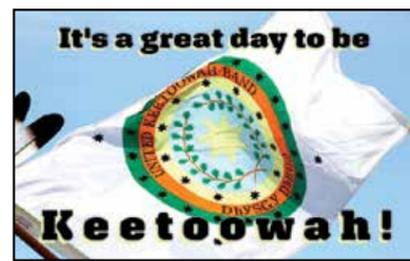


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# GIDUWA CHEROKEE NEWS

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

## Kenwood Lady Indians bring home the gold; Indians bring home the silver

Kenwood Teams dominate at ORES 25th Anniversary State Basketball Tournament



Kenwood Lady Indians 2026 ORES Division IV State Champs



ORES 25th Anniversary Division IV Girls All-Tournament Team

LANI HANSEN, Senior Reporter

KENWOOD, Okla- The Kenwood Lady Indians done it again, as they returned to the Oklahoma Rural Elementary Schools (ORES) State Basketball Tournament winning back-to-back state championships for the Division IV Girls.

The 7th/8th grade team went undefeated all season, having one goal in mind which was bringing back another gold ball. This year they added teams on their schedule who they never played before, such as 6A school the Jenks Trojans.

Jenks' 7th/8th grade has double the size of student population over Kenwood. The Lady Trojans were stunned when the Lady Indians came to play and scored 30 over 17 against them.

As the season continued, the Lady Indians would continue their winning streak and would find themselves back in the ORES State Tournament. The Lady Indians showed up and

scored 58-10 over Bearden, 52-17 over Forest Grove and 67-16 over Peavine.

What people didn't see was a team overlooked, who added excitement to the Lady Indians season as well and that was the 7th/8th Kenwood Indians.

See TOURNAMENT, Page 2



ORES 25th Anniversary Division IV Girls Tournament MVP, Peyton Proctor

## Bridging to Our Future: United Keetoowah Band Swears in Youth Council

Bodee Jimerson, Echota Behavioral Health

TAHLEQUAH, Okla- The 2026-2027 Youth Council of the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians was officially sworn in February 16, marking a renewed commitment to investing in the Tribe's next generation of leaders. Tribal Officials, Tribal Council, and families gathered to witness the oath ceremony at The Venue in Tahlequah.

The event blended reflection and celebration. Marquanna Fourkiller honored former Youth Council members Bryan Shade, Janelle Adair, and Becky Adair for their lasting impact and role in revitalizing the council. A lighthearted moment drew laughter when Adair joked that her service dated back to "the 1900s ... the late 1900s."

The council's revitalization was formalized through Tribal Resolution No. 25-UKB-138, declaring the spiritual, mental, physical, and social well-being of youth as the Tribe's highest priority. The Youth Council operates under the supervision and support of the Tribe and Echota Behavioral Health (EBH), with EBH Director Jennifer Leep and the Prevention Team spearheading the initiative.

Bodee Jimerson and Nikki Ken-

edy will serve as Youth Advisors, providing mentorship and leadership development. Youth Council members will engage in professional growth, cultural education, community service, and the development of a collective platform focused on youth well-being. They will also represent the Tribe at the UNITY Conference in Oklahoma City this summer.

The evening's theme honored the Tribe while embracing the symbolism of the hummingbird, a representation of joy, resilience, and strength. Jimerson shared his vision of helping youth feel inspired, confident, and motivated as they step into leadership roles. In that spirit, UKB youth were recognized as the hummingbirds of the Tribe — small, yet powerful in purpose.

Funding for the Youth Council is made possible primarily through the Native Connections and Tribal Opioid Response grants, federally supported initiatives administered by SAMHSA. These investments reflect a national commitment to strengthening Native youth leadership, behavioral health prevention efforts, and the long-term well-being of Tribal communities.

See YOUTH COUNCIL, Page 3



## UKB Tribal Historic Preservation Department received recognition from US Forest Service

Timber strike crew and Rivercane crew build a partnership

LANI HANSEN, Senior Reporter

TAHLEQUAH, Okla- The United Keetoowah Band received recognition from the US Forest Service for the work of the Historic Preservation Department which has been doing forest service through the timber strike crew and rivercane crew.

The timber strike crew is made up of eight members Spencer Comingdeer, Colton Bunch, Jesse Sexton, Ryley Bunch, Dale Eagle, Daryn Smith, Tristan Vann and Darren Eagle. This crew helps the Ozark of the Washington National Forest timber cells, by marking the perimeters of the timber cells on the trees to see how much wood is harvested from it.

The rivercane crew who is Buck Nofire, Curtis Hummingbird and Todd Downing all take care of the rivercane conservation in the Ozark National Forest. The crew has been doing rivercane conservation work on the Mulberry River, Lee Creek and Natural Dam.

