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GIDUWA CHEROKEE NEWS

YSG GWY A&P Official News Publication of the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma June 2026

Henry Lee Doublehead Child Development Center Celebrates 40th Anniversary

Tahlequah's Best Daycare continues to serve the children since 2006



Henry Lee Doublehead Child Development Center

LANI HANSEN, Senior Reporter/Media Specialist

TAHLEQUAH, Okla- The United Keetoowah Band Henry Lee Doublehead Child Development Center celebrates its 40th anniversary of serving children of the community.

It all began when a proposal to build a childcare development center on the Tribal campus was introduced in 2003. In 2004, the Tribe submitted requests to the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development and

the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), under the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, to request funds through Development Block Grants to build a Tribal center to provide quality childcare services.

In that time, Michelle Deason was the Child Care Development Fund Director. Tonya Bryant was then named the first director of Henry Lee Doublehead CDC. The center opened on June 19, 2006.

In a 2006 article former Chief George Wickliffe said, "Henry Lee was a leader and tribal councilor for the United Keetoowah Band. He helped write the by-laws of the UKB Constitution and was quoted as saying 'We (the Keetoowah Cherokee) are going to rise, and no one can stop us.'"

The center is a year-round program and serves children from 6 weeks old to 5 years old. The center is open to the public; children do not have to be enrolled members of the UKB or any other tribe. The hours of operation are 7:30am to 5:30pm, Monday through Friday.

The center is licensed by the OKDHS Child Care Licensing Agency and is rated as a 3 Star facility on their Quality Rating Scale. The center is approved for a capacity of 120 children, and currently there are 76 children enrolled.

Throughout the years until now the center has taken a full transition, some of the former directors are Linda Davis, Lala Stopp and Christie Kirk is the current director; along with Kim Gourd as the current CCDF Manager.

Gourd has been with the center since July 9, 2007, taking off a year in 2013. She returned in 2014 and has never left. She began as a part-time teacher's assistant in the summer school program before being named the CCDF manager.

Diamondhead Resort: A place to camp, float and have fun

Diamondhead opens for floating season and brings back Terp Float and Diamondstone Music Festival.

LANI HANSEN, Senior Reporter/Media Specialist

TAHLEQUAH, Okla- Diamondhead Resort officially opened for floating season on May 9th, bringing tourists from everywhere to enjoy the river and events that take place at the resort.

The Keetoowah Company has been tribally operated since 2025 but has been in business for about 40 years. Diamondhead offers options for floating the river, staying on the river and entertainment on the river.

They offer kayaks for solo riders or couple and rafts for groups from 4, 6 or 8-person setups. Two routes are available:

Float A (short trip):

- Takes 2-3 hours depending on stops on the river.
- Route starts at Edmunson Access by Combs Bridge.
- \$34 per person

Float B (long trip):

- Takes 4-6 hours with more river and views.
- Route starts at Peavine Hollow.
- \$38 per person

Diamondhead does not do overnight floats and first launch is at 8 a.m. while the last launch is at 2 p.m.

Lodging available for primitive camping, electrical site 30 amp only, RV: Water and electric, RV: 30-amp full hook-up and RV: 50-amp full hook-up.

- Primitive Tent camping is \$28 per night per vehicle (no reservations, first come first served).
- 30-amp, electric-only sites are \$33.00 per night with a single vehicle, additional vehicles are \$28.00 per night.
- RV 30/50amp electric and water sites are \$35 per night with a single vehicle, additional vehicles are \$28.00 per night.
- 30-amp full hook-ups are \$40.00 per night. Water, Electric, Sewer
- 50-amp full hook-ups are \$50.00 per night. Water, Electric, Sewer

Location also offers motel rooms at a rate of \$125.00 per night on weekends, \$95.00 weeknights. Bunkhouse rooms are \$335.00 per night on weekends, \$300.00 weeknights. Bunkhouse with kitchen is \$395 per night weekends, \$365.00 per night weeknights.

Three cabins are on-site too with one which sleeps 12 for \$340.00 per night weekends, \$315.00 per night weeknights. A cabin which sleeps 2 for \$255.00 per night weekends, and \$225.00 per night weeknights. A cabin which sleeps 10 for \$430.00



Diamondhead Resort is located off Hwy 10



The Keetoowah Company has been tribally operated since 2025 but has been in business for about 40 years.



Festival grounds at Diamondhead for Terp Float and Diamondstone.

per night weekends, and \$400.00 per night weeknights.

Cabins, motels, camping spots, bunkhouses and RV sites are all offered when Diamondhead brings their festivals like Terp Float and Diamond Stone Music Festival to the grounds.

Terp Float is back for its 6th year with three days of live music, floating down the Illinois River and hanging out with friends, making memories. The festival will take place July 30th through August 2nd.

