

79th Annual

May 9, 2026

STILWELL Strawberry Festival

**2026 Queen
Nathalie Martinez**





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WELCOME

antique cars and the horses, every part was exciting. We stayed all day looking forward to the strawberries and ice cream, hoping they didn't run out before we got ours. Then we would go home and get cleaned up for the rodeo and then finally the carnival. I guess things haven't changed all that much. We have a talent show now, and over 100 vendors each year. We still have one of the very best parades known to man. The carnival is still top notch and the rodeo still brings in over 1000 people for that Friday and Saturday night performance.

I am so thankful we are still around, so many have stopped or don't exist any longer. Some people have asked what is the best part of the festival? For me

it's the celebration of our town and the tradition of growing strawberries. Back in the day we had thousands of acres of berries, several varieties and all had their own unique flavor. The contest for the best berry has always been a big thing. To be awarded top berry is a very prestigious honor. It means all the hard work has paid off. All the sweat in the hot sun and the tears when the frost comes and let's don't forget the rain. It can be a blessing or a hindrance. But, when it's all said and done it is worth it. I am so glad I live in a place where hard work is honored and appreciated. I have heard stories of picking berries and how much you could earn, well for me I would go with my mom and dad to the patch. But my picking only lasted long

enough to get a bologna sandwich and strawberry pop. After that I would stay in the shade.

I have great memories from the festival and it has been my honor to be the Kiwanis president for the past 2 years and be a part of the planning of the festival. It takes a lot of planning, people and time to have the festival. We normally take the rest of May off but start right back in June with planning for next year's festival. Thank you so much to my fellow Kiwanians for all you do to make not only the festival great but our club great. So, here's to next year. The 80th Stilwell Strawberry Festival, coming soon.

Sincerely,

Tracy Sims

Stilwell Kiwanis Club President



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CLUB OF STILWELL



Kiwanis members from left; Dan Collins, Casey Brown, Kyla Lundberg, Shania Merchant, Tracy Sims, Samuel Wilhite, Sydney Helm, Robert St. Pierre, Natalie Harrison, Krista Bradley, Tyler Davis, Cassie Shores, Liz Brown, Stephanie Ford, Josh Sam, Rhea Terrapin-Toney.

WELCOME



Welcome to Stilwell, the Strawberry Capital of the World, and the annual Strawberry Festival - the longest-running, continuous event in Oklahoma. This is the county where acres of the

sweet, red delicious fruit inspired a festival, and people to drive for miles to purchase and take home to make jams, eat with ice cream or enjoy many other ways.

It is a privilege and honor for city employees, the City Council and myself, as Mayor, to work on this fun-filled festival for you.

Activities kick off mid-week with the annual rodeo and carnival which run through the weekend. Stilwell's Got Talent is a Friday evening event showcasing local youth and adults.

The 5K Run for the Berries gives an early start to Saturday festivities which include a parade, the presentation of the Strawberry Queen and her Court, strawberry judging and auction, and more than 200 vendors with arts and crafts, food and

so much more. A car show, horse-shoe tournament and many youth games and activities add to the variety of reasons visitors and locals enjoy attending the event. And it's an opportunity for many citizens to catch up with friends and family downtown or at one of the class reunions.

Many, many volunteers pitch in to make this premiere event grow and improve each year.

We wish to thank all who work together for this successful endeavor, especially the Kiwanis Club members who organize and manage this award-winning event and the farmers who make it possible.

We're glad you're here to help us celebrate the many achievements of the City of Stilwell, from clean up and revitalization, to the growth

of new business and housing. The City leaders have initiated numerous programs and improvements such as parks with basketball goals, pickle ball courts, a sports complex and a golf course is in the works - many reasons for citizens to feel a sense of pride in their community. While in town check out our new City Offices, the Mary H. Carson Wellness Facility, New CCO Community Center, New Headstart facility, and many other new improvements that have been updated recently.

We hope you enjoy your time in Stilwell and look forward to seeing you on another trip back soon.

Thank you!

Jean Ann Wright
Mayor of Stilwell



Dear Fellow Oklahomans and Guests,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Stilwell Strawberry Festival! Since 1948, this festival has been a cherished tradition, celebrating the hard work of our local farmers and the unmatched spirit of our great state.

Each year, the "Strawberry Capital of the World" welcomes thousands of visitors to enjoy live music, parades, rodeo events, and, of course, locally grown strawberries. This festival is a true celebration of Oklahoma's rich agricultural heritage and a testament to the dedication and perseverance of our farmers.

Bring your friends and family to enjoy the best strawberries around and make even better memories. Thank you for supporting Oklahoma agriculture and the communities that make our state so special.

Sincerely,

J. Kevin Stitt
Governor of Oklahoma



Welcome to the 79th annual Stilwell Strawberry Festival! It is a true pleasure to gather once again in honor of a tradition that showcases the very best of the Stilwell community.

The Stilwell Strawberry Festival highlights the strength of agritourism in Oklahoma and the hardworking farmers, ranchers, and small businesses who keep it thriving. Each year, thousands of visitors join us to experience the sights, sounds, and flavors that make this festival so special. From live music and a vibrant parade to a classic car show, vendors, and activities for children of all ages, there is something here for everyone to enjoy.

Events like this not only bring us together in fellowship but also strengthen our local economy and preserve the traditions that define us. Your support of local growers, craftsmen, and entrepreneurs makes a lasting impact.

Thank you for being part of this celebration. I hope you make wonderful memories, reconnect with friends old and new, and leave with a renewed appreciation for the spirit and hospitality that make our community shine.

Sincerely,

Matt Pinnell
Lieutenant Governor of Oklahoma



Principal Chief
Chuck Hoskin Jr.



Deputy Chief
Bryan Warner

Welcome to the Cherokee Nation Reservation and the 79th annual Stilwell Strawberry Festival.

Year in and year out, this enduring Stilwell tradition is one of the most vibrant community celebrations in northeast Oklahoma.

In our Cherokee culture and tradition, strawberries are said to signify reconciliation and reunification.

Strawberries to this day remain an important part of the economy and a significant source of income for many Cherokee families in Adair County.

So many Stilwell community volunteers work tirelessly to ensure this annual celebration remains such a joyous experience for us all.

We hope you enjoy the Stilwell Strawberry Festival and take some time to enjoy the rich traditions and culture found throughout the historic Cherokee Nation.

Wado.

Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. & Deputy Chief Bryan Warner



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Stilwell Kiwanis has been the official sponsor of the Strawberry Festival since 1948. The primary purpose of the Stilwell Kiwanis Club is to sponsor programs or projects that benefit children in the community. In addition to the annual programs, events or institutions that the Stilwell Kiwanis Club supports, the club has been a leader in community improvement projects such as the Kiwanis Stage that was constructed to replace an aging bandstand on the Adair County Courthouse lawn as well as Fletcher Park that provides a first-class playground and gathering area in downtown Stilwell. The numerous community programs, institutions and events annually supported by the club, include but are not limited to:

“Bringing up Grades” program in local schools
Annual Easter egg hunt
Read to Succeed Program
Sophomore of the Year award
Strawberry Queen Pageant & Scholarships
Super Star Show at the county fair
DHS Christmas Angel Tree
Shop with a Cop program
ICTC programs

Adair County 4-H
Adair County Boys and Girls Club
Annual community backpack giveaway
DHS Summer Foster Camp
Fire Angel program with Stilwell Fire Department
McIntosh House
Annual 4th of July Firework Show
Imagination Library
12 days of Christmas at Fletcher Park

Stilwell High School Key Club
Friends of the Library
Stilwell Public Schools Scholarship Foundation
Golf Course Project at Carson Park
Partnership with Cherokee Nation Foundation for scholarship opportunities
Ronnie Trentham Service Award Scholarship
Numerous events with Adair County Schools
Berry Closet



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CLUB OF STILWELL Awards



Shonda and Tyler Davis with the Human & Spiritual award.



Kainan Yeager Sophomore of the Year.



Andrea Brown Certificate of Appreciation Award.



Cody Killer Certificate of Appreciation Award.



Kenny Sims Certificate of Appreciation Award.



Ralph Keen Legion of Honor



Craig Brown Certificate of Appreciation Award.



Jessie Collins and Cassie Shores Certificates of Appreciation.



The Ronnie Trentham family along with the Ronnie Trentham Award recipient Seth Brown.