"We've been cleaning up rivercane ecosystems, getting them nice and healthy for the public along with getting them larger for our tribal



UKB Timber Strike Crew Back Row: Darren Eagle, Colton Bunch, Spencer Comingdeer and Daryn Smith. Front Row: Roger Cain, Dale Eagle and Tristan Vann

members to harvest materials later on," UKB Tribal Historic Preservation Director Roger Cain said.

The work between the timber strike crew, rivercane crew and the forest service have plans to continue working on projects together on UKB homelands. Cain said he was looking forward for more opportunities of working with the forest service.

"All three crews are showing great work, the forest service brags on them all the time," Cain said. "We're just excited to do the work."



UKB Rivercane Crew: Buck Nofire, Todd Downing, Roger Cain and Curtis Hummingbird.



UKB THPO Director Roger Cain and Chief Jeff Wacoche proudly show the award presented.



Nathan Valle (former UKB Timber Strike Crew Member) and Crew One Lead Dale Eagle are shown here marking trees in the U.S. Forest Service Shortleaf Bluestem Community of trees located between Talihina, OK and Mena, AR. The site is part of the Poteau/Cold Springs Ranger District in Waldron, AR in the Ouachita National Forest.



Daryn Smith, UKB THPO Timber Strike Crew team member, is skilled at hitting his mark. Smith, along with Tristan Vann and Dale Eagle are members of Crew One who were assigned to work under supervision of Ouachita National Forest Archaeologist Tony King in December of last year. When Valle resigned in January, he was replaced by Darren Eagle to keep the crew at four members. (Photo Credit: Tony King)



**Assistant Chief**  
Amos Ketcher  
aketcher@ukb-nsn.gov  
918-457-9645



**Secretary**  
Caleb Grimm-Smith  
csmith@ukb-nsn.gov



**Treasurer**  
Sonja Gour  
sgourd@ukb-nsn.gov



**Cooweescoowee Dist.**  
Clifford Wofford  
918-822-1953



**Delaware Dist.**  
Tishaleta Smith-Guevara  
918-718-4366  
tguevara@ukb-nsn.gov



**Flint Dist.**  
Frankie Still  
918-507-1822



**Goingsnake Dist.**  
Willie Christie  
918-822-3803



**Illinois Dist.**  
Janelle Adair  
918-457-7067



**Saline Dist.**  
Charles Smoke  
918-457-7071



**Sequoyah Dist.**  
Donald Adair  
918-931-0941



**Tahlequah Dist.**  
Sammy Allen  
918-931-0177

## March Chief Chat



### Chief's Corner

**JEFF WACOCHÉ**  
Chief  
jwacoche@ukb-nsn.gov

Siyo,  
Last month, I traveled to Washington, D.C., alongside our Congressional Delegate Tori Holland and Attorney General Klint Cowan to advocate for the United Keetoowah Band and our Members. We met with Members of Congress, congressional staff, and leaders of key committees that shape federal Indian policy.

These visits matter. Showing up in Washington ensures decision-makers understand who we are and the rights we carry.

Our message was clear: the United Keetoowah Band is a sovereign Tribal nation with treaty-based rights and a responsibility to serve our Members.

We spoke about strengthening healthcare resources for our people, raised the importance of advancing the UKB's opportunity to game on its gaming lands as a powerful form of economic development, and creating additional economic development opportunities that support long-term stability for Keetoowah families. We shared the growth of our health

programs and the importance of sustained federal investment in Indian Health Services programs that support our Members.

Recent healthcare progress is the latest marker in a long history of the United States affirming the treaty-based rights of the UKB.

Congress affirmed our rights through federal recognition in 1950.

Federal courts affirmed our rights when the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit determined the UKB is entitled to lands held in trust for our benefit – a decision left intact by the United States Supreme Court.

The Executive Branch affirmed our rights in 2025 when the Department of the Interior, through M-Opinion

M-37084, confirmed that rights once exercised by the historical Cherokee Nation continue today through both the UKB and the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma – equally.

Our trip to Washington was about continuing to ensure our treaty-based rights are understood. We always need to proactively protect our sovereignty. And it's in that advocacy of our sovereignty that we continue to make gains – to advance UKB healthcare, wellbeing and economic opportunities.

In the months ahead, we will continue advancing our priorities – expanding healthcare services for our Members, advancing economic development opportunities, and ensuring the federal government fully honors its trust responsibility to the UKB. The work happening today is laying the foundation for stronger services, stronger sovereignty, and stronger opportunities for future generations of Keetoowahs.

Wado.