Diamond Stone Music Festival has returned for its 5th on the river, with three days of red dirt country music. This year's headliners are Jason Boland and The Stragglers and UKB's own Blaine Bailey. This festival will be August 20th through August 22nd.

All throughout the summer, Diamondhead Resort has weekend entertainment starting on June 7th with Kanton Teen & The Penny Pickers playing on the River Stage.

Be sure to check out the Diamondhead Resort website, <https://diamondheadresorts.com> for more information regarding floating, camping, festivals and entertainment. For booking call, 800-722-2411.



March 2004 article on receiving grant money for HLDCDC.



May 2006 article on HLDCDC grand opening.

See ANNIVERSARY, Page 2

Sequoyah's Teaching by Ed Rackleff

Keetoowah Storytelling Through Art EXHIBIT

Teaching Basket Weaving by Roger Loftis

Immerse yourself in Indigenous and Keetoowah culture, as the John Hair Cultural Center and Keetoowah Museum showcases two talented Keetoowah artists, Roger Loftis and Ed Rackleff.

Both tell stories of our ancestors and the ones who came before us, stories of our customs and lifeways, and show their challenges and triumphs.

John Hair Cultural Center and Keetoowah Museum | 18280 West Keetoowah Circle, Tahlequah, OK Admission \$5. Ask about group rates | Info: 918-871-2866



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918-931-0941



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Graduation season is upon us, and across our community Members are watching sons and daughters cross stages and step into what comes next. Congratulations to every Keetoowah graduate, and to every parent, grandparent, teacher, cousin and neighbor who helped them get there. It takes a community to raise the next generation, and I am very grateful for ours!

But even in time of celebration, pride and adversity walk side by side for the Keetoowah people. I want to share one example from this graduation season.

A Keetoowah senior in another state graduated in May. Her father is a UKB Member. Her school district told her she may not wear her UKB honor cord during commencement. The family reached out to the Tribe, and the Tribe stepped in.

On May 14, I wrote directly to the district's superintendent, with copies to the principal and the board of trustees. I asked respectfully and directly that the decision be reconsidered. The honor cord is a recognition conferred by the United Keetoowah Band on Members who complete high school or college. It is regalia of accomplishment and carries the weight of generations. For this young woman, and for her family, wearing it is how she honors that lineage as she crosses the stage.

Whether or not the district re-

June Chief Chat



Chief's Corner

JEFF WACOCHÉ
Chief
jwacoche@ukb-nsn.gov

versed its decision in time, I want every Member to know what happened here because it tells you something about how the Tribe operates. When a Keetoowah family asks for our help, we answer. When a Member is told their heritage is unwelcome, we engage. When the cause is right, we will stand alongside our people whether they live in Tahlequah, Texas, or anywhere else.

That same posture carries into our broader work. In late May, the UKB was at the table for the Tribal-Interior Budget Council – the formal consultation body through which tribes communicate budget priorities to the Department of the Interior. I will be carrying a clear message: the UKB needs continued and expanded funding to serve our Members. We need it to grow our health services. We need it to support our governance. We need it to honor what was promised to our people.

Closer to home, I want to share some good news from Diamondhead. We celebrated Mother's Day on the Illinois River with a free float trip for

mothers. It was a beautiful day on the water, just as it was meant to be enjoyed. If you have not been out to Diamondhead lately, this is the time to come see what we are building. Our food service is new and improved. We have a new cook on staff, and the menu has stepped up to match. Come out and enjoy!

Diamondhead is a tribal enterprise that funds the things that matter most. Every dollar spent there strengthens our ability to serve Members and to invest in our programs. When you bring your family to Diamondhead, you are supporting the United Keetoowah Band.

And on healthcare – we are moving forward. Our PRC program continues to serve Members. We are advocating in Washington for the funding we need to grow what we offer. We are pursuing every avenue available to us to make sure our Members can see a doctor, get the care they need, and live healthier lives.

To every graduate, congratulations. To the family fighting for the right to wear a cord this season, we are with you. To every Member carrying your own quiet battles, you are not alone. The Keetoowah people have always found ways to celebrate who we are, even in the midst of challenge.

Wado.

Chief Jeff Wacoche

ANNIVERSARY



HLDCDC ribbon cutting of the grand opening of their expansion.

and in 2016 Kirk became the director of childcare.

"I have always taken great pride in being a UKB member and the work that I do for my tribe once as a teacher and now as the director of the childcare program," Kirk said. "Although I do not work directly in the classroom anymore, the work I do is and always has been for the children and the families we serve not only at the centers, but also through our childcare subsidy program."

Under the direction of Gourd and Kirk the program has grown with HLDCDC having a site manager, currently in that position is Shirlene Proctor. The center has expanded and made improvements from 6 classrooms to 8 classrooms, the playgrounds have been remodeled adding



June 2006 article on HLDCDC open house.

a splash pad, we have upgraded the camera system, added Child Pilot, an online app that allows parents and teachers to communicate, and enrollment has increased.