Former Stilwell Kiwanis Club Presidents

1946 Dick Brodie	1973 Larry Roberts	2000 Nason Morton
1947 Otto Alderson	1974 Charles O. McFarland	2001 Gary Johnson
1948 Jack Chaffin	1975 Jack Smay	2002 Michael L. Taffer
1949 Joe H. Carson	1976 E.R. Kirkbride	2003 Robert St. Pierre
1950 Jean R. Reed	1977 Larry Strauss	2004 Robert St. Pierre
1951 Barnes Pemberton	1978 Jim Young	2005 Ralph Keen Jr.
1952 Norvell Henley	1979 Larry Eubanks	2006 Ralph Keen Jr.
1953 Gene L. Gray	1980 John Freeman	2007 Larry E. Adair
1954 Kenneth Rains	1981 Tom Todd	2008 Matt Hoyt
1955 John McGinnis	1982 Charles W. Crozier	2009 Liz Brown
1956 Jack K. Holt	1983 Jack E. Kay	2010 Barry Hayes
1957 Berry A. Ferguson	1984 Dean Jackson	2011 Gary Jackson
1958 D.C. (Tobe) O'Neal	1985 Bobby Ray	2012 Gary Jackson
1959 Jim DeJarnett	1986 Jim Carson	2013 Dan Collins
1960 Jack Braham	1987 Andy Inman	2014 Dan Collins
1961 Kenneth Carleton	1988 Hiram McFarland	2015 Marty Green
1962 Colbert Starr	1989 Mike Doublehead	2016 Marty Green
1963 Ben Briley	1990 Robert Crozier	2017 Ronnie Trentham
1964 Julius H. Thomas	1991 David West	2018 Ronnie Trentham
1965 Wade Zumwalt	1992 Reggy Cox	2019 Sharon Jackson
1966 W. Neil Morton	1993 Lynn Carson	2020 Sharon Jackson
1967 L.T. Spray	1994 Drew Carson	2021 Tyler Davis
1968 J.L. Hallford	1995 Jim Panter	2022 Tyler Davis
1969 H.D. Gound	1996 Clyde Enlow	2023 Krista Baird Bradley
1970 H.D. Gound	1997 Charles W. Crozier	2024 Krista Baird Bradley
1971 Phil Keeter	1998 Alan Adams	2025 Tracy Sims
1972 Jack Perry	1999 Chad Catron	2026 Tracy Sims



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CLUB OF STILWELL

Hershal Dotson, 1940-2025

Hershal Dotson was unknowingly tied to the Stilwell Strawberry Festival the very first time he came to town in 1974. He was a supervisor for Alltel (then Allied Telephone Company) in Berryville, Arkansas, when the company offered him a promotion if he wanted to transfer to the Stilwell location. They told him to drive over and visit the town and the areas that would be in his supervisory area (Stilwell, Baron and Vian). So he and his wife, Penny, and two children Michael and Michelle, drove to Stilwell one sunny Saturday in May which also happened to be the same day as the Strawberry Festival. They slowly made their way through



the crowds and pre-bypass traffic in town and decided to visit Vian and Baron and come back to Stilwell later in the day. It was quite an eye-opener to see how many people visited such



a small town.

After much thought and discussion they decided to make the move. Alltel suggested he join Kiwanis as it would be the best and fastest way to meet community leaders and become involved in civic activities. That was the beginning of 51 years of Kiwanis membership and Strawberry Festivals, and in 2024 he received a Distinguished Service Award from Kiwanis International to recognize 50 years of Kiwanis service.

In keeping with the Kiwanis objectives of working with the area youth combined with his interest in horses, he served on the Adair County Fair Board and helped the youth with horse show activities. He was especially interested in assisting them with halter and showmanship skills as he and his family had been avid horse show competitors when they lived in Arkansas. Hershal also enjoyed horse racing and raced horses at the Carroll

County Fair in Berrville, Blue Ribbon Downs and area tracks. He worked



with others to develop the vendor segment of the Strawberry Festival from zero vendors to over 100 today and could usually be found every year marking streets for booth spaces and working in the vendor sign up booth.

After 39 years with Alltel, Hershal retired and spent his time on his land north of Stilwell, usually with a horse or two and some cattle and solving the world's problems every morning at a local coffee shop. He was also known

for his enthusiasm for chuckwagon-style cooking and grilling on his various outdoor equipment. When his wife, Penny, retired from Northeastern State University in 2004, they spent a lot of time RV traveling, most of the time in the West and taking numerous cruises while still participating in Kiwanis and festival activi-

ties. Hershal passed away suddenly on September 3, 2005, at the age of 85. We will miss him.



Ronnie Trentham Scholarship

Carson Brown

Carson Brown is the 17-year-old son of Casey and Andrea Brown. He is the grandson of Mike and Rhonda Brown and Nancy Benham and the late Gene Benham. He is currently a junior at Stilwell High School, where he stays involved as a member of FCS and Key Club. Carson has always taken pride in his academics, graduating as valedictorian of his eighth grade class at Maryetta School. He is a proud member of the Cherokee Nation.

Carson enjoys running cross country and participating in trap shooting. He

has a strong interest in shooting sports and enjoys going to gun shows, a hobby he shared with Ronnie. When he's not at school or practice, you can usually find him working at Mr. B's Pizza, where he's learned the value of hard work and responsibility while gaining a group of good friends along the way.

Looking ahead, Carson hopes to continue his education and find a path that allows him to build a meaningful career while giving back to the people and community that have shaped him.



Helping to present the Ronnie Trentham Scholarship is from left: Lori Trentham, Kelsea Patton, Kyla Lundberg and Carson Brown.

Adair County Strawberry Growers 2026



Bobby & Jane Doyle: (918)797-5319 or
(918)507-0884

Doyle's Country Garden-Otoniel Barrera:
(479)601-0476

Miller Farms: (918)797-5104

David Guevara: (918)507-1151

Inmer Garcia: (479)364-1923

Strawberry growers pick strawberries daily. Therefore, there are a limited number of berries to be sold on the actual festival day. If you wish to purchase berries, you must make arrangements with one of the growers to hold berries for you if you will not be able to make it into town until later in the day.

2026 Stilwell Kiwanis

Sophomore of the Year



Talon Thurber



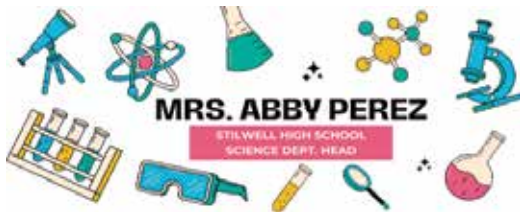
Talon McCrae Thurber is a 17-year-old student and the son of Stacy and Doug Kester, and Brian and Toi Thurber. He attended Zion Elementary School, where he graduated in 2024 as the Salutatorian of his eighth-grade class. Talon currently attends Stilwell High School.

Talon is actively involved in a variety of school activities, including Fellowship of Christian Students (FCS), 4-H, Spanish Club, and Key Club. He is a dedicated athlete, playing basketball for the Stilwell Indians as well as for his AAU competitive team. In addition, he plays for the Stilwell Indians football team in which he serves as team captain. Outside of school, Talon is a member of Victory Southern Baptist Church in Stilwell.

He has two older siblings, Bryar and Kasia, whom he enjoys aggravating and spending time with. In his free time, Talon enjoys hanging out with friends, playing pickleball, cruise nights in his truck, and taking vacations with family and friends.

Talon plans to continue his education at Stilwell High School for the next two years and intends to pursue college or trade school after graduation.

Stilwell High School Key Club



“Caring — Our Way of Life.” This is the motto of Key Club International, a student-led high school organization and part of the Kiwanis International family. Members make the world a better place through service while growing as individuals and leaders by answering the call to lead, summoning the courage to engage, and developing the heart to serve.

The Stilwell High School Key Club participates in many community service activities throughout the school year. Members host a reception for local veterans on Veterans Day, sing carols at the nursing home during the holidays, and deliver nearly 500 goody bags to Pre-K 3rd through 4th grade students on Valentine’s Day. They also assemble comfort care backpacks for students in need and manage the Comfort Care Closet at Stilwell High School, where students can anonymously access free personal hygiene products. Members also assist with school events such as the Nutcracker play, track meets, and other activities across the district, and they partner with the local Kiwanis Club for community projects.

This year, the Stilwell High School Key Club has 57 members. Officers include President Chris Canoe, Vice President Taylor Croley, Treasurer Lily Maupin, Secretary Lilly Davis, and Communications Officer Nate Vann. The club is sponsored by Mrs. Abby Perez



Stilwell Strawberry Festival Rodeo

8:pm Nightly

MAY 8-9, 2026

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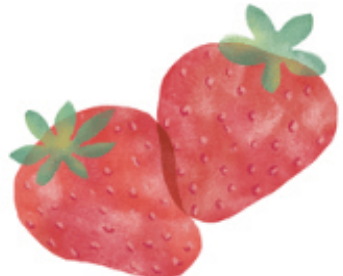
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Adair County

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service

220 W. Division St., CH Basement

Stilwell, OK 4960

Office phone: 918-696-2253

Miller Farms remains committed to preserving and advancing the family tradition of strawberry farming

Miller Farms is a three generation family farm established in 1992 in the rural Bell community outside Stilwell, Oklahoma. Founded by Wayne and Ernestine Miller—affectionately known as **Granny and Grandad Miller**—the farm began with traditional matted row strawberry beds, complemented by a diverse selection of vegetables and sweet corn.

