



Kanza News

January 2025





letter from the *Chair*

2025 is here! Happy New Year everyone! According to the persimmon seeds that we have opened here in Kaw City, it was a knife and spoon. So, it looks like we are in store for a cold, icy winter with snow! So be sure to be ready and have a plan for that upcoming weather, and most of all, stay warm! As we kick off the new year, I encourage our tribal citizens to visit our website, explore the boards and committees, and consider joining one or even two of them.

The Tribal Council has been working diligently to ensure that all our ARPA funding is either closed out or allocated to projects planned for completion by 2026. This process had to be finalized by December 31, 2024.

We are currently working on the addition of six new rooms to the Kanza Clinic, for behavioral health services. The Union Street property (Kaw Nation Resource Center) is on track to be completed in February. Once finished it will house several departments, including Child Support Services,

with an estimated completion timeline of eight months. Additionally, the remodel of the old Braman bank building to house the Kaw Nation Gaming Commission has been completed and they have officially moved in!

The plan of transforming the One Stop property into a Distribution Center for vegetables and plants along with the reintroduction of the laundromat will soon begin. This presents a great opportunity for the community and Kaw citizens to be able to have a variety of fresh food available to them while also having access to be able to wash clothes to keep a healthy home.

It was wonderful to see everyone who was able to attend the annual Christmas party. It's always so heartwarming to watch the children's faces light up when Santa Claus arrives!

In closing, I'd like to wish everyone a healthy, strong and great start to this New Year! Prayers and blessings to you all!

Wiblahan,

-Kimberly Jenkins

Domestic Violence, Kaw Nation Education Services(477), Veterans Affairs, Injury Prevention, and ICW. The greenhouse project in Kaw City is set to break ground by late January, weather permitting,

REBRANDING FOR GROWTH: KHDD EVOLVES INTO KAW NATION EDUCATION SERVICES

The Kanza Human Development Division (KHDD) of Kaw Nation is set to undergo a significant transformation in the coming year. Effective January 1, 2025, KHDD will officially be renamed Kaw Nation Education Services (KNES). This change reflects a broader vision for the department and better encapsulates the wide range of educational and developmental programs it oversees.

The transition to KNES signifies more than just a name change; it represents an expansion of services and a renewed focus on comprehensive educational support for Kaw Citizens. As part of this restructuring, Kaw Nation's Tribal Youth Program will be brought under the KNES umbrella, consolidating youth-oriented initiatives within a single, cohesive department. This integration will allow for more streamlined and effective programming for young citizens.

In addition to incorporating existing programs, KNES will introduce several new initiatives to further support the educational and personal development of Tribal Citizens. These include a Senior Picture Project, which will help high school seniors capture this important milestone, as well as a Summer Book Club to promote literacy and cultural engagement.

Looking ahead, KNES is poised for further growth and development. One prospect on the horizon is the potential establishment of a workforce development program. This initiative would build upon the department's existing efforts

to provide education and training opportunities, further equipping participants with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in today's job market.

The transition from KHDD to KNES represents a strategic move to align the department's name with its comprehensive range of services. By encompassing education at all levels - from pre-school to workforce development - KNES will be better positioned to serve the diverse needs of the Kaw Nation community. This holistic approach to education and development underscores the Kaw Nation's commitment to nurturing growth and success from cradle to career.



Safeguarding Our Future

KNED's Commitment to Natural Resource Protection



KNED Director - Emily Douglas

The Kaw Nation Environmental Department (KNED), established in 1996, plays a pivotal role in preserving and enhancing the natural resources of Kaw Nation. With a mission focused on safeguarding the environment for the benefit of the Kaw people and their descendants, KNED is led by Emily Douglas, whose personal history is deeply intertwined with the department's objectives.

Emily Douglas draws inspiration from her late mother, Crystal Douglas, who dedicated 25 years to preserving the cultural heritage of the Kaw Nation as the director of the Kanza Museum and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer. Crystal's commitment to environmental stewardship and her work with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) profoundly influenced Emily's career path. From attending powwows with her mother to participating in ground radar operations, these formative experiences shaped Emily's passion for environmental protection, leading her to minor in Archaeology and engage in significant projects within KNED.

