the first step on that walk that she completed on Friday.

And that's what she did. She wanted to get a degree in culinary arts and become a chef, so she enrolled at OSUIT and started everything in motion.

It wasn't easy. She had to drive round-trip to Okmulgee at least four times a week and she still had to raise three kids and a husband in addition to maintaining her job and classwork, which included algebra.

But she did it. In spades. A couple of hours before the graduation ceremony she was honored as the outstanding graduate in her division and she graduated summa cum laude, with highest honors.

I was the proudest person in the hall when they read her name and she walked across the stage.



Enter and Win a \$100 Check from Oklahoma Natural Gas!

The December Oklahoma Natural Gas Column and Editorial Contest was judged by a member of the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame.

1. Each month, submit your entry online at okpress.com/ong-contest. Attachments should be in PDF format.
2. Entries may also be emailed (full-page tearsheet) to amartin@okpress.com. Include the author's name, name of publication, date of publication and category entered (column or editorial).
3. All entries for the previous month must be at the OPA office by the 15th of the current month.
4. Only ONE editorial and/or ONE column per writer per month will be accepted.
5. Winners will receive a Certificate of Achievement, a \$100 check and the column or editorial may be published in The Oklahoma Publisher. Annual Sweepstakes winners will receive a plaque, a \$200 check and may have the column or editorial published in The Publisher.

Contest open to staff at OPA Legal Newspaper and General News Media members, as well as OPA Individual members.

Although Oklahoma Natural Gas Company selects representative contest winners' work for use in this monthly ad, the views expressed in winning columns and editorials are those of the writers and don't necessarily reflect the Company's opinions.