Following the passing of Grandad Miller in 2011, their youngest son, **Joe David**, returned to the farm to assist Granny Miller with day to day operations. Together, in 2012 and 2013, they expanded the farm's production, developing larger strawberry beds and increasing their plantings of vegetables and sweet corn. In 2014, the farm grew once again with the establishment of the "Big Garden," a repurposed former rodeo arena. This new space supported larger plantings of tomatoes, corn, watermelons, and cantaloupes.

In 2015, Miller Farms introduced 2,500 bare root strawberry plants—an experiment that proved highly successful for family and friends and also unfortunately for the local deer population. Managing wildlife encroachment became a persistent challenge, as deer consumed much of the crop.

By 2016, the farm welcomed a third generation farmer, **Bryce David**, who returned to help carry forward the family legacy. The following spring, the family installed new electric fencing and planted 4,000 bare root strawberry plants along with pumpkins—only to have deer once again decimate the crop.

In the summer of 2017, Miller Farms made the strategic decision to construct a deer proof perimeter fence and transition from traditional matted rows to **plasticulture**, a modern system for growing strawberries in plastic-covered raised beds. With the guidance and support of Bob and Jane Doyle and Burl Doyle, the farm planted its first crop of strawberry plugs using plasticulture in September 2018,

aiming for a spring harvest. The results marked a turning point for the farm.

Since then, Miller Farms has continued its annual planting cycle. Strawberry plugs are planted each September, maintained through dormancy in December, and typically harvested from late April through mid June. By July, the plastic is removed and ground preparation be-



gins for the next planting season, completing the cycle anew.

Today, the farm continues to thrive with the help of the youngest third generation member, **Katelyn**, who contributes on picking days, manages social media outreach, and handles sales at farmers markets and roadside stands.

Miller Farms honors the memory of Grandad Miller, who passed in 2011, and Granny Miller, who passed in 2017. One of the family's enduring regrets is not adopting plasticulture sooner, as they would have cherished the opportunity for both to witness the farm's evolution.

Despite this, their legacy endures. Miller Farms remains committed to preserving and advancing the family tradition of strawberry farming—ensuring that the values, heritage, and hard work that shaped the farm from the beginning will continue for generations to come.



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Strawberry Day at the Capitol 2025



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Stilwell Strawberry Festival!





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Q&A with 2025 Stilwell Strawberry Festival Queen Karlee Jo Ingram

As your year with the crown ends, how would you describe your time as the Stilwell Strawberry Festival Queen?

My year as the Stilwell Strawberry Festival Queen has been incredibly meaningful and truly transformative. When I first stepped into this role, I knew it would be special, but I never could have imagined just how much I would grow or how deeply this experience would shape me.

Over the past year, I've gained confidence in ways I didn't expect, learning to speak with purpose, connect with people from all walks of life, and represent a community that has always felt like home. I've had the privilege of meeting so many kind, supportive individuals who reminded me of the strength and heart that define Stilwell. Every event, every conversation, and every moment spent celebrating our traditions has left a lasting impression on me. This role has given me unforgettable memories, genuine friendships, and a deeper appreciation for the place I'm proud to call my hometown. As my year comes to an end, I carry nothing but gratitude, pride, and a full heart for the opportunity to serve as the Stilwell Strawberry Festival Queen.

What have been some of the more memorable moments from the 2025 competition to now?

Some of my most memorable moments from the 2025 competition to now have been the ones that allowed me to truly connect with people. I'll never forget the excitement and nerves of competition week, meeting the other contestants, and realizing how much support surrounded me. From every parade, reading to preschools, to every local event, each appearance gave me a chance to represent Stilwell with pride and to see firsthand how caring our community is.

Specifically, one of the most memorable moments of my year was our trip to the Capitol. It was a day that felt both exciting



and surreal, standing in a place filled with so much history and importance, knowing I was there representing Stilwell and the Strawberry Festival. What made it even more special was the night before, when my first and second runner-up, Savannah Cunningham and Samantha Taylor, and I had a sleepover. We stayed up talking, laughing, watching movies, and just so excited for the next day. That time together made the experience even more meaningful. Walking into the Capitol the next morning with them and our families by my side is something I'll never forget. It was a moment that made me feel proud, grateful, and deeply connected to the community I was representing.

What are you most proud of accomplishing during your time as queen?



During my time as queen, I'm most proud of how much I've grown as a person, especially in the way I communicate and connect with others. When I first stepped into this role, I knew it would challenge me, especially since before competing I was extremely shy and not a talker at all, but I didn't realize just how much it would help me find my voice. Over the year, I learned to speak with confidence, hold meaningful conversations, and represent myself with poise. Whether I was talking with children, teens, adults — each experience strengthened my communication skills and helped me grow into someone more self-assured and capable. That personal growth — becoming more confident, more open, and more comfortable stepping



into leadership — is what I'm truly proud of accomplishing during my reign.

How has your time as the Strawberry Festival Queen prepared you for future endeavors?

My time as the Stilwell Strawberry Festival Queen prepared me for the future by strengthening my confidence to put myself out there and pursue my own path, grounded in my faith of course.

Through regular appearances and solo responsibilities, I learned to trust my instincts, rely on prayer, and step forward with the assurance that God is guiding me. Each school visit and community event pushed me beyond my comfort zone and showed me I can thrive independently while still leaning on my faith for courage. That growing self-assurance has made me less afraid to try new things, take risks, and carve

out opportunities that reflect who I am. Ultimately, this year gave me the courage to spread my wings, follow my own direction, and embrace whatever comes next with excitement, purpose, and gratitude to God.

What advice would you offer to young people who are considering participating in the Stilwell Strawberry Festival Queen Competition?

If you're thinking about entering the Stilwell Strawberry Festival Queen Competition, just do it!

Even if you're unsure or nervous; this experience is far more about who you become than whether you walk away with the crown. It's a safe place to try new things, build character, and discover strengths you didn't know you had, so focus on growth over outcome: the real prize is the confidence, poise, and resilience you develop along the way. You'll learn responsibility, integrity, and how to represent something bigger than yourself, and you'll meet peers, mentors, and neighbours who support you long after the competition ends. Personally, the goal for me was not to win or be crowned, my goal was to just try new things and push myself out of my comfort zone. So treat every rehearsal, interview, and speech as practice for life skills, be authentically yourself, and go in wanting to learn, serve, and grow; crown or no crown, you'll leave that stage way stronger, braver, and more ready to spread your wings!



Stilwell Strawberry Jr. Royalty Competition

Sponsored by



Jr. Queen Court, from left to right: Mila Ward 2nd Runner-up, Jr. Queen Madison Long, Blakely Lundberg, 1st Runner-up.



Jr. Princess Court, from left to right: Harper Merchant 1st Runner-up, Kelsey Sanders Jr. Princess, and Trinity Cunningham 2nd Runner-up.



Pick of the Patch Award in Honor of Andrea Longshore winner Jabrie Leach.



Princess Court, from left to right: Alivia Davis 2nd Runner-up, Jabrie Leach Princess, and Mila Decker 1st Runner-up.



Peoples Choice Lila Harrison



Enjoy the Stilwell Strawberry Festival

Strawberry Queen _____ and Her Court

Queen Nathalie Martinez

Nathalie Martinez is the 16-year-old daughter of Ricardo & Maria Martinez of Westville, Oklahoma. She is a Junior at Westville High School and is Chapter and District President of FCCLA, involved in FCA, did the Christmas play with Junior Drama, Prom Committee, and on the girls powerlifting and track & field teams. Outside of school she advocates for Citizens Caring for Children (CCC) as well as the Pearl House in Africa, helping to raise donations for both. She attends TOP Church and Impact Church, both of Westville. She loves lifting and constantly getting stronger, however, may be one of the girliest girls you'll meet. She loves doing makeup, getting dressed up, hanging out with friends and making memories. She has experience in child care and is also currently a brand ambassador for a fitness brand called Vital Apparel. Future plans include college after graduation, then Law School to become an attorney to give people a voice, know what it's like not to be heard. Nathalie is running for Strawberry Festival Queen for the opportunities, experience, and memories.



1st Runner-up Emma Sam



Emma Sam is the 17-year-old daughter of Vanessa Guevara of Stilwell, Oklahoma. She is a Senior at Stilwell High School and currently serves as the Student Council President, in Media Club, Yearbook, Varsity Volleyball, Varsity Soccer, Varsity Cheer, as Football Manager, and on the Arvest Junior Board. Outside of school she owns and operates a photography business, coaches “Little Kickers” soccer, and has an internship with the 55 Performance Factory. Emma is a member of New Life Church and enjoys writing poetry, arts and crafts, as well as hanging out with friends. Her future plans include attending the University of Oklahoma to study Communications and hopes to work in Sports Marketing and Photography. She is running for Strawberry Festival Queen to step out of her comfort zone, try something new, and make fun memories.