A cornerstone of KNED's mission is water quality protection. The department actively monitors and manages water resources, particularly focusing on Kaw Lake, which serves approximately 100,000 residents in the region. Their comprehensive approach encompasses regular testing and assessment of water quality in rivers, lakes, and groundwater across tribal lands. Collaborating with state and federal agencies, KNED implements water quality standards and addresses potential contamination issues to ensure safe drinking water for both the Kaw people and surrounding communities.

Recently, KNED conducted a peer-reviewed study examining mercury concentrations in water and fish tissue from Kaw Lake. This research analyzed various sport fish species, yielding critical insights into mercury levels and resulting in

recommendations for safe fish consumption. Such efforts exemplify KNED's commitment not only to environmental stewardship but also to protecting public health.

In addition to water quality initiatives, KNED has developed environmental codes and strategic plans that incorporate air quality considerations into broader environmental protection efforts. With support from grants provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), including a recent award of \$115,000, KNED is dedicated to implementing effective strategies for monitoring and improving air quality. These efforts are crucial for ensuring a healthier environment for current and future generations.

KNED's ongoing efforts reflect its dedication to engaging the community in addressing pressing environmental concerns. For instance, their Climate Change Survey aims to gather input from community members on environmental issues impacting their lives. This participatory approach fosters a sense of ownership among tribal citizens regarding their natural resources.

Through its diverse programs and projects, the Kaw Nation Environmental Department continues to fulfill its mission of preserving and protecting the natural resources of Kaw Nation while contributing positively to the broader community. The department's proactive measures not only safeguard essential resources but also promote awareness and education about environmental issues among tribal youth and local schools.

Under Emily Douglas's leadership, KNED exemplifies a strong commitment to environmental stewardship rooted in cultural heritage. By prioritizing water quality protection, air quality improvement, and community engagement, KNED not only honors the legacy of past leaders like Crystal Douglas but also paves the way for a sustainable future for Kaw Nation.

KNED Climate Change Survey

The Kaw Nation Environmental Department (KNED) invites community members to participate in its Climate Change Survey, available at kawnation.gov/environmental. This survey seeks to gather insights from Tribal Citizens on climate-related issues that affect their lives and environment. By sharing their experiences, participants contribute valuable information that will help shape local and regional climate policies tailored to the community's needs. This initiative aligns with KNED's commitment to environmental stewardship while empowering individuals to play an active role in fostering a sustainable future for the Kaw Nation.

Section 1 - General Concerns

Explores community experiences with environmental challenges, including impacts of air and water quality, flood risks, and their personal observations of environmental changes affecting the area.

Section 2 - Global Environmental Issues

Addresses overall climate change awareness and the different sources of climate change information.

Section 3 - General Environmental Views

Examines respondents' ethical perspectives on climate change, including personal responsibility and potential roles in addressing environmental challenges.

Section 4 - About You

While ensuring participant anonymity, this section collects demographic information, including age and education level.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Scan the QR code below to complete the survey online.



KAW NATION'S HEALTHY HOMES PROJECT

The Kaw Nation Healthy Homes Project provides comprehensive home-based healthy homes intervention services to low-income families who occupy privately-owned housing.

Learn more about participating in this program:

Visit: www.kawnation.gov/healthy-homes-program/

Call: (580) 269-1203





28 Years of Dedication

Kaw Nation Honors the Career of Kevin Stephens



After 28 years of dedicated service to the Kaw Nation maintenance staff team, Kaw Citizen Kevin Stephens has entered the retirement chapter of his life. On September 27th, friends and co-workers gathered at the W.A. Mehojah Sr. Resource Center in Kaw City to honor his remarkable career and celebrate his contributions to the community. The reception was a heartfelt affair, filled with shared stories, laughter, and fond memories from nearly three decades of service. Longer-tenured employees took the opportunity to share kind words, recount amusing anecdotes from years past, and express their optimistic wishes for Kevin's new chapter in life.