*Chief Jeff Wacoche*

## TOURNAMENT

The Indians had no perfect record during the regular season like the Lady Indians, but they proved everyone wrong and came out on fire in the ORES Division IV tournament. The Indians scored 56-9 over Bearden, 33-19 over Tannehill but was defeated in the finals 28-46 against Stidham.

The Kenwood Lady Indians ended the season as State Champions and a gold ball, meanwhile the Kenwood Indians ended as State Runner-Up and a silver ball.

Three of the Lady Indians were named ORES 25th Anniversary Division IV All Tournament Team: Brayleigh Tanner, Ceegyn Sapp and Nakayah Sanders. Tournament MVP went to Peyton Proctor for the second year in a row.

Three boys from the Indians were named All Tournament Team: Chris Clouse, Ross Nichols and Adrian Newton.

State Champions Kenwood Lady Indians are: Peyton Proctor, Shariah Ortiz, Nakayah Sanders, Carlie Ross, Brylee Vann, Ceegyn Sapp, Brinklea Foreman, Raelynn Myers, Brayleigh Tanner, Bianka O'Field, Willow Billey and Jocelyn King.

State Runner-Up Kenwood Indians are: Kaiden Sanders, Ross Nichols, Chris Clouse, Brylen Brown, Codey Soap, Tyren Factor, Adrian Newton, Cael Hogshooter, Bryson Vann, Coby Pettit, Bryson King and Adian Leroy.

Mangers are: Les Mouse, Bella Ballou and Janessa Vann. Coached by: Doo Foreman and Stephanie Camp-

bell.

"I am really proud of these teams, how they both showed up in Shawnee, and it's always nice to see the community show up and support" Kenwood Public School Superintendent Jerod Phillips said. "They challenged themselves all season, day in and day out. Our basketball kids are held at a high standard, and it shows how they perform academically and with extracurricular activities."

Other teams who represented the UKB districts that came back with either a gold ball or silver ball was the Peavine Lady Panthers (Runners-up), Maryetta Lady Raiders (Runners-up) and Maryetta Raiders (State Champs).



**Kenwood Indians 2026 ORES Division IV State Runner-Up**



**ORES 25th Anniversary Division IV Boys All-Tournament Team**

## UKB Leadership Advances Sovereignty Priorities During Advocacy Trip to Washington, D.C.

UKB leaders spent three days in Washington, D.C., meeting with Members of Congress, congressional staff, and key committee leaders to advance the Tribe's federal priorities and reaffirm UKB sovereignty.

Chief Jeff Wacoche, Congressional Delegate Tori Holland, and Attorney General Klint Cowan met with members of the Oklahoma congressional delegation, the House Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs, and the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. The meetings focused on reiterating the federal government's trust responsibility to the UKB and ensuring the Tribe has the tools needed to serve its Members.

Throughout the visit, UKB leadership emphasized the Tribe's treaty rights, jurisdiction, and the importance of being part of policy decisions affecting Indian Country.

"This trip was about continuing to assert who we are as a sovereign Tribal nation and ensuring federal decision-makers understand both our history and our future," said Chief Jeff Wacoche. "We are advocating for the resources and recognition necessary to serve our Members and build long-term stability for Keetoowahs."

Discussions with lawmakers and committee staff centered on several key priorities for the UKB, including

expanding healthcare resources, advancing the UKB's opportunity to game on its gaming lands as a powerful form of economic development, and strengthening economic development opportunities for the Tribe.

Healthcare remains a central focus of the UKB's federal advocacy. Leaders shared updates on the Tribe's growing health programs and the importance of sustained federal investment from Indian Health Services to meet the needs of UKB Members.

"Our responsibility is to ensure the federal government honors its commitments to the UKB," said Attorney General Klint Cowan. "That includes clarity on legal issues affecting our sovereignty, support for our healthcare programs, and recognition of our authority to pursue economic development opportunities that benefit Tribal Members."

Congressional Delegate Tori Holland highlighted the importance of maintaining strong relationships with congressional offices and federal committees that shape Indian policy.

"These meetings are critical to making sure the UKB's voice is heard in Washington," Holland said. "We are building understanding about who we are, what our Members need, and why federal policy decisions must respect our sovereignty and self-determina-

tion."

The advocacy trip reflects the UKB's continued commitment to engaging directly with federal leaders and ensuring the Tribe's priorities remain visible at the national level. By strengthening relationships in Congress and across federal agencies, UKB leadership is working to secure the resources necessary to enable wellbeing and prosperity for future generations.