2nd Runner-up Allie Harrison

Allie Harrison is the 18-year-old daughter of Sean & Sarah Clark of Westville, Oklahoma. She is a Senior at Westville High School and is an active member of the National Honor Society, Yellowjacket Stem Club, 4-H, and currently serves as Secretary of Westville HS FFA. Allie spends most of her time working with her Showstock and serves as President of the Adair County Junior Fair Board, President of the Adair County Rabbit / Poultry Club, Member of Carson Community Bank Junior Board, and Member of the Adair County Sheep & Goat Club. She is passionate about agriculture, and plans to major in Poultry Science at the University of Arkansas in the fall. Allie is running for Strawberry Festival Queen to push herself out of her comfort zone, test her limits, and involve herself in the community in a new way.



Miss Congeniality Award winner Savannah Cunningham.



People's Choice Award winner Allie Harrison.



Former Strawberry Queens

1948 Patsy Reed
 1949 Patsy Prock
 1950 Carline Emerson
 1951 Patsy Lee
 1952 Norma Lee Latta
 1953 Delores Steddum
 1954 Barbara Caviness
 1955 Bessie Phelps
 1956 Annetta Johnson
 1957 Mary Jane Cabe
 1958 Delois Nofire
 1959 Monaray Stanfill
 1960 Shirley Tate
 1961 Deveryl Butler
 1962 Marilyn Todd
 1963 Sandy J. Goodall
 1964 Deanna Briggs
 1965 Calene Green
 1966 Rita Kay Carson
 1967 Karen Nichols
 1968 Carolyn Carson
 1969 Beverly Green
 1970 Margaret Couch
 1971 Donna Padgett
 1972 Kathy Rosebeary
 1973 Lydia Lewis
 1974 Nina Reagon
 1975 Karen Baublitz
 1976 Dalana Hudgins
 1977 Tammy Smothers
 1978 Betsy Cox
 1979 Donna Terrell
 1980 Vicki Guthrie
 1981 Stephanie Goodall
 1982 Monica Martinez
 1983 Brenda Lawrence
 1984 Shellie Cureton
 1985 Cheryl Tackett
 1986 Charlene Green



1956 Annetta Johnson



1966 Rita Kay Carson



1976 Dalana Hudgins



1986 Charlene Green

1987 Stephanie Cain
 1988 Jamie Johnson
 1989 Angela Brewster
 1990 Angela Ross
 1991 Sky Hume
 1992 Rachelle Ritchie
 1993 LaNetta S. Green
 1994 Michelle Clifton
 1995 Nikki Knight
 1996 Jamie Talyor
 1997 Sarah Cox
 1998 Kristy Marlin
 1999 Sarae Janes
 2000 Crystal Dooley
 2001 Susan Hill
 2002 Breanna Walker
 2003 Laura Ketcher
 2004 Leslie Ketcher
 2005 Megan Eubanks
 2006 Holly Crittenden
 2007 Charbrice Rhea
 2008 Tawnie Goodwin
 2009 Jessika Baird
 2010 Whitney Reece
 2011 Hanna Kindle
 2012 Tori Coates
 2013 Jessica Simmons
 2014 Summer Taylor
 2015 Lauren Lawrence
 2016 Emily Christie
 2017 Cheyenne McCrary
 2018 Chloe Brown
 2019 Sydney Ritter
 2020 Gabby Guthrie
 2021 Molly Helm
 2022 Kelsey Berry
 2023 Adrian Gaches
 2024 Lily Ritter
 2025 Karlee Jo Ingram



1996 Jamie Talyor



2006 Holly Crittenden



2016 Emily Christie



2025 Karlee Jo Ingram

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OVER \$44 MILLION IN 2025!

*TOTAL SALES VOLUME OF AGENTS SHOWN



The Flint Courthouse, A Vital Piece of Adair County History



Over a hundred and fifty years ago, the original Flint Courthouse sat not so very far from where this pictured replica courthouse sits today—about a mile north of Dahlongah School. The following is a short history of this important structure.

When the last of the Cherokee emigrants arrived via the forced removal in 1839, they quickly began organizing their section of Indian Territory into nine districts. Two of these districts lay in what would become Adair County: Goingsnake and Flint.

In the early 1840s, these Cherokee settlers built a rough, cabin-like courthouse in each of the districts. The Flint Courthouse

was built close to Sallisaw Creek and was a good place for the Cherokees to settle. Soon a small town developed close to the courthouse, and the Flint Post Office was established on August 1, 1846, with Walter Scott Adair being appointed as the first post master. In later years, the town was called Mays, and it grew to include several businesses, including those owned by Harrison Paden, W.N. Littlejohn, B.G. Fletcher, Ellis Starr, Pole Hannah, George Taylor, Baxter Choate, and John Houseberg. In addition to these establishments, the Flint Masonic Lodge was established there in 1853.

No one knows what happened to the original Flint Courthouse, but it, along with most of the original district courthouses, was replaced by a large, white, two-story frame building in the 1880s. This courthouse was torn down sometime before statehood. It is said that the materials from the second courthouse were used in various building projects in the newly formed town of Stilwell. A bench from this second courthouse is featured in the Adair County Historical and Genealogical Association (ACH&GA) Kansas City Southern Depot Museum.

In 1977, the Adair County Historical Society received \$15,000 from the Oklahoma State Legislature to build a memorial structure of the first Flint Courthouse near its original location. Today, our local history group, ACH&GA, includes the replica courthouse in their guided tour of historic sites of Adair County.

*By Regina McLemore,
ACH&GA President*

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District 1

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County.”*



Galatians 5:22-23

79TH ANNUAL STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

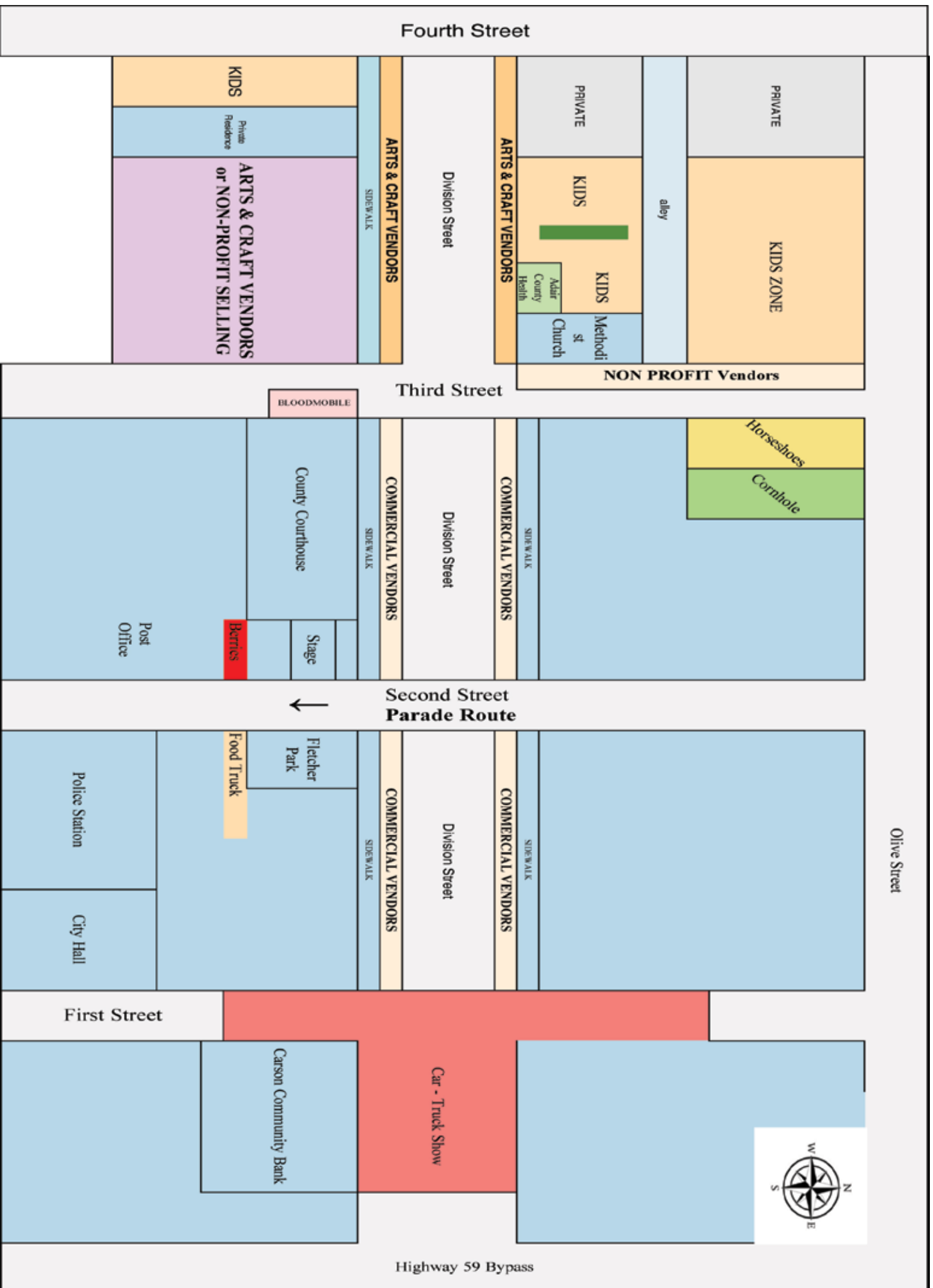
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STILWELL STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

Bike Show

Hospitality provided by CMA Christ Messengers

Registration 8-11 A.M.  Winners 1 P.M.