The program has also opened another center back in Stilwell, Keetoowah Child Development Center, in 2024.

Since 2016, HLDCDC has been named Tahlequah Daily Press' Best of the Best Daycare for 7 years in a row. For inquiries or to check enrollment availability, call 918-871-2799.

The center is located at 18771 W. Keetoowah Circle Tahlequah, OK.

UKB
STILWELL
SUB-OFFICE



STILWELL OFFICE HOURS
MON-FRI: 8:00-11:00
MON-THURS

AFTERNOON HOURS: 2:00-5:00
CLOSED AT 11:00 ON FRIDAY

PHONE: 918-696-871-2814
EMAIL: MBALLARD@UKB-NSN.GOV
FLINT DISTRICT
REP. FRANKIE STILL
918-507-1822
GOINGSNAKE DISTRICT
REP. WILLIE CHRISTIE
918-822-3803



Goingsnake District
Sub-office

HOURS: MON-THUR, 8:30-12:30
1:00-4:00
FRI. 8:30-12:30
UKB KANSAS COMMUNITY BUILDING
280 S HWY 10, KANSAS, OK
CONTACT:
TERRIE TURTLE, 918-871-5038

DIAMONDHEAD RESORT TAHLEQUAH OKLAHOMA AUGUST 20 - 22ND

DIAMONDSTONE
MUSIC FESTIVAL
MUSIC LINEUP 2026

JASON BOLAND & THE STRAGGLERS
SILVERADA THE DAMN QUAILS BLAINE BAILEY
RED DIRT RANGERS BC & THE BIG RIG CASEY WEST
EMILY HOLLINGSHEAD JAKE TANKERSLEY WES SHIPP
DAVIS BROTHERS BAND KANTON TEEN & THE PENNY PICKERS
CANYON SONS RACE RICKETTS MASON MAREK JON BULLARD
SOPHIA CLARK MADDIE K NIKKI & COMPANY JACKSON GLASBY
BEAR MORRISON'S GOD DOG OKLAHOMA SPACE PROGRAM
TEMPEST REVIVAL BOONE MENDENHALL JOE MACK
REX PRYOR SHAD STOREY & MORE!

RED DIRT COUNTRY MUSIC - RIVER FLOATS - CAMPING - COLD BEER

Roger Loftis' art featured in Keetoowah Storytelling Through Art

Roger Loftis' paintings are now being featured at the John Hair Cultural Center and Keetoowah Museum in an exhibit titled, Keetoowah Storytelling Through Art. The exhibit also features another Keetoowah artist, the late Ed Rackleff. The exhibit will be showcased in the museum through the Keetoowah Celebration in October.



Loftis' paintings include a variety of authentic imagery of Keetoowah life. Loftis was selected as one of the tribe's Tradition Keepers in 2024. "Loftis uses ink, pencil, and paint on canvas to reveal historic moments or to tell stories of his Keetoowah ancestors and experiences of his childhood near Jay, Oklahoma," said Ernestine Berry. - Museum Director

Roger Loftis Obituary

Roger C. Loftis, born on June 29, 1963, in Claremore, Oklahoma, passed away on May 13, 2026, in Rose, Oklahoma. He was a man of creativity and skill, known for his talent as an artist. Roger enjoyed drawing and contributed artwork for the UKB Tribe. In his younger years, he liked to hunt and fish when he was able and had a passion for wood-working, which reflected his love for making things with his hands. Roger was a devoted member of Euwasha Baptist Church in Kenwood.

ma; and Anita King and her husband Nigel of Bull Hollow, Oklahoma. Roger was a beloved brother to Clifford Loftis Jr. and his wife Pat of Spavinaw, Oklahoma, and Faye Loftis, also of Spavinaw. He is also survived by his aunt, Mary Boney of Spavinaw. His family provided him with much joy, including seventeen grandchildren, three step-grandchildren, and one great step-grandchild. Roger's faithful dog, Marley, was a constant companion and was known for being very protective of him.

Roger's life was marked by his kindness and creativity. He is survived by his partner, Betsy Thompson, with whom he shared his home. He was a proud father to Randall Loftis and Christina of Tahlequah, Oklahoma; DJ Loftis and Stephanie of Inola, Oklahoma; Joshua Loftis and Sammi of Twin Oaks, Oklahoma; Adrian Loftis of Tulsa, Oklahoma; Jaclyn Wofford of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma; and Deena Loftis and Quinton of Pryor, Oklahoma. Roger also embraced his stepchildren, Brandon Thompson and Melody of Gentry, Arkansas; Tyler Thompson and Emily of Locust Grove, Oklaho-

He was preceded in death by his parents, Clifford Loftis Sr. and Nellie (Boney) Loftis, and his sister, Shirley Bearpaw.