# YOUTH COUNCIL



We are pleased to introduce the following 10 Youth Council Members:

- Grayci Spradlin is an 18-year-old student at Tahlequah High School and the daughter of Krissy and JB Spradlin. She is actively involved in the National Honor Society, participates in community service, and holds the title of Miss Keetoowah. She is a certified Phlebotomy Tech and attends Tahlequah ICTC to get her CMA. She enjoys spending time with family and friends. Grayci is a member of the Tahlequah District.

- Angel Jones is a 19-year-old student attending Carl Albert State College. She is the Granddaughter of Reba Vann. She continues to serve as Sequoyah's H.O.P.E Club Princess and a member of Gracepoint Outreach Worship team. Angel is a member of the Flint District.

- Laney is a 19-year-old student attending the University of Oklahoma, studying Psychology. She is the daughter of Cecilia Frogg and a member of the Tahlequah District. She is actively involved in the American Indian Association and is a member of Gamma Delta Pi, an Indigenous sorority at OU.

- Aiyanna Washington is a 17-year-old student at Tahlequah Sequoyah High School and the daughter of Angel Wolfe and Tim Washington. She is actively involved in volleyball,

including volleyball clubs, as well as golf. Aiyanna participates in HOPE Club, Art Stream—where she creates Native American crafts such as skirts, shirts, and earrings—Talent Search, and FCA. She volunteers at Echota Behavioral Health events and at her church Boudinot Baptist Church. Aiyanna is a member of the Tahlequah District.

- Serenity Feather is a 16-year-old student at Jay High School and the daughter of Kayla Sharp and Wasey Feather. She is actively involved in FOMC (Feathers of Many Colors), the art club, and the drama club. Serenity enjoys reading, writing, and taking walks to observe trees. Serenity is a member of the Delaware District.

- Eva Barnes is a 16-year-old student at Tahlequah High School and the daughter of Rendy McCulley. She is involved in the National Honor

Society and Oklahoma Indian Honor Society. She participates in Yearbook, focusing on graphic design and sports photography. As JV Academic Team captain and co-founder of her mental health project "The Hive", has engaged over 250 participants. She also competed in the Wharton Investing Challenge with the Math and Finance Club and recently completed the National Security Language Initiative for Youth Virtual Arabic Scholarship. Eva is a member of the Tahlequah District.

- Leland Deere is a 15-year-old student at Tahlequah High School and the son of Stacy and Jeremy Deere. He is actively involved in cross country, participates in his church youth group, and plays soccer in the Tahlequah league. Leland is a member of the Tahlequah District.

- Izabella Phillips is a 16-year-old student at Hulbert High School and

the daughter of Amber Luster. She has a passion for helping others and enjoys baking and reading. Izabella is a member of the Tahlequah District.

- J'Leeanna Geneva Denae Ramsey is a 14-year-old student at Maryetta Public School. She is the daughter of Tycilla and Jerrad Ramsey and is actively involved in numerous activities. J'Leeanna participates in Service and Leadership programs, Gifted and Talented initiatives, and is a member of the Academic Team. She is also involved in various sports, including archery, basketball, soccer, cross country, track, and football as a water girl. Additionally, she plays AAU basketball and is a part of a softball travel team. She holds the title of Jr. Miss Keetoowah. She enjoys spending time with family and being involved in the community. J'Leeanna is a member of the Tahlequah District.

- Noah Wolfe is a 13-year-old student at Grandview. He is the son of Rhonda Monrroy and is actively involved in his community and church. Noah participates in the Cherokee Challenge Bowl and volunteers at Echota Behavioral Health events to support the EBH Prevention team. He is also a dedicated member of Boudinot Baptist Church, serving as an usher and participating in the Puppet Ministry. Noah is a member of the Tahlequah District.

# UKB Housing on the Lease-Purchase Program

LOPA participant Jacob Bishop is one of few to receive a home from the program.

**LANI HANSEN, Senior Reporter**

TAHLEQUAH, Okla- Home ownership is a crucial way families can build generational wealth. The United Keetoowah Band Housing Department recognized this and implemented the Lease-Purchase Program in 2013. Since this time grant funding has allowed for the purchase of homes to provide to those on the housing wait list. This approach sets up our people for success as homeowners and be prepared for the routine upkeep and maintenance of a home.

The Lease-Purchase Program provides decent, safe, sanitary, and affordable housing to income eligible, exclusive UKB tribal members within the Tribe's service area. The program follows NAHASDA and HUD regulations and preserves tribal sovereign immunity.



**New homeowners, Jacob and wife Sydney Bishop receive the keys to their home.**

Eligibility Requirements Participants must:

- Be exclusive UKB members and first-time homeowners (with limited exceptions).
- Meet HUD low-income limits ( $\leq 80\%$  median income) and UKB minimum income guidelines.
- Intend to use the home as their primary residence and maintain good rental history.
- Live within the UKB's service area.