05.9.2026

Meeting point at
Corner of First St. & Division

Registration
8-11 A.M.
Winners Announced
1 p.m.

- CATEGORIES**
- Best American
 - Best Metric
 - Garage Build
 - Best Trike
 - Best of Show
 - Queen's Choice
 - Best Bicycle (12 & Under)

No entry fee.
For more information, call 918-575-2846.

L&L ENTERTAINMENT CARNIVAL

ARMBAND PRICES



- WEDNESDAY** (May 6)
6:00pm - 10:00pm
ARMBAND: **\$30**
- THURSDAY** (May 7)
6:00pm - 10:00pm
ARMBAND: **\$30**
- FRIDAY** (May 8)
5:00pm - 11:00pm
ARMBAND: **\$35**
- SATURDAY** (May 9)
FAMILY DAY
12:00PM - 4:00PM
ARMBAND: **ONLY \$25**
- SATURDAY** (May 9)
6:00pm - 11:00pm
ARMBAND: **\$35**

\$2.00
Individual Tickets

Located adjacent to the Adair County
Fair Grounds & Adair Park

Presented By: **Stilwell Kiwanis**
strawberrycapital.com



Strawberry Festival Car Show

Saturday, May 9

8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Registration starts at 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Entry fee: \$20 per vehicle

Awards at 3:00 p.m.
Best of Show, Queen's Choice, Mayor's Choice
Top 50 cars and trucks
50/50 pot, door prizes

Located on First and Division St. just off of Hwy 59
For info, text George at 918-316-5176 or Derek at 918-575-5236
or contact us on Facebook at Native Warriors Auto Club.

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&
THE CITY OF STILWELL
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STILWELL'S Got Talent

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DIVISION & 2ND ST

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- 2ND PLACE - \$500.00
- 3RD PLACE - \$400.00
- 4TH PLACE - \$300.00
- 5TH PLACE - \$200.00
- 6TH PLACE - \$100.00

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WWW.STRAWBERRYPARTICIPAL.COM. THEY WILL BE
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APRIL 24, 2026 TO TRACY SIMS AT CARSON
COMMUNITY BANK, 24 WEST DIVISION STREET.
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(CD OR FLASH DRIVE) WILL NEED TO TURNED IN
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79th ANNUAL STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

www.strawberrycapital.com

Wednesday, May 6, 2026

6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. - **Carnival** – Adair Park

Thursday, May 7, 2026

6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. - **Carnival** – Adair Park

6:30 p.m. - **Strawberry Jam** - Southern Gospel Singing - Stilwell Grade School Gym

8:00 p.m. - **The Strawberry Festival Rodeo** – SLACK - Sponsored by Stilwell Roundup Club at Rodeo Grounds – North of Stilwell Hwy 59 North

Friday, May 8, 2026

Division Street between 1st - 4th will close at noon.
2nd Street between Division and Olive will close at noon.
Vendors may start setting up as soon as they check in at noon in front of Courthouse at Kiwanis table

5:00 p.m. - **Live Entertainment** on Kiwanis Stage: Local Artists

5:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m. - **Carnival** – Adair Park

6:00 p.m. - **5th Annual Stilwell's Got Talent** on Kiwanis Stage
More live entertainment from local artists following the talent contest

Cornhole contest at Third and Olive (Singles) check in at contest site

8:00 p.m. - **The Strawberry Festival Rodeo**, Sponsored by Stilwell Roundup Club at Rodeo Grounds – North of Stilwell Hwy 59 North

Saturday, May 9, 2026 – ALL DAY EVENTS --

Over 100 Spaces for Arts & Crafts, Food and Merchandise Vendors

Second Street closed (from north end to Hwy 100 West)

Division Street closed (from First Street to Fourth Street)

NO THRU TRAFFIC

7:00 a.m. - **Fun Run** – see Kiwanis website for entry form check in at Carson Park

7:30 a.m. - **5-K Run for the Berries** – see Kiwanis website for entry form, check in at Carson Park



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Kiwanis
CLUB OF STILWELL

79th ANNUAL STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

www.strawberrycapital.com



8:00 – 9:45 a.m. - Parade check-in – Intersection of Clevenger Street and Second Street – by Taco Bell

8:00 – 9:25 a.m. - Live Entertainment by the Stilwell Performing Arts – Kiwanis Stage

8:00 - 11:00 a.m. - Registration for Motorcycle and Car Show on First & Division Street

9:40 – 10:00 a.m. - Live Entertainment 1st – 3rd place winners of Stilwell's Got Talent – Kiwanis Stage

10:00 a.m. - Check in Farm Berries at Kiwanis Stage
- Horseshoe Throwing Contest at Third and Olive
- Cornhole Contest at Third and Olive (Doubles)

10:00 a.m. Strawberry Festival Parade along Second Street (north to south) **CITY ORDINANCE – NO THROWING OF ANY OBJECTS FROM ANY PARADE ENTRY – VIOLATORS MAY BE CITED.**

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING PARADE - Presentation of the 2026 Strawberry Festival Queen & Court. Announcement of Parade Winners

12:00 - 4:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m. Carnival at Adair Park

10:30 a.m. - Judging of Farm Berries on Kiwanis Stage

11:30 p.m. - 1:00p.m. - Check in for Youth Club Berries at Kiwanis Stage. Judging immediately following judging of Farm Berries

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 - Live Entertainment on Kiwanis Stage – **Two Bullets**

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. – Berry Auction on the Kiwanis Stage

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. - Live Entertainment on Kiwanis Stage – **Vince Turner Band** (immediately following their berry auction)

3:30 p.m. - Free Strawberries & Ice Cream - on 2nd Street, Courtesy of the **Stilwell Kiwanis**

4:30 p.m. - Streets will re-open

8:00 p.m. – Stilwell Strawberry Festival Rodeo sponsored by Stilwell Roundup Club at the Rodeo Grounds – North of Stilwell on Hwy. 59 North.



Kiwanis
CLUB OF STILWELL



2025

Strawberry Growers Memorial Youth Club Contest

The fifth annual Strawberry Growers Youth Contest was held at the 2025 Strawberry Festival. The idea of this contest is to promote future generations of strawberry farmers. The Adair County Strawberry Growers Association are constantly exploring ways to raise public awareness of the impact they have on our community and state.



1st Place-Zion 4-H



2nd Place-Stilwell Elem. 4-H



3rd Place-Westville 4-H



1st Place

2025 Strawberry Festival Auction Winners



Placing	Grower	Buyer	Amount
1	Juan Navarro	Mt. View	\$4000
2	David Guevara	Mt. View	\$3000
3	Miller Farms-Bryce Miller	Armstrong	\$4000
4	Doyle Country Gardens-Otoniel Barrera	Keller Williams	\$1500
5	Miller Farms-Mason O'Neal	Cherokee Nation	\$4000
6	Inmer Garcia	Oklahoma Ag Credit	\$2000
7	Doyle Farms	Carson Community Bank	\$3750
TOTAL			\$22,250



2nd Place



3rd Place



4th Place



5th Place

Stilwell Kansas City Southern Railway Depot



Built in 1915, the Stilwell Kansas City Southern Railway Depot served the community as a passenger and shipping terminal until its closure in 1971. Restored during the winter of 2003-04, the iconic building now serves as the home of the Adair County Historical & Genealogical Association and the Stilwell Area Chamber of Commerce. In 2015, the National Parks Service listed the Stilwell Depot on the national Register of Historic Places. The Depot is open Tuesday through Friday, from 10 am to 4 p.m., at which time volunteers are available to help visitors with their history and research questions. They also conduct free tours of the Depot Museum, which features artifacts and displays from the Indian Territory, early statehood, and post statehood eras. Periodically, volunteers provide educational history programs and tours for the children of Adair County. In addition to the large Depot meeting room, ACH&GA now offers a larger meeting room for groups to use. In the fall of 2025, Cherokee Nation opened their Stilwell Community Building on 708 W. Blackjack under the administration of ACH&GA's volunteers. This new building is currently being utilized for cultural classes and ACH&GA membership meetings and contains a climate-controlled archives room. It also functions as a meeting place and event venue for individuals and organizations. The Stilwell Chamber of Commerce meets at the Cherokee Stilwell Community Building at noon on the first Wednesday of each month.