Funeral services were held on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at Euwasha Baptist Church with Pastor Richard Budder and Clifford Loftis officiating. Burial will follow in the Euwasha Cemetery with Patrick Bearpaw, Jarrod Bearpaw, Kevin Loftis, Randall Loftis, Joshua Loftis, and DJ Loftis serving as casket bearers. Honorary casket bearers include Clifford Little-dave, Brandon Thompson, and Tyler Thompson.

LUNCH SERVED MONDAY - THURSDAY 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM, ALL MEALS TO GO MUST BE PICKED UP BY 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM
BREAKFAST SERVED FRIDAY 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM, ALL MEALS TO GO MUST BE PICKED UP BY 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM
ALL MEALS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE*

UKB 55+, SPOUSES = FREE, CDIB 55+ & SPOUSE MUST CONTRIBUTE TO COST OF MEAL \$1.00 EACH MEAL, GUEST \$5.00/Child 0-12 \$3.00

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Jim Proctor Elder Community Center 918-871-2747 918-871-2861	1 <u>Flip a Coin Day</u> Roast Beef Sandwich Baked Potato Wedge Broccoli Fresh Fruit Salad	2 <u>Rocky Road Day</u> Meat/Cheese Nacho's Mexican Rice Refried Beans Fresh Fruit	3 <u>National Egg Day</u> Philly Cheese Steak Macaroni Salad Garden Salad Pickle Spear, Fruit	4 <u>Hug Your Cat Day</u> Chef's Choice	5 <u>Start Over Day</u> Biscuits N Gravy Dry Cereal, Bacon Yogurt Apple Juice, Fruit	6 UKB Regular Council Meeting 10 AM <u>Wellness Center</u>
7 <u>June Bug Day</u> 	8 <u>Brain Tumor Day</u> BLT Tomato Soup Sweet Potato Fries Fresh Fruit Salad	9 <u>Call Your Dr. Day</u> Catfish Fillets (tartar) French Fries Coleslaw Hushpuppies, Fruit	10 <u>Iced Tea Day</u> Meatloaf Sweet Potato Broccoli, Hot Roll Banana Wafer Pudding	11 <u>Say "Hi" Day</u> Brown Beans w/ Ham Boiled Potato Spinach Cornbread, Dessert	12 <u>Superman Day</u> Pancakes Sausage, Eggs Hashbrowns Juice, Fresh Fruit	13 <u>World Softball Day</u>
14 <u>Flag Day</u> 	15 <u>Bug Busting Day</u> Goulash Italian Green Beans Baby Carrots Garlic Roll, Fruit	16 <u>National Fudge Day</u> Taco Burger Spanish Rice Refried Beans Pineapple	17 <u>Bunker Hill Day</u> Baked Pork Chops Mash Potato/Gravy Broccoli Bread, Peach Cobbler	18 <u>Nat. Go Fishing Day</u> BBQ Chopped Brisket on Bun, Coleslaw Baked Beans Strawberry Shortcake	19 <u>Juneteenth</u> UKB Tribal Offices CLOSED HOLIDAY	20 <u>Summer Solstice</u> <u>Midsummer Day</u>
21 <u>Father's Day</u> 	22 <u>Onion Ring Day</u> Chicken Strips Onion Rings Broccoli/Cauliflower Garlic Toast, Fruit	23 <u>National Pink Day</u> Reuben Sandwich Potato Chips Coleslaw, Pickles Classic Cheesecake	24 <u>World UFO Day</u> Chicken Fried Steak Mash Potato/Gravy Green Beans, Bread Banana Nilla Pudding	25 <u>Goats Cheese Day</u> "June Birthdays" Cheeseburgers French Fries Cake, Ice Cream	26 <u>Forgiveness Day</u> <u>Kitchen Cleaning Day</u> 	27 <u>Nat. Bingo Day</u>
28 <u>Nat. Tapioca Day</u> 	29 <u>Nat. Camera Day</u> Chicken Alfredo Italian Green Beans Corn, Garlic Toast Watermelon	30 <u>Social Media Day</u> Baked Potato/Fixings Garden Salad Breadstick Fresh Fruit	July 1, 2026 To be announced	<u>INCLEMENT WEATHER</u> NO HOME MEALS DELIVERED FOR THE SAFETY OF DRIVER	<u>TORNADO WARNING OR WATCH: PLEASE BE AWARE, STAY HOME, TAKE PRECAUTIONS</u>	JuneRose Honeysuckle

Protect yourself! Stay home if you feel sick! Title VI Staff - serve's 2% milk, tea and coffee.
Named after the Roman Goddess Juno, protector of marriage and women, it is a popular month for weddings.
June's moon is the "Strawberry Moon" is the 29th at 7:56 PM. "A good rain in June sets all in tune" "A wet June predicts a dry September"
Folklore suggests burning fires during the Summer Solstice (Midsummer) to strengthen the Sun and ward off Evil Spirits.
"The louder the frog, the more the rain" "In June, when there is no dew, it indicates rain"
When the summer birds take their flight, the summer goes with them!
The Honeysuckle denotes the bonds of Love, or generous and devoted affection!
"If June could talk right now, it would probably boast it invented romance"

UKB Education continues to celebrate Keetoowah Graduates

LANI HANSEN, Senior Reporter/Media Specialist

TAHLEQUAH, Okla- The United Keetoowah Band Education Department celebrated and recognized a few Keetoowah graduates in the early month of May.