Applicants may be denied for past evictions, property damage, criminal history (violent or drug related), debts to housing programs, or detrimental behavior.

Application & Selection:

- Applications must be complete, verified, and updated annually.
- Eligible applicants are placed on a waiting list.
- Failure to recertify or misrepresentation will result in removal off the waitlist.

Occupancy & Lease:

- Unit size is assigned based on household size.
- A lease agreement must be executed prior to occupancy.
- Participants must move in within 30 days of acceptance.

Payments:

- Monthly payment = 15% of adjusted household income, capped by the Maximum Lease Payment (Total Development Cost  $\div$  300 months).
- Participants never pay more than 300 payments or more than the total unit development cost.

- Payments are due on the 5th; late after the 10th.
- Zero income status may not exceed 60 days without termination risk.

Participant Responsibilities:

- Maintain the property according to housekeeping and maintenance standards.
- Keep utilities active in their own name.
- Avoid nuisances, abandoned vehicles, unapproved structures, and more than two household pets.
- Allow move in, annual, and follow up inspections.
- Attend required counseling for maintenance or budgeting if needed.

Repairs & Rehabilitation:

Participants are responsible for all repairs and upkeep. Major rehabilitation, if performed by the Tribe, is repaid through a loan not exceeding five years and subject to income-based limits.

Re Examination (Recertification):

Income is re verified annually. Participants must report household or income changes immediately. Failure to recertify or misrepresentation may result in termination.

Conveyance (Becoming the Owner):

A participant becomes eligible for homeownership when:

- The Total Development Cost is fully paid, or
- 300 consecutive payments have been made.

Homes are conveyed by Quitclaim Deed to the qualifying tribal member.

Successorship:

Participants must designate a successor and alternate who are members of the United Keetoowah Band.

Successors must meet full eligibility requirements and assume all obligations.

Special rules apply for death, incapacity, divorce, and minor children.

Termination of Participation: Grounds include:

- Nonpayment of rent
- Misrepresentation
- Failure to recertify
- Abandonment
- Violations of occupancy rules, criminal activity, or policy non-compliance

A structured notice process is followed unless fraud or imminent danger is involved.

"One of the favorite parts of my job is to give keys to families who are getting into their first home, especially to young families who otherwise wouldn't have the opportunity to own a home." said Roxana Wilden, who has worked in the UKB Housing Department for 8 years. "All it takes is one person to change the trajectory of a family forever because participants can literally see the investment in their future and are usually more motivated to care for the property and meet the program requirements."

UKB Housing Department has had the privilege of giving one home away within the last month to Jacob and Sydney Bishop. The Bishops are a young family who are first time homeowners thanks to the Lease-Purchase Program.

# Senior 918 Program Assists Community Organizations

**Marilyn Craig, Museum Marketing Coordinator**

TAHLEQUAH - Supported by the National Council on Aging, the Senior 918 program is an AmeriCorps senior citizen work program coordinated by the Cherokee County Health Services Council. The primary focus area is healthy futures – access to care and obesity and food objectives, providing social support, increasing health knowledge, promoting healthy lifestyles, preserving cultural food practices, fostering intergenerational connections.

Senior 918 serves elders over age 65. Participants in the program work between 32 and 35 hours per month at a non-profit organization and are paid a stipend of \$10. per hour. Some worksites include Farmer's Market, Habitat for Humanity, Tahlequah Day Center, the Jim Proctor Elder Center, the Tahlequah library, and John Hair Cultural Center and Keetoowah Museum.

While there have been stories on the museum volunteers and their activities, this is the first one to highlight the volunteers that work at the elder center. They have contributed a great deal to the tribe and to elders that eat at the center.

The Title VI Staff certainly appreciate their contributions. Keetoowah Elder Center kitchen manager Ronald Holden said, "They have helped us in places we need help. They help us get things done so that we can better serve our elders. They are all



**Senior 918 volunteers (left) Sarah Noble and (right) Mark Sontag serve lunch at Title VI as Kitchen Manager Ronald Holden looks on.**

very good people".

Nutrition Program Coordinator, Rebecca Dreadfulwater said, "Our volunteers are giving something of themselves to help others in the Title VI Nutrition Program. Not only do they help in the kitchen, but they offer fellowship to elders. Elders come daily to eat, and they talk with volunteers, you can hear the laughter, if it is a joke or some story, it is easily shared. They help by assisting with preparing side foods and help with meals on wheels. Volun-

teering when they can, it helps brighten our staff each day; we love and appreciate all our volunteers!