Adair County Historical & Genealogical Association
 83065 Highway 59, Stilwell, OK 74960
 918-410-0789
 Email: adaircountyhistory@gmail.com

Champion Strawberry Growers For the Last Decade

<u>Year</u>	<u>Grower</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Buyer</u>
2016	Bobby & Jane Doyle	\$2,800	Cherokee Nation
2017	David Guevara	\$2,000	Cherokee Nation
2018	Josh Lo	\$2,700	Cherokee Nation
2019	Burl Doyle	\$2,750	Mtn. View Meat Company
2020	Juan Navarro	\$1,800	Carson Community Bank
2021	Navarro Farms	\$3,100	Mtn. View Meat Company
2022	Miller Farms	\$3,900	Mtn. View Meat Company
2023	Doyle Country Gardens	\$1,750	Mtn. View Meat Company
2024	Steve Trammell	\$2,000	Carson Community Bank
2025	Juan Navarro	\$4,000	Mtn. View Meat Company



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 James Smith

Legacy of Service: 1989 Strawberry Festival Queen Angela Kohl

Growing up in Stilwell, the annual Strawberry Festival has long been a cherished tradition. For many young girls, watching the Strawberry Festival Queen ride through town in the parade and later be crowned on the bandstand represents elegance, achievement, and community pride. For one Stilwell native, Angela Ross Kohl, that dream took root early, nurtured by years of attending the festival and gathering with relatives from across Adair County and family members who traveled in from out of state for the special weekend.

By her junior year at Stilwell High School, entering the Strawberry Festival Queen contest felt like a natural next step. She had grown up performing, singing solos in the school choir from her early days at Zion through her high school years at Stilwell. Music had always been a source of confidence, so selecting a vocal solo for the talent portion of the competition was an easy decision.

The day of the contest was filled with anticipation and support. That morning, she traveled to Fayetteville to have her makeup professionally applied by a former Miss Arkansas contestant with pageantry experience. Though the stage makeup initially felt dramatic, it was carefully designed for the bright lights of competition. That evening, the event was held in the Stilwell High School gymnasium, transformed into a formal stage for the occasion. Family members played important roles behind the scenes. Her cousin styled her hair, and a close family friend assisted backstage with outfit coordination and encouragement so her parents could fully enjoy the event from the audience.

For the talent presentation, she performed the song, Everything, a Top 40 hit by Jody Watley that suited her vocal range and style. During the interview portion of the contest, she remembers being asked how she intended to repay her parents for their support. Her answer was both confident and heartfelt: while she could never fully repay them for helping her



Angela Kohl

pursue her dream, she would always strive to make them proud.

When her name was announced as the winner, the celebration was immediate and unforgettable. Her family excitedly made their way toward the stage, and both parents beamed with pride. She was crowned by the previous year's queen, Angela Brewster, a family friend, which

made the moment even more meaningful. Receiving the sash, bouquet, and tiara marked the beginning of a year filled with both opportunity and responsibility.

As Strawberry Festival Queen, she participated in television commercials and news segments promoting Stilwell Foods and the festival, appearing on Tulsa news channels. She represented the community in additional parades and public events and visited local businesses that generously presented the queen with gift certificates, merchandise, savings bonds, and other tokens of support. Among the honors was a scholarship to Northeastern State University, which later helped cover a semester of tuition.

During high school, she worked at Mr. B's Pizza, where she formed lasting friendships and observed strong leadership and management practices that would influence her own professional approach. After graduation, she enrolled at Northeastern State University, earning both her bachelor's and master's degrees in education.

Her career began in career and technical education, where she taught night classes at Stilwell Indian Capital Technology Center (ICTC) and worked as an evening Adult Career Development Receptionist. Following her internship in the Business

program, she was hired as a part-time co-instructor. Soon after, she accepted a full-time business and computer teaching position at Stilwell High School, where she served for more than a decade.

She later returned to Indian Capital Technology Center to teach Business Computer Technology, expanding course offerings to include medical coding and medical office assistant training. These programs strengthened the workforce pipeline in Adair County and surrounding communities by preparing students for both administrative and healthcare support roles. One of the most rewarding aspects of teaching in the Career Technology system, according to Angela, was witnessing immediate results: students earning promotions, securing sustainable employment, and improving their families' financial stability within her community.



Angela was also honored with the opportunity to address the House of Representatives at the State Capitol, where she shared highlights from her reign as queen and celebrated the traditions of the Strawberry Festival. The moment was both thrilling and humbling, offering an exciting glimpse into the responsibilities and impact of her role.

In 2015, she transitioned to the Muskogee Campus of ICTC, where she served in the Instructional Services Department. There, she worked in curriculum design and as an instructional coach, mentoring industry professionals who were new to teaching and equipping them with classroom management and instructional strategies. Her responsibilities included writing grants, developing cooperative agreements with colleges, facilitating student enrollment in colleges, submitting curriculum for state

approval, researching new programs, and assisting with accreditation processes.

After three years, she moved into administration as the Assistant Campus Director of the Muskogee Campus, overseeing transportation, discipline, facility operations, and campus safety, while supporting the Campus Director. In 2021, she achieved a long-held professional goal when she was selected to serve as Campus Director.

That same year brought profound personal tragedy with the loss of her 20-year-old son in an automobile

accident. He had previously been a student in the Precision Machining program at the Muskogee Campus. In his honor, she and her family established a scholarship to assist students nearing completion of their programs. The scholarship provides funding for tools, certifications, protective equipment, and other essential resources to support a transition into the workforce. Multiple students have benefited from this support, extending his legacy through opportunity and hope.

Angela remains active in community leadership initiatives and service organizations while continuing her work in education. Residing at Lake Tenkiller with her husband, Michael, since 2017, she values time spent with family above all else and treasures her role as Nangie to her grandchildren. Recently, she completed a doctoral degree in K-12 administration, fulfilling a significant professional milestone. She also honors the memory of her brother, a lifelong supporter whose encouragement spanned from her pageant days to her academic achievements.

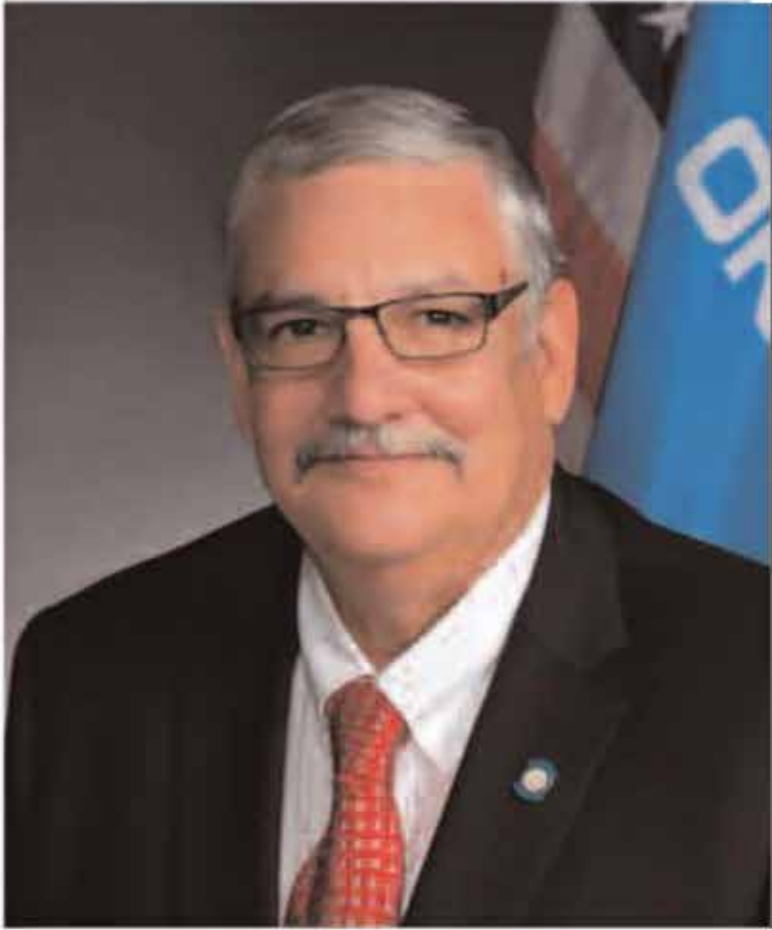
Being selected as a Legacy Queen is both a humbling honor and a full-circle moment. Stilwell and Adair County remain places rich in opportunity, support, and community pride. The educational resources, work experiences, and encouragement found there laid the foundation for a life devoted to service and leadership.

Her message to the young people of Stilwell is one of empowerment: do not limit your dreams. Be proactive. Seek guidance and use the resources around you. Take pride in your community and represent it with integrity wherever life leads.