Throughout his tenure, Kevin proved to be an invaluable asset to Kaw Nation, contributing a diverse range of skills to the maintenance and upkeep of tribal properties. His expertise in carpentry and woodworking made him the go-to person for many of the Nation's building maintenance needs. Kevin's responsibilities extended beyond traditional maintenance tasks, as he also headed the operation and maintenance of the riding mower fleet, ensuring

the sprawling acreage surrounding all major Kaw Nation properties remained well-maintained and presentable.

Kevin's enduring dedication and multifaceted skill set serve as a shining example of the individuals who have been vital to the growth and success of Kaw Nation. His commitment to his work has played a significant role in supporting the Nation's continued vision for progress and development. As Kevin embarks on this new phase of his life, his legacy of hard work, reliability, and dedication will undoubtedly continue to inspire his colleagues and future generations of Kaw Nation staff. Kevin plans to remain active in retirement by engaging in various projects on his property and those of his family. With a wealth of experience in maintenance and carpentry, he looks forward to applying his expertise to personal endeavors that not only enhance his surroundings but also bring joy and fulfillment.

Kaw Nation extends our heartfelt gratitude to Kevin for his years of service and wish him all the best in this exciting new stage of his life, thank you, Kevin!

NEW KAW NATION HIRES

We are excited to introduce the newest employees of Kaw Nation, who bring a wealth of talent and expertise to our team as we continue to serve and uplift our community.

- **Ashlynn Mercer** (JOM Resource Advisor)
- **Shelly Donaldson** (Admin. Receptionist)
- **Haley Goddard** (JOM Specialist)
- **Trinity Lewis** (Childcare Kitchen Supervisor)
- **Sheldon Tawkoity** (JOM Specialist)
- **Tracy Messineo** (HR Director)
- **Dora Tanner** (Library Asst.)
- **Elizabeth Shimer** (Dental Hygienist)
- **Deric Estes** (Language Asst.)
- **Amber Loftis** (CSS Financial Specialist)
- **John Myers** (Maintenance Helper)
- **Kimala Means** (Janitor)
- **Angelina Young** (Daycare Teacher)
- **Troy Baugus** (Police Officer)
- **Desiree Elfers** (Childcare Receptionist)
- **Tomi Faulkner** (PT) (Library/LC Coordinator)
- **April Sanders** (Women's Health LPN)
- **Julian Perez-Vargas** (Maintenance Helper)
- **Paula McCann** (Community LPN)
- **Sarah Pickup** (ICW Caseworker)



APPLY WITH KAW NATION TODAY

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kawnation.gov/careers

698 Grandview Dr. Kaw City, OK 74641

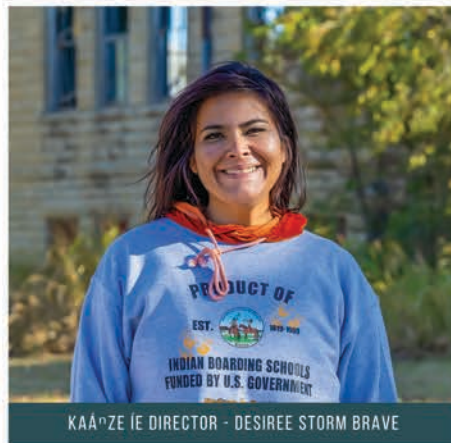


Kaá'ze Íe Students Embrace Boarding School History

The history of Indian boarding schools in the United States is a dark chapter that spans from the mid-19th to the late 20th century. These institutions, established by the federal government and often run by Christian missionaries, were designed to assimilate Native American children into Euro-American culture. The boarding school era officially began in 1860 and lasted until 1978, with approximately 357 schools operating across 30 states, housing over 60,000 Native children.