Volunteers include Sara Noble, Mark Sontag, Patty Welch, and Susie Welch. When asked what she enjoys about volunteering, Patty said, "I enjoy the people. Getting to visit with everyone. I have been volunteering for the past year." Patty has retired from the Cherokee Nation Oaks Senior Center.

Susie Welch said, "It gives me something to do. It gives me a reason to get out of the house, and I get to meet new people. Mark Sontag said, "I like the atmosphere here. The people. The food. It is convenient to where I live. An outgoing person, Mark, always has something to say to the people as they come along the line.

Sarah Noble has a lot of experience working with people. At her last regular job, she worked with Cherokee Nation Child Support services. After retiring, she wanted to give back to the community. She began to give back as she worked five years at the Tahlequah Day Center, which feeds the homeless and hungry in the community daily at noon. She has been working with the Senior 918 program for the past 3 years and has been working at the UKB Elder Center for a few months. "I love working here with my tribe and it gives me the opportunity to speak my first language – Cherokee. Volunteering keeps me going and continuing to work keeps me healthy," Sarah said.

# “Keetoowah Storytelling Through Art” Exhibit Opens April 6

Marilyn Craig, Museum Marketing Coordinator

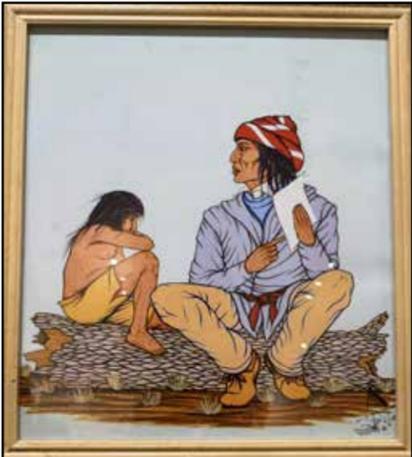
TAHLEQUAH – The John Hair Cultural Center and Keetoowah Museum is preparing to host its first visual art exhibit. The works of two Keetoowah tribal members will be featured when the exhibit opens on April 6th through October 6, 2026, the late Ed Rackleff and Roger Loftis. The cost to see the exhibit is a ticket to the museum, only \$5 per person or a special rate for groups. The exhibit is titled, “Keetoowah Storytelling Through Art”.

“Rackleff used varied artistic mediums such as painting, drawing, silver and bronze to visually tell stories from the past and to express experiences of his Native upbringing,” Berry said. His paintings represent a variety of subjects and tribes including his people, but he also features other Southeastern tribes and quite a few plains tribes as well.

Most of Loftis’ paintings and drawings depict authentic imagery of Keetoowah people going about their daily lives hunting, cooking, washing, sewing, gathering food, gig making, flint knapping, making baskets, etc.

“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 Berry.

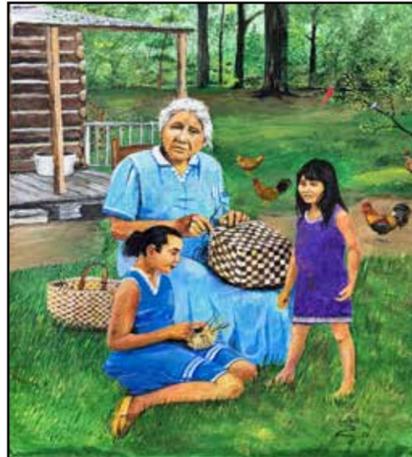
For more information on the exhibit or the museum, visit us on Facebook, the tribal website or call us at (918) 871-2866.



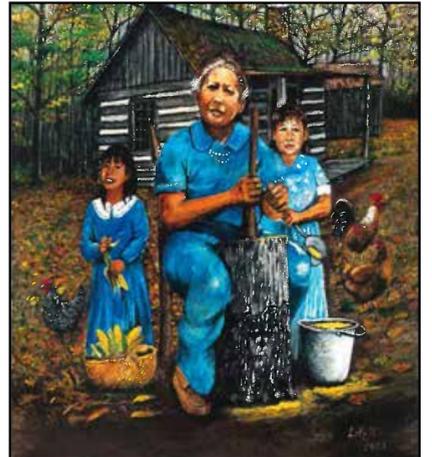
Ed Rackleff's, “Sequoyah’s Teaching” is one of his paintings that will be featured in the exhibit.



Rackleff's The Leaves Say It – Sequoyah's Cherokee sculpture is on display in front of the Keetoowah museum



“Teaching Basket Weaving”, is one of Roger Loftis' paintings that will be featured in the exhibit.



Making Corn Meal is one Roger Loftis' prints on sale in the museum gift shop.