The UKB Education started this celebration to recognize graduates from the tribe in 2022.

Seven students were able to come out with family and friends, although we have more than those who showed up UKB would not want the other accomplishments to go unnoticed. During the evening, UKB Council was in attendance as well to support these students. Each council representative was able to share a remark to congratulate the graduates.

“It was nice of the council to

Seven Keetoowah graduates recognized at the graduation celebration.

show up, we had more representation and admin this year than previous years,” UKB Education Director Dr. Leslie Hannah and Intake Specialist Amber Dry said.

The night consisted of pictures, food, laughter and fellowship. A program was prepared for the evening, with invocation by Rev. Cody Robinson. He serves on the UKB Education Committee and is a 2025 graduate with a Master of Divinity degree.

Chief Jeff Wacoche and Dr. Hannah were both able to speak towards the graduates, and Jesseca Deere, B.A. (UKB Member), Susan Adair, M.S. (UKB Member) and Victoria Holland, J.D. (UKB Legal Team).

“It was a good night, and was happy to see few graduates come to be recognized,” Dr. Hannah said.



Seven Keetoowah graduates celebrated with friends and family.



Coordinators, Chief Jeff Wacoche with Education Director Dr. Leslie Hannah and Intake Specialist Amber Dry.



UKB Council celebrated the Keetoowah graduates on their accomplishment.

Getting Back to Basics Traditional Food Series Kicks off in June

“For many Keetoowah people, eating traditional foods is not just about the food. It’s the time spent together gathering it, preserving it, and the goodness of the heart and soul that went into cooking it”. Barbara Foster – JHCKM Assistant Director

Marilyn Craig, Museum Communications Coordinator

Did you grow up eating traditional foods that were a part of Keetoowah family meals? If you are like many of us, you grew up enjoying those foods but wish that you had paid more attention to how it is prepared. The John Hair Cultural Center and Keetoowah Museum will give you the opportunity to gain experience cooking these special foods, and as a bonus, the class will feast on the fruits of their labors at each class.

“For many Keetoowah people, eating traditional foods is not just about the food. It’s the time spent together gathering it, preserving it, and the goodness of the heart and soul that went into cooking it. I invite you to join us in the kitchen and let the aroma of cooking some traditional meals take you back to grandma’s house before we had expensive processed or fast foods,” said Barbara Foster. Museum Assistant Director.

The Getting Back to Basics Traditional Foods Series begins on June 27. These 4-hour classes are held on the last Saturday of the month, including June 27, July 25, and August 29, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Tahlequah at the Speedway. Each workshop is \$25, or you may pay \$75. for all three classes to reserve a spot in each class in the series. Each class is limited to ten participants.

In June, the menu will include wild onions, bean balls, poke salad, and potatoes. The menu in July will be hog meat, beans, grape dumplings, hot water cornbread, and water cress. In August, we will cook neckbone and hominy soup, Kanuchi, mustard or turnip greens, and frybread (not traditional).

If you have questions or would like to register for any of the Keetoowah Museum’s upcoming cultural classes or workshops, contact Barbara Foster at (918) 316-5352.



Ashley Hopton drops dough into grape juice for grape dumplings while Rylee Grimmatt waits her turn.

Keetoowah Environmental Department
 June 27th @ THE OPEN PIT
 (UKB Celebration Grounds)
 HORSESHOE TOURNAMENT

1ST ANNUAL RECYCLING COLLECTION EVENT

Door Prizes throughout the day

- DOUBLE ELIMINATION -
 Men's Singles & Doubles Doubles: Bring your own Partner
 Prizes for 1st & 2nd

Cost per person:
 1 Clear bag of recyclables of either Aluminum or Cardboard, Paper & Plastic

Registration:
 9AM
Tournament:
 10AM

Women's Single's Prizes for
 1st:
 2nd:

For more information call
 Robert Downing
 918-871-2765
 Justyn Rains
 email: jrains@ukb-nsn.gov
 Ronny Livers
 918-871-2852

76TH ANNUAL UKB CELEBRATION

“HONORING OUR ANCESTORS, EMPOWERING OUR YOUTH”

Join us as we celebrate the 76th year since the United Keetoowah Band ratified its constitution and by-laws.

This celebration has a full list of events for our youth and elder. Please continue to follow as we provide more details later.