The philosophy behind these schools was infamously articulated by Richard Henry Pratt, founder of the Carlisle Indian School, who stated, "Kill the Indian, Save the Man." This approach aimed to eradicate Native cultures, languages, and traditions, replacing them with Euro-American values and practices. Children were often forcibly removed from their families and communities, subjected to harsh discipline, and forbidden from speaking their native languages or practicing their cultural traditions.

One such institution was the Chilocco Indian Agricultural School, established in 1884 in north-central Oklahoma. It was one of the largest federally-funded boarding schools, operating for nearly a century until its closure in 1980. Chilocco, like other boarding schools, offered a curriculum that was half academic and half vocational, focusing on agricultural training.



KAA'ZE ÍE DIRECTOR - DESIREE STORM BRAVE

During its operation, it saw close to 18,000 students and awarded more than 5,500 high school diplomas. The impact of these schools on Native American communities has been profound and long-lasting. The trauma inflicted by forced assimilation, separation from family, and cultural erasure has reverberated through generations. In recent years, there has been a growing movement to acknowledge this painful history and work towards healing and reconciliation.

On October 26th, the KAA'ZE ÍE Language Team, TAJÉ SAGE, took a significant step in this direction by hosting a walk at the Chilocco Indian School grounds. This event was designed to initiate a process of healing and reconciliation regarding Indian Boarding Schools, Indian Industrial Schools, and Indian Manual Labor Schools that were funded by the US Government between 1839 and 1969. During the walk, participants honored all the ŌWAHAⁿ who suffered the loss of their true identities due to these institutions.

The Kaa'ze youth language team, Tajé Sage, conducted extensive research on various boarding schools, including Carlisle Indian Industrial School, Shawnee Methodist Manual Labor School, Pawnee Indian Industrial School, Haskell Indian Industrial Training School, and Chilocco Indian Agricultural School. Their research

culminated in a powerful class project that deeply affected even young Kaa'ze elementary students, demonstrating the emotional weight this history still carries.

As part of their educational efforts, the students filled out "student information cards" similar to those used historically to identify Native children as they were transported to boarding schools. These cards included details such as age, tribal affiliation, parent names, and arrival and departure dates. This exercise helped participants understand the dehumanizing process these children endured.

The Language Department and Kaw Nation hope that this event has raised awareness about boarding schools and their lasting effects on Native communities. By acknowledging and educating about generational trauma, they aim to prevent this painful history from being forgotten and to empower younger generations to carry this knowledge forward.

The phrase "Yegáha wéwahna"be, we are grateful to be here" encapsulates the spirit of resilience and gratitude that characterizes many Native communities as they work to heal from the boarding school era's legacy. By confronting this history, honoring the survivors, and educating future generations, Native communities are reclaiming their cultural heritage and working towards a future where such atrocities are never repeated.

KAA'ZE ÍE STUDENTS CONVENED AROUND THE WEATHERED REMAINS OF THE CENTRAL FOUNTAIN ON THE ABANDONED CHILOCCO CAMPUS, A POIGNANT LANDMARK AMID THE SCHOOL'S DETERIORATING GROUNDS.



Kaw Nation Title VI Department



Three Decades of Comprehensive Elder Care and Support

The Kaw Nation's Title VI program, established in 1989, has been a cornerstone of support for Native American elders in the community for over three decades. This vital service, which aligns with the Older Americans Act (OAA) Title VI, promotes the delivery of nutrition, supportive, and caregiver services to those in need.

At the helm of this program is Director/Kaw Citizen Ladoma Bryan, who has been with the program since its inception. Ladoma's dedication to the program is evident in her long-standing commitment, including a pivotal moment in 1991 when she stepped up to become director, saving the department from losing funding due to the absence of an acting director. Her leadership has been instrumental in shaping the program into the comprehensive service it is today.

The Title VI staff also includes Lead Delivery Driver and Kaw Citizen Dona Ball, Cook Merika Warren, and Driver/Janitor Bogahdah Nicole Presley (Kaw Citizen). This dedicated team works tirelessly to ensure that the program's services reach those who need them most. Their efforts contribute significantly to the estimated \$200 million annual economic impact of the Kaw Nation's services and businesses.