## United Keetoowah Band Recognizes 70 Years of the Indian Health Service

The United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians joined Tribal Nations across the country in recognizing the 70th anniversary of the Indian Health Service (IHS), honoring seven decades of partnership in providing healthcare to American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Established in 1955, the Indian Health Service carries forward the federal government’s trust responsibility to provide healthcare to Tribal Nations. Over the past seventy years, Tribal governments and IHS have worked together to expand healthcare access, improve quality of care, and strengthen tribally administered health programs.

“The Indian Health Service exists to support the healthcare of Tribal Nations. Promises rooted in treaties manifest today as thousands of nurses and physicians – hardworking, dedicated men and women – who take great pride in advancing Native healthcare,” said UKB Chief Jeff Wacoche. “Together with IHS, the UKB continues to expand our own healthcare services. A top priority is ensuring UKB-led healthcare access, which we’ve accomplished with IHS.”

The UKB administers multiple IHS-funded health programs that directly serve Members and their families.

Through Echota Behavioral Health, the Tribe provides culturally grounded behavioral health services focused on healing and wellness for individuals and families. The Tribe’s Purchased and Referred Care (PRC) program helps ensure Members can access hospital services and specialty care.

Most recently, the UKB received IHS funding to open a UKB Health Clinic – the Tribe’s first direct patient care facility. The clinic marks an important step forward in expanding tribally administered healthcare services and strengthening the Tribe’s ability to care for its Members.

These investments in healthcare infrastructure and programs reflect the UKB’s sovereignty and long-term commitment to improving access to care and building tribally driven health systems in partnership with IHS.

As the Indian Health Service marks its 70th anniversary, the UKB celebrates this shared progress while continuing to focus on the future – expanding tribally administered healthcare programs, strengthening partnerships, and ensuring Members have access to holistic care that supports physical, mental, spiritual, and social well-being.



*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

*UKB*  
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

### 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](http://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](http://ukb-nsn.gov/john-hair-cultural-center-museum) or call 918-871-2866.

# Echota Behavioral Health's Keetoowah Elder Day, Goingsnake District

EBH and UKB Departments honor and celebrate Keetoowah elders.

LANI HANSEN, Senior Reporter

KANSAS, Okla- Echota Behavioral Health honored and celebrated Keetoowah elders with a day of fellowship and community engagement in the Goingsnake Community.

EBH Prevention Team always includes departments within the United Keetoowah Band to come out and set up informal booths for the elders. Departments who have participated are Title 6, Historic Preservation, Environmental, Education, Media, Museum, Tribal Courts and Indian Child Welfare.

Elder days have become an important asset to the tribe, it's a way to connect and engage with elders, and to learn from them. The elders within UKB, play an important role in shaping our communities.

This last elder day consisted of fellowship, chair volleyball, painting,

bingo, a fish fry and most importantly laughter.

EBH Prevention Teams stated, "Thank you to everyone who came out and shared the day with us. And a big thank you to all who helped plan, prepare, cook, organize, and make this event such a success. We

appreciate you all so much!"

EBH Prevention Teams include: Melody Proctor, Marquana Fourkiller, Nikki Kennedy, Arlow Jumper, Marcella Morton, Kyndal Aimerson, Kaleb Proctor, Lundi Brickey, Caleb Phelps, Bodee Jimerson and Brittany Cheater.



## Aden Boston 2nd in Powerlifting Meet

Former summer youth and Keetoowah tribal member, Aden Boston recently placed 2nd in the Checotah High School Powerlifting Meet. Aden is a junior at Keys High School.

Aden's weight class was 275 pounds. He lifted 530 pounds on squat, 315 pounds on bench, and 545 pounds on deadlift... It was 1,390 lbs. altogether!

Aden is a go getter and if things work out like he plans, has a busy summer ahead of him. He plans to work with the UKB summer youth program again this year and have a second job in the evenings and on weekends.



## We Are HIRING

Please visit our UKB website at: [www.ukb-nsn.gov](http://www.ukb-nsn.gov) for all opening positions!

**Apply Now**

Applications can be found at [www.ukb-nsn.gov/employment](http://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.