1989 Strawberry Festival Queen Angela Kohl

House of Representatives
David Hardin
State Representative
House District 86



Home:
472450 E. 790 Rd.,
Stilwell, Ok 74960
918-507-2811
david.hardin@okhouse.gov



Capitol:
2300 N. Lincoln Blvd., Rm 502
Oklahoma City, Ok 73105
405-557-7394

**Welcome to the Stilwell
Strawberry Festival!**

Oklahoma State Senator
Tom Woods
District 4



Capitol:
2300 N. Lincoln Blvd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73105
405-521-5576
Tom.Woods@oksenate.gov

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Festival!**

WELCOME TO THE 79TH STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL



PICTURED ABOVE

Back Row (Left to Right): Alan Starr - Comm. Dist. 2, Charles Boecher - Comm. Dist. 1, Larry Wood - Comm. Dist. 3,
Timothy Fishinghawk - County Clerk, Jason Ritchie - Sheriff.

Front Row (Left to Right) : Nichole Cooper - Court Clerk, Ann Bishop - Treasurer, Liz Brown - Associate District Judge



Mayor: Jean Ann Wright

**City Council Members: Lane Kindle, Debbie Johnson,
Jim Spray, Barrett Harris and Coye Nettles**

City Attorney: Jeff Jones

City Clerk Treasurer: Larry Nettles

Director of Community Development: Ross Johnson

Director of Public Relations and Media: Renee Fite

Municipal Works: Dale Dandridge

Police Chief: Chad Smith

Fire Chief: Charley Coombes

Parks Director: Matt Cochran

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Saturday Afternoon

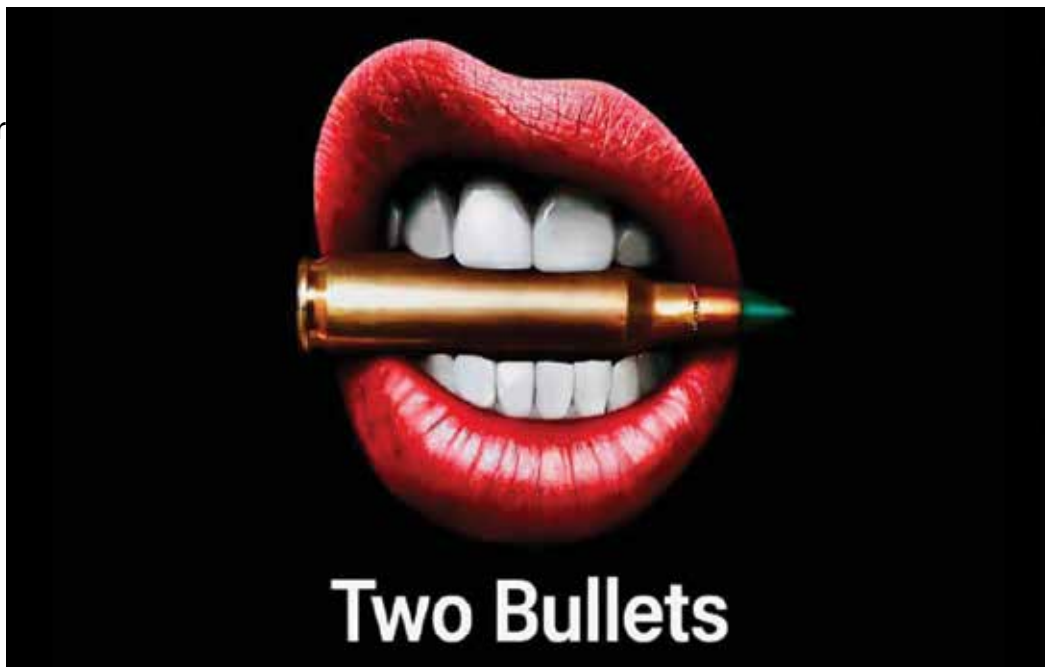
Featured Entertainment

2 Bullets

2 Bullets is a high-energy live band fronted by husband-and-wife duo Jennifer and Grant Nesbit, delivering powerhouse vocals, seasoned musicianship, and an unforgettable stage presence across every performance. For this special full-band show, 2 Bullets brings an expanded sound and dynamic live experience that elevates their signature style to a full concert production.

Jennifer Nesbit commands the stage with soaring, emotionally charged vocals that rival today's top country and pop artists. A lifelong performer, Jennifer's voice blends strength, warmth, and precision — equally at home on intimate ballads and arena-level anthems. Her commanding delivery, range, and natural connection with audiences make her a standout frontwoman wherever she performs.

Grant Nesbit, former lead singer of the touring rock band Uttermost, spent over two decades performing across the U.S. and internationally — from major venues and festivals to schools, prisons, and international stages including South America. Known for his powerful tone, commanding presence, and ability to engage any crowd, Grant brings a rare blend of rock authenticity and polished showmanship developed through thousands of live performances worldwide.



Together with their full band, 2 Bullets delivers a genre-spanning live show covering the biggest hits from the '80s, '90s, 2000s, and today — country, pop, rock, grunge, and crowd-favorite classics — all performed with powerful vocals, tight musicianship, and high-energy delivery that keeps audiences singing along from the first song to the last encore.

Grant Nesbit

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/grant-nesbit-b881a176>

granttnesbit@gmail.com

479-739-6678

Vince Turner

Vince Turner, has been a professional musician for 40 plus years. He formed his band Rackensak, with James Miller & Kevin Bonner in 2017 and they play all over the tri-state area. Vince is the son of the late Jay and Helen Turner, long time residents of Stilwell. Vince was born and raised here and is currently living in Fairfield.



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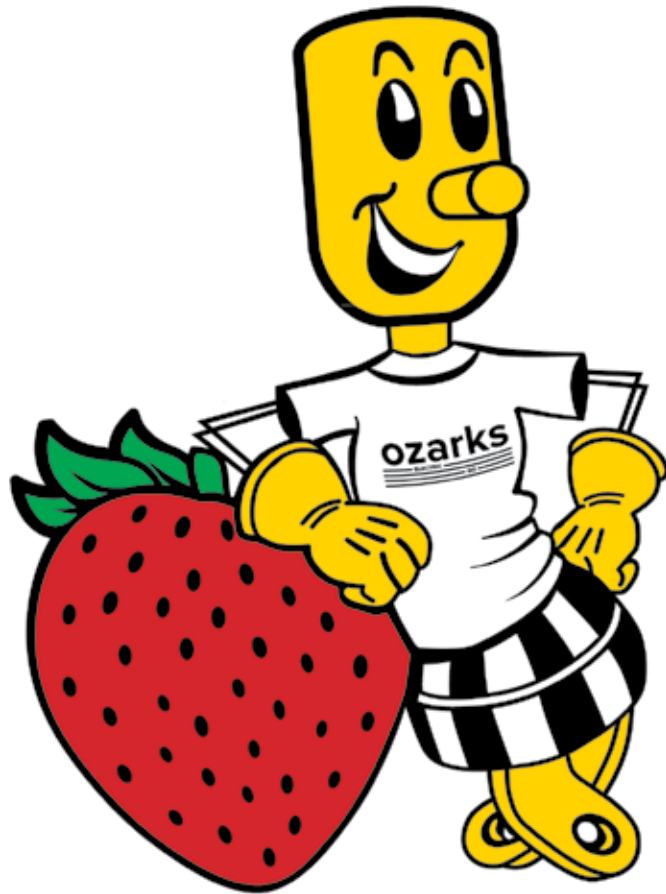


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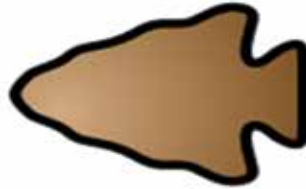
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Shawn Crittenden, 1992 graduate of Stilwell High school, will always tell you he is most proud of being a husband to Kristina, a dad to Lacy, Wes, Jenna, and Sam. He was raised in Peavine by his parents Paul Crittenden and the late Debbie Crittenden. Shawn has always been proud of that close, four member Peavine family that included big sister Leta. In 1993 Shawn enrolled at Northeastern State University. He quickly discovered a music store in downtown Tahlequah where old men would set up with guitars, fiddles, mandolins, and play all day. Shawn spent his lunch hours there, then skipped a few classes here and there to keep playing, and eventually the only classes he was taking for the rest of the semester was in that little room in the back, taught by some of the best local musicians around. Shawn says he doesn't regret that, wouldn't advise it, but doesn't regret it. Shawn worked several jobs, Tyson, Stilwell Foods,

convenient stores, construction, several others, just making enough to pursue music. Over the years Shawn would take a couple of classes at NSU here and there, passed some, still eyeing a music career. Fast forward through a whole lot of living, learning, and life, it was during these times Shawn started developing and recognizing his love and some talent for helping people. Shawn began utilizing his music skills to coordinate benefits for community members going through hard times. In 2003 Shawn met Kristina Been from Henryetta at NSU's country music summer show, turned on the charm, proposed on stage, and 22 years later Shawn will tell you that was the best use of charm ever. Kristina, undoubtedly, Shawn will tell you, is the rock, base, strength, and talent of the pair. Kristina encouraged Shawn to finish his elemen-



tary education degree and in 2007 he did. Together and with the help of longtime friend the late John R. Sellers, teaching Shawn some auctioneering, Shawn and Kris have been proud to host and be a part of several grass root benefits for their community. Shawn taught for 15 years earning two teacher of the year awards. Shawn took pride in his teaching and getting to know families in and out of the classroom. Shawn for years had been proud of his uncle Joe Crittenden, always serving, in particular his role as a Cherokee Nation councilman. The opportunity arose with inspiration and advice from Uncle Joe, and the humbling support of community members, Shawn ran and won what would turn out to be a 2 term seat at the Cherokee Nation Tribal Council table where Shawn was immersed in all things community and had the rewarding job of simply being a part of helping people. Shawn gives special credit to Chuck Hoskin Jr, Bryan Warner, Canaan Duncan, Josh Sam and the late Frankie Hargis for the close-knit working relationship that was formed from like-hearted people who had the same goal of at the time, helping Adair County Cherokees and the county as a whole. Shawn currently is the Executive Director of Cherokee Nation Gadugi Corps which allows him to continue to work closely with lots of people and several communities with that same goal of working together to help. Shawn also currently serves on the Peavine School Board, where he attended K-8, worked as a custodian, taught and coached. Shawn is ever mindful and thankful that he is a whosoever!