SAVE THE DATE!
OCT. 3, 2026
AT THE UKB CELEBRATION GROUNDS ON WEST KEETOOWAH CIRCLE, TAHLEQUAH

Behavioral Health Spotlight

Last month was Mental Health Awareness Month — a time to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and remind others that taking care of your mental health is just as important as taking care of your physical health.

At Echota Behavioral Health, we encourage everyone to take small steps each day to support their mental wellness. A few simple ways to care for your mental health include:

- Make time for rest and sleep
- Stay connected with supportive friends and family
- Take breaks when feeling overwhelmed
- Spend time outdoors or stay active when possible
- Talk to someone you trust about how you are feeling
- Ask for help when you need it — you do not have to face things alone



In May we also celebrated Employee Appreciation Week. We are incredibly thankful for the dedicated staff across all our offices who work hard each day to provide compassionate care and support to the people we serve. Their dedication, kindness, and commitment make a difference in our communities every single day, and we truly could not do what we do without them.

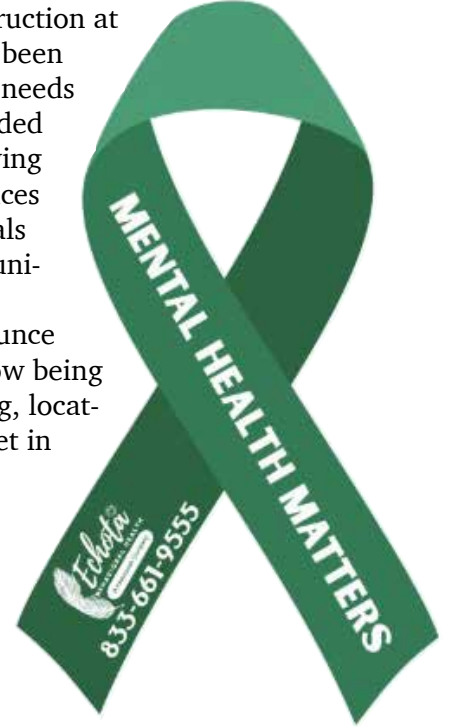
As our programs continue to grow, we

are excited to share that construction at our East location has officially been completed. To better meet the needs of our community, we have added six new therapist offices, allowing us to continue expanding services and supporting more individuals and families across our communities.

We are also proud to announce that all therapy services are now being centralized at our East Building, located at 1640 W. Keetoowah Street in Tahlequah.

New Phone Numbers:

- EBH Tahlequah – 918-871-5151
- EBH Kansas – 918-888-9250
- EBH Jay – 918-205-6767



Prevention Corner



“Wellness in the Ring” finished the year with breakfast and pizza parties to acknowledge the student’s hard work and determination. Each participant showed perseverance throughout the year, making their coaches very proud!

This year the program averaged about 2 students at Cave Springs, and 15 students at Maryetta & Dahlongah. Coach Arlow and Phelps focused on teaching about mindfulness, self-compassion, self-respect, accountability, the importance of positive decision-making, and respecting others. Showing them that the skills they have learned can be applied not only in how they approach school and interact with their classmates, but also in how they engage with everyone they encounter.

Wellness in the Ring will start back up at Cave Springs, Maryetta, and Dahlongah on August 31st.

Employee Spotlight: Brittany Cheater

For the past three years, Brittany Cheater has served as our Grant Team Manager, helping lead and grow prevention and grant services within our community. Through her hard work, dedication, and passion for helping others, she has played an important role in supporting the success of our programs and the people we serve.

As Brittany begins an exciting new chapter, she will be transitioning into a Project Director role while continuing her education to earn her master's degree in social work. Her goal is to become a licensed therapist and continue making a difference in the lives of others through behavioral health services.

We are incredibly proud of Brittany and grateful for everything she has contributed to our team over the years. We look forward to seeing all she accomplishes in this next step of her journey.



Care Connection: PRC Updates

The PRC team has officially moved into the new UKB Health Services Administration Building, located at 1810 Park Hill Road. We are excited to continue serving our community from our new space and appreciate everyone’s patience as we get settled in.

As with any new building transition, we are currently working through a few technical difficulties with internet and phone systems while we get everything fully up and running. During this time, our team remains committed to providing quick, continuous care and support for our tribal members.

For questions or assistance, please contact PRC at 918-871-2833.

Meet the PRC Team

Caleen Bolin
PRC Manager



Tyra Davis
PRC Specialist



Jennifer Vann
PRC Program Support



Della Melo
PRC Health Claims Auditor



Helpful PRC Reminders

- Please call PRC with your appointment dates so we can assist with the referral process.
- If you receive a medical bill, please bring it to the PRC office or mail it in as soon as possible.
- Tribal members may also take paperwork to any UKB satellite office or any Echota Behavioral Health office, and staff will be happy to fax the information to PRC.
- Before leaving your doctor’s office, be sure to sign a Release of Information (ROI) form so the provider has permission to send medical records to PRC.
- PRC referrals are approved for one appointment only. Additional appointments will require an additional referral.
- If you are seen in the Emergency Room at a non-IHS facility, you must contact PRC — or have someone contact PRC on your behalf — within 72 hours of the visit so the paperwork process can begin.