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 \*



MARCH IS NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH - UKB TITLE VI - JIM PROCTOR ELDER NUTRITION CENTER MENU  
 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

March 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Jim Proctor Elder Community Center 918-871-2727 918-871-2861	2 Dr Seuss Day Tomato Soup BLT Sandwich Pasta Salad, Crackers Fresh Fruit	3 Nat. Anthem Day Taco Burger Mexican Rice Tortilla Chip Fresh Fruit	4 Nat. Sons Day Roast Beef w/ Gravy Potato/Carrots Salad, Hot Roll Strawberry Cake	5 Cheese Doodle Day  <b>COOKS CHOICE</b>	6 Nat. Dress Day Biscuits & Gravy Bacon, Eggs Hashbrowns Fruit, Juice	7 Sock Monkey Day UKB Regular Council Meeting 10 AM Justice
8 Daylight Savings Time 	9 Get Over It Day Goulash Italian Green Beans Garlic Toast Fresh Fruit	10 Nat. Mario Day Chicken Fajitas Mex Corn Mex Rice Pineapple	11 Plumbing Day Sliced Ham Potato/Green Beans Sweet Potato, Salad Roll, Peaches	12 Girl Scouts Day Brown Beans/ Ham Okra, Corn Frybread Banana Pudding	13 Nat. Jewel Day Dry Cereal, Toast Eggs, Sausage Yogurt Fruit, Juice	14 Save a Spider Day 
15 World Sleep Day 	16 Nat. Panda Day Fried Bologna SW Potato Salad Potato Chips Fruit Salad	17 St. Patrick's Day Sauerkraut Weenies Potato Wedges Carrots, Roll Chocolate Cake	18 Sloppy Joe Day Sloppy Joes, Chips Potato Salad Baked Beans, Pickle No Bake Cookie	19 Let's Laugh Day Chicken n Dumplin Green Bean/ Potato Salad, Hot Roll Fruit Salad	20 Spring Equinox Pancakes Bacon, Eggs Hashbrown Yogurt, Juice, Fruit	21 Nat. Flower Day 
22 World Water Day 	23 Nat. Puppy Day Broccoli Fettuccine Alfredo, Carrots Garlic Toast Fruit Salad	24 Nat. Cocktail Day Taco Casserole Mex Corn Zucchini Pineapple Cake	25 Waffle Day Nutrition Closed Ben E Keith Food Show OKC, OK	26 Nat Spinach Day March Birthday Hamburgers/ fixing Tatar Tots Cake & Ice Cream	27 National Joe Day Kitchen Cleaning Day	28 Earth Hour Day 
29 World Piano Day 	30 Nat. Pencil Day Hamburger Veg Stew Hominy Commodity Cheese Cornbread, Dessert	31 Nat. Crayon Day BBQ Chicken Potato Salad Baked Beans, Roll Strawberry Shortcake	March Color: Light Blue Flower: Daffodil Stone: Aquamarine	PLEASE CHECK ON YOUR ELDERS & NEIGHBORS WADO	Inclement Weather When Tahlequah schools are CLOSED UKB Offices will be CLOSED.	Inclement Weather There will be no home delivered meals due to the safety of our driver

Please wear a mask, stay home if you feel sick! Thank you for your patience - Title VI Staff - 2% Milk, bread and fruit served daily.

March is National Women's History Month! "If March comes in like a lion, it will go out like a lamb"

The Full Worm Moon will occur on March 3, 2026, and will be accompanied by a Total Lunar Eclipse.

Springtime in March starts with wild onions, so come and enjoy Traditional Cherokee foods, wild onions and eggs!

"March, March, all the day, Winds of March, please march away; March away with noisy drum, For the flowers want to come; March away through every street, Noisy tramp of noisy feet, Noisy music all the way - March, March, March away!" -Annette Wynne

"The first blooms of spring always make my heart sing" "Flowers and colors everywhere, I am glad that March is here"

"Happy March! May the warmer and longer days ahead fill you with joy!"



# Hart

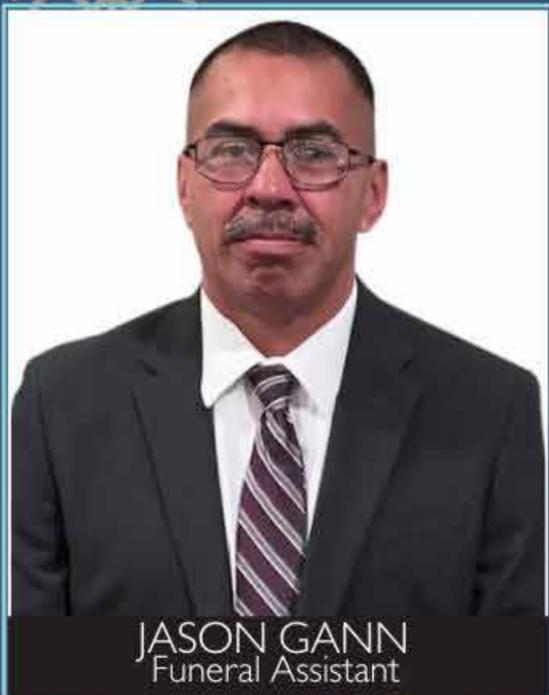
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