One of the primary services offered by the Title VI program is the delivery of meals Monday through Friday to elders in Kaw City, Newkirk, and Ponca City. This service is crucial for ensuring that eligible Native American elders, aged 55 and older, have access to nutritious meals. The program extends its reach beyond meal delivery, offering on-site dining at the W. A. Mehojah, Sr. Resource Center, located at the tribal headquarters in Kaw City, OK. Here, free lunches

are served to eligible elders, while reasonably priced lunches are available to the public from 11:00 to 12:30, Monday through Friday. This dual-purpose approach not only serves the tribal elders but also provides a valuable resource for the Kaw Nation workforce in Kaw City.

The Title VI program goes beyond nutrition services, offering a range of supportive services that enhance the quality of life for Native American elders. The Title VI Lending Closet is a prime example of these additional services. This initiative provides medical equipment to Native Americans aged 55 and older, including wheelchairs, walkers, commodes, shower chairs, transfer benches, safety rails and risers, and crutches. This service ensures that elders have

access to necessary medical equipment, promoting their independence and well-being. Another crucial component of the program is the Title VI Caregiver Program. This service supports caregivers of Native American elders and Native American grandparents raising grandchildren. The program offers a wide range of services, including light housekeeping, respite care, running errands, preparing meals, lawn work, and providing clothing and school supplies for children. This comprehensive approach recognizes the diverse needs of caregivers and aims to alleviate some of the challenges they face in their caregiving roles.

The Kaw Nation Title VI program also demonstrates a commitment to preventive health care through its monthly elder checkups and BINGO events. These gatherings serve a dual purpose of social engagement and health monitoring. A Public Nurse from the Kanza Health Clinic attends these monthly bingo games, providing essential health services such as blood pressure checks, weight checks, quarterly A1C and blood sugar diabetic checks, and yearly lipid checks. This integration of health services into social activities encourages regular health monitoring among the elder population.

The comprehensive nature of the Kaw Nation's Title VI program reflects a deep understanding of the multifaceted needs of Native American elders. From nutrition and medical equipment to caregiver support and health monitoring, the program strives to address various aspects of elder care. This dynamic approach not only supports the physical health of elders but also contributes to their social and emotional well-being.

As the program continues to serve the community, it stands as a testament to the Kaw Nation's commitment to its Tribal Citizens. The dedication of staff members like Ladoma Bryan, who have been with the program for decades, ensures that the services remain responsive to the community's needs. The Title VI program, with its range of services and community-centered approach, plays a vital role in preserving the dignity, independence, and cultural heritage of Native American elders in the Kaw Nation.



IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Our Kaw Citizens

Clement Joseph Lessert

DOD - AUGUST 17TH, 2024

Wanda Lee Murphy

DOD - NOVEMBER 1ST, 2024

Vickie Joann Hays

DOD - NOVEMBER 6TH, 2024

Stephanie Gwen Tolland

DOD - NOVEMBER 15TH, 2024

Rhonda Sue Howland

DOD - NOVEMBER 17TH, 2024

TO THE STARS

The Ad Astra Statue and Kansas' Evolving Tribute to the Kanza People

The Ad Astra statue atop the Kansas State Capitol in Topeka has a long and complex history spanning over a century. The project to place a statue on the Capitol dome began in the late 19th century, with initial plans to install a statue of Ceres, the Roman goddess of agriculture. However, this idea was abandoned due to concerns about the appropriateness of a pagan deity representing the state. It wasn't until 1988 that Richard Bergen won a competition to design a new sculpture for the dome, proposing a 22-foot bronze statue of a Kanza (Kaw) warrior aiming an arrow at the stars.