UKB Tribal Enrollment

18300 W. Keetoowah Circle Tahlequah, OK 74464 Open Monday-Friday | 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

As with other federally recognized tribes, the United Keetoowah Band has its unique process to determine membership. Visit ukb-nsn.gov/membership for Enrollment documents and a brief FAQ section of the most common questions about UKB membership. Find forms for Membership Applications, CDIB Instructions, Update Your Information and UKB Relinquishment.

For additional questions, or if you are a member who has lost your enrollment card, call the UKB Enrollment Office Registrar Amanda Stopp at 918-871-2797. Questions concerning history, cultural practices, clothing, language or ceremonies are better suited for our John Hair Cultural Center and Museum. Visit ukb-nsn.gov/john-hair-cultural-center-museum or call 918-871-2866.

Deere receives NSU Dr. Tiffany Maher Legacy Award

Lena Deere is one of ten faculty/staff at NSU to receive this award.

LANI HANSEN, Senior Reporter/Media Specialist

TAHLEQUAH, Okla- United Keetoowah Band member and Tradition Keeper Lena Deere, was named one of ten recipients for the Northeastern State University's Dr. Tiffany Maher Legacy Award.

The Dr. Tiffany Maher Legacy Award is presented annually to a faculty or staff member who leads with positivity and has a lasting impact on the students at the university. The award is named in honor of Dr. Tiffany Maher, a devoted and beloved NSU professor who passed away in 2013. Maher was known for her fun-loving spirit and deep passion for her students.

"It is such an honor to have received the Dr. Tiffany Maher Award; I also feel so humbled to

receive such a prestigious award. I love helping students and I am grateful that I can continue to do just that at NSU," Deere said.

She has been at NSU since 1999, enjoying helping students navigate college and giving students a place where they feel supported and encouraged while at NSU. Deere started out as a secretary in TRIO Student Support Services, and over the years was promoted to coordinator positions within SSS to becoming director.

Deere said, "Recently our grant program ended; but the institution has retained my staff and me. We are transitioning from TRIO Student Support Services to Student Success Center; we will continue to provide support, student services and resources to students at NSU."

She is very grateful to be nominated for this award, as her dedication and hard work for the students does not go unnoticed.

"I am so proud of the students that my staff and I support," Deere said. "I appreciate my assistant director, Michaela Stewart and program specialist, Kevin Chuculate, in that we work together to make our department, Student Success Center, a place where students can get the extra help they need while they navigate college life. I also want to thank Dr. Rodney Hanley, NSU President, Dr. Jerrid Freeman, Vice-President of Student Affairs, and Dr. Sheila Self, Assistant Vice President, Dean of Students, for the support and opportunity to continue providing student services and resources to students at NSU."



Lena Deere, recipient of the Dr. Tiffany Maher Legacy Award



Deere receiving the award on April 10.



Deere gave a short thank you speech at the award ceremony.

Museum Volunteers and EBH Prevention Team Make Paper Roses



Members of Echota Behavioral Health's Prevention Team make paper roses to carry in the Keetoowah's MMIP Walk.

Staff and volunteers from Echota Behavioral Health's Prevention Team and volunteers at the John Hair Cultural Center and Keetoowah Museum came together the last week of April to make paper flowers, which were carried by employees in the Missing and Murdered Indigenous People Walk at the UKB Tribal Complex.

Tradition Keeper Cindy Hair taught the employees this craft, which

was a craft many of our grandparents and great grandparents used to make flowers for Decoration Day, Memorial Day, and Veteran's Day before silk flowers became readily available. The group made one hundred paper roses. After the walk, Echota Behavioral Health incorporated these paper roses in their Stilwell Strawberry Festival Parade float.

We Are HIRING

Please visit our UKB website at: www.ukb-nsn.gov for all opening positions!

Apply Now

Applications can be found at www.ukb-nsn.gov/employment

Send your applications to:
 UKB Federal Programs Building at 18300 W. Keetoowah Circle, Tahlequah, OK, 74464. If mailing please address your envelope with ATTN: Human Resources. Completed and scanned applications will be accepted.

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IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE UNITED KEETOOWAH BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS IN OKLAHOMA

In the matter of: T.K, DOB 01/15/2025) Case No. JU-2025-02

FILED United Keetoowah Band Tribal Court Date

NOTICE BY PUBLICATION

TO: Candace Bird, Natural Mother to T.K. Address Unknown Oklahoma

By Victoria Holland, Court Clerk

TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Termination has been filed. Said Petition for Termination is set for hearing on the 7th day of July, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. You have the right to appear in court and present evidence as to why the Petition should not be granted. Further, you have the right to be represented by counsel on the above date.