Ramona Ketcher, a 1980 graduate of Stilwell High School and a 1986 graduate of Northeastern State

University (NSU), has devoted more than four decades to the field of education. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and later completed a Master's degree in School Administration and Reading from NSU, laying the foundation for a lifelong commitment to serving students, schools, and communities.

With 40 years in education, Ramona has served in a variety of impactful roles across the K-12 spectrum. Her career includes teaching students from kindergarten through 12th grade, including work in alternative education, where she demonstrated a deep commitment to meeting the needs of every learner. She has also served as an assistant principal and principal, providing strong leadership and mentorship to both students and educators. Today, she continues to shape the future of education as the Superintendent

of Cherokee Immersion Charter Schools.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Ramona is an active member of Alpha Delta Kappa, an international honorary organization for women educators, where she currently serves as Vice President-Elect of the ADK NU Chapter. She is also a dedicated member of First Baptist Church.

Family is at the heart of Ramona's life. She and her husband, RD Ketcher, enjoy life on their farm, where she finds joy in sewing and spending time with family. She is the proud mother of two daughters, Laura Lundberg and Leslie Hughes, and the delighted grandmother of seven grandchildren, whom she considers the greatest blessings. Through her service, leadership, and unwavering dedication to education, Ramona Ketcher exemplifies the spirit and impact of an outstanding SHS alumna.



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RACE DETAILS:

Saturday, May 9, 2026

In-person 5K starts at 7:30 a.m.

In-person 1K Fun Run starts at 7 a.m.

Race day registration and packet pick-up: 6:00 a.m.

Packet pick up will end at 7:15 a.m.

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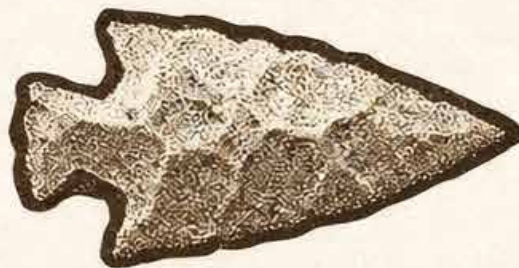
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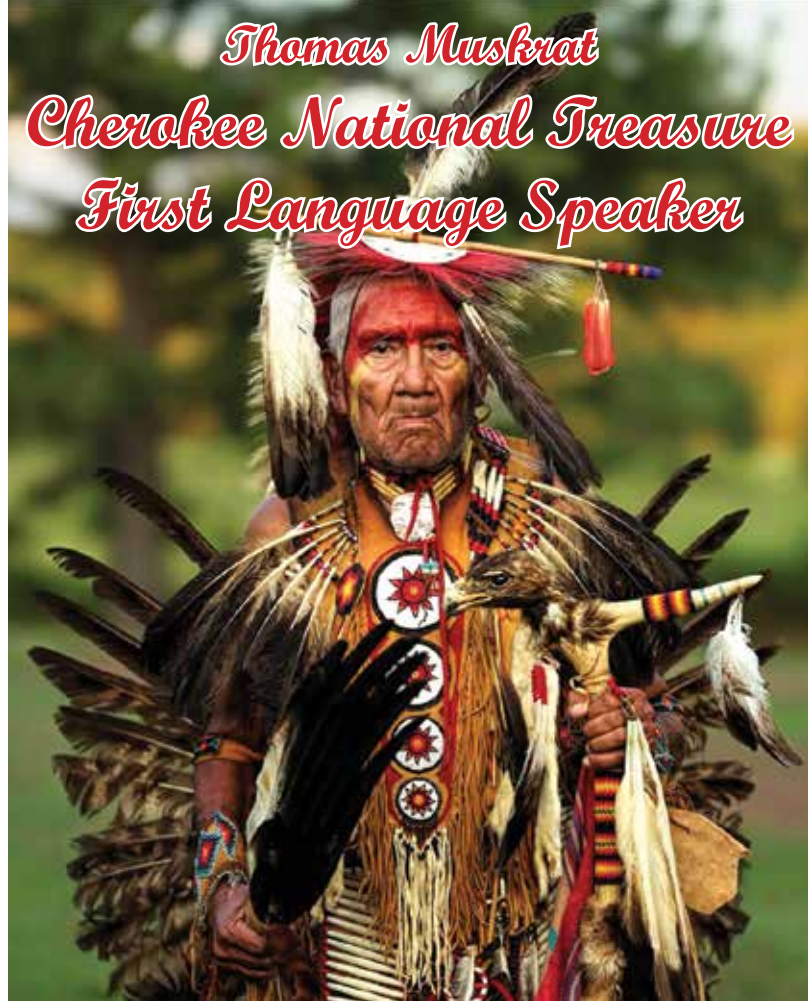
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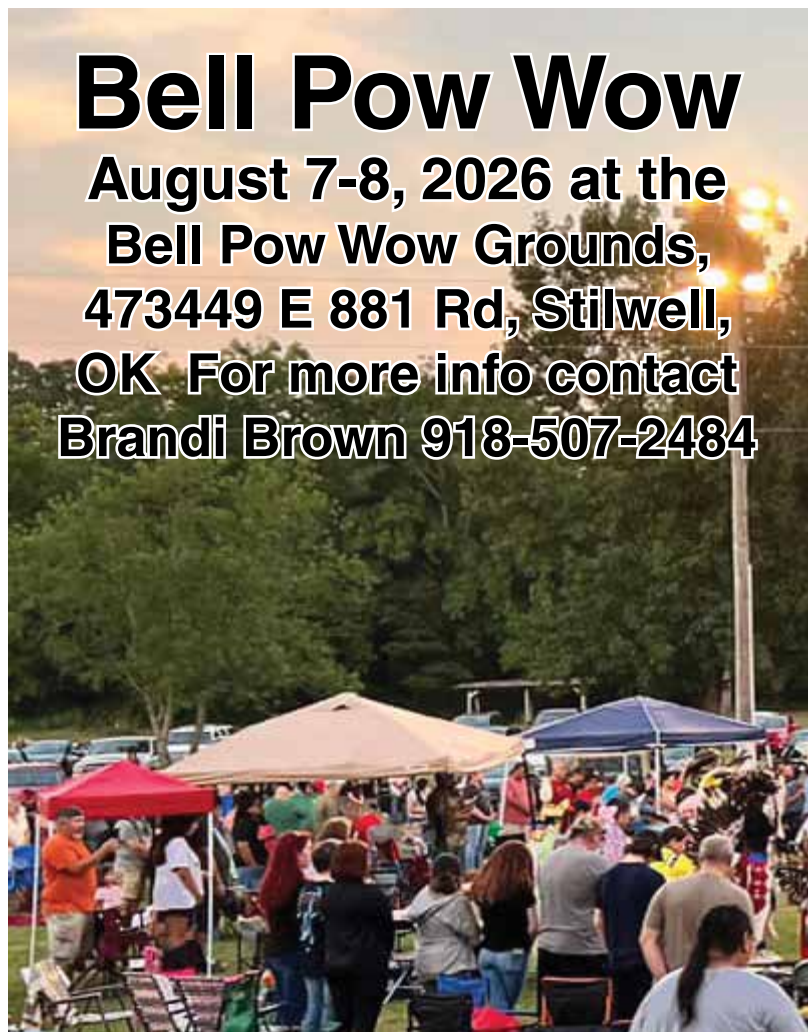
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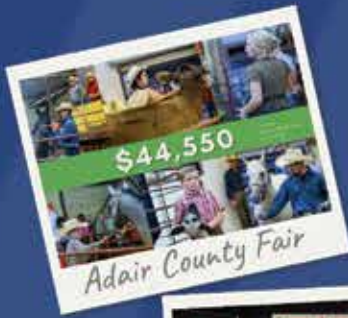
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