You must appear before Judge Tripp in the District Court of the United Keetoowah Band located at 17485 Louie Griffin Circle Tahlequah, Oklahoma, 74464 on the 7th day of July, 2026 at 10:00 or a Default Judgment will be entered against you and your rights to the above named juvenile may be affected.

/s/ Victoria Holland
 Victoria Holland, Prosecutor
 United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians

Dated this 4th day of May, 2026

Wrista Bradley
 Court Clerk

Using River Cane Technology

“We were just approved for additional funding for teaching river cane conservation, restoration, and technology. We will do more classes on river cane technology associated with basketry and blowguns.” – Roger Cain, UKB Tribal Historic Preservation Officer.

Marilyn Craig, Museum Communications Coordinator

The third and final session of Getting Back to Basics River Cane Technology was held on Saturday, April 18 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the John Hair Cultural Center and Keetoowah Museum. UKB Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Roger Cain taught the class, as well as the previous two cane classes.

The first class was about canebrake ecosystem basics or River Cane 101. It covered the four types of indigenous bamboo growing in the United States, river cane ecosystems, wildlife dependent to canebrake habitats, and emphasized there is a 98% decline in river cane ecosystems remaining on the landscape as measured through area loss or ecological degradation from 1491 to modern times. Participants learned about the many uses of river cane historically and prehistorically and made cane torches at the end of the class.

The second class focused on how to identify appropriately sized and aged river cane for cultural purposes as well as how to manage canebrake ecosystems for habitats and cultural lifeways. The class took a field trip to the Barren Fork Wildlife Management area in Adair County, where they able to experience a canebrake by walking through and around a canebrake the Keetoowah River Cane Conservation program has been stewarding for the past four years. We also discussed the ecological importance of river cane conservation.

The third class in the series was about processing and utilizing river cane. When you go out to harvest the river cane, make sure you are getting a mature culm. Participants learned it is especially important to cut the culm even to the ground and straight across to prevent dangerous points that could harm an animal or another person if they stepped on it. Participants also learned the process of splitting and peeling river cane with the first process you need to do when processing river cane is to clean the cane and remove the branches and leaves. The reason you want your river cane to be clean is to prevent infection from the dirt that has accumulated on the culms as a result from flooding episodes leaving debris on the culms that could get a cut infected during the splitting and peeling of the cane. He also stressed the importance of using a good and sharp knife to peel the cane.

Like any skill, the more you practice peeling cane, the easier it becomes. “The Getting Back to Basics River Cane Technology Series has ended, but the opportunities to use river cane abound,” said Roger Cain, UKB Historic Preservation Officer. “We were just approved for additional funding for teaching river cane conservation, restoration, and technology. We will do more classes on river cane technology associated with basketry and blowguns.”

For more information, contact the Tribal Historic Preservation office at 918-871-2826.



Class members peel river cane to make basket strips.



Roger Cain shows Brian Barlow how to peel cane.

TRIVIA Night!
 KNOW IT? PROVE IT!
 DATE: FRIDAY, JUNE 12TH
 TIME: 6:00 PM
 LOCATION: THE VENUE
 \$25 PER TEAM
 UP TO 5 MEMBERS (MAXIMUM)
 CALL TO REGISTER YOUR TEAM!
 822-2436 or 822-4423
 CONCESSIONS WILL BE AVAILABLE!
 DOOR PRIZES FOR PARTICIPANTS!
 Hosted by THE UKB EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND THE YOUTH COUNCIL

Keetoowah FREE Dump Day
 Keetoowah Environmental Department
 Saturday, June 13th, 2026, 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM
 Location – Solid Waste Service Station – 1851 N. Douglas Ave Tahlequah Ok, 74464
 *** Must present Keetoowah Tribal Membership card upon arrival. If not an Exclusive Keetoowah member, you will be required to pay for the trash you are wanting dumped. ***
 When you arrive drive up to the weigh station scale to be weighed and to present your Keetoowah card to be able to partake in the free dump day. Once you leave the weigh scale drive up to the dump site to be unloaded then return to the weigh scale to be weighed one last time before leaving.
 Free and Safe Household Waste Disposal and Recycling
 No, Rock, Dirt, Brush or appliances with Freon.
 Accepted Items
 Paper, Cardboard, Tin, Aluminum and Plastic
 E- Waste, Computers, TV's and Household waste!!!
 No Explosives, Unknowns, Commercial or Agricultural Waste!!!
 For more information contact
 Environmental Manager – Robert Downing - 918.871.2765
 Environmental Director – Merinda Reamy – 918.871.2764
 Event held by Keetoowah Environmental Department & City of Tahlequah.



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