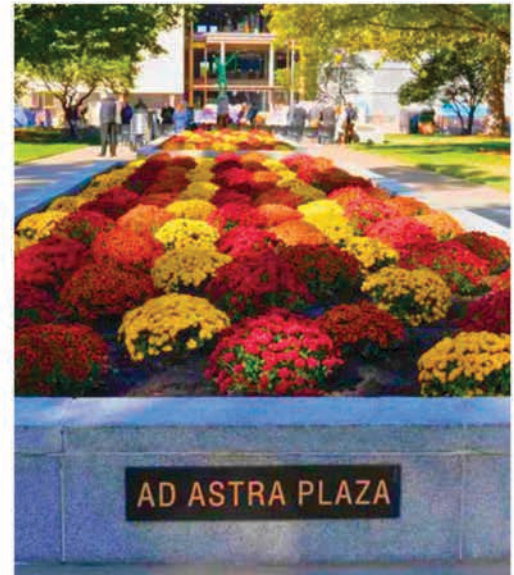
The journey from concept to installation was fraught with challenges. Bergen faced numerous financial and political hurdles over the next 14

years. The project relied heavily on private donations and souvenir sales to fund the statue's creation. In the final stages, controversy erupted when Governor Bill Graves allocated over \$600,000 in state funds to reinforce the Capitol dome during a time of budget cuts to education and social services. This decision faced significant criticism, leading to anonymous donors contributing \$500,000 to offset most of the cost.

After years of delays and setbacks, the Ad Astra statue was finally installed on October 7, 2002. The name "Ad Astra" comes from the state motto "Ad Astra Per Aspera," meaning "To the Stars Through Difficulties" in Latin, symbolizing the perseverance and aspirations of Kansas.



Members of the Kaw Nation Tribal Council along with Government Affairs Director, Ken Bellmard attend the plaza celebration.



The statue's placement atop the Capitol serves as a symbolic acknowledgment of the Kanza people's historical connection to Kansas, as they are the namesake of the state.

However, the significance of the Ad Astra statue to the Kanza people is complex. While it represents a recognition of their heritage, it also raises questions about representation and historical treatment. The statue's prominence contrasts with the forced removal of the Kanza people to Oklahoma in 1873, just 11 years after Kansas achieved statehood. This juxtaposition highlights the need for a more comprehensive engagement with the state's Native American history.

Capitol, passionately emphasized the indigenous representation, declaring, "This is their property. Who else would you put up there?"

The new installation only partially realizes Bergen's vision which originally included an educational component about the Kanza people. While funding issues have left some aspects of the project incomplete, the plaza represents a significant step in honoring Kaw heritage in Kansas.

The creation of this new plaza comes at a time when the Kaw Nation is working to re-establish a growing presence in their ancestral lands north of their current home in Oklahoma. The hope is that future funding efforts will allow for the full realization of Bergen's original vision, including comprehensive educational elements about the Kanza people and their culture.

The Ad Astra statue and its new ground-level counterpart serve as reminders of the need for more comprehensive representation and education about the Kanza people and their significant role in Kansas history. While these installations mark important steps in acknowledging the state's indigenous heritage, they also highlight the ongoing need for deeper engagement with Native American history and culture in Kansas. As the state continues to grapple with its complex past, these statues offer opportunities for reflection, education, and a more inclusive understanding of Kansas' diverse heritage.



The "Ad Astra" statue, a 22-foot bronze sculpture of a Kanza (Kaw) warrior aiming an arrow at the stars, crowns the Kansas State Capitol in Topeka.



Bergen (left) with a life-size replica of Ad Astra, his son Richie (middle) who modeled for the statue, and Jack Gillam, the artist responsible for the sketches of Ad Astra that Bergen worked from.

In a recent development, on October 15, 2024, state officials, including Kansas Governor Laura Kelly and members of the Kaw Nation Tribal Council, gathered to celebrate the completion of a new plaza on the statehouse grounds. At the plaza stands a six-foot tall replica of the Ad Astra statue, a tribute to the Kanza people, meticulously crafted by Richard Bergen and his son. Bergen, who designed the iconic 22-foot bronze sculpture adorning the Kansas State

HALLOWEEN AT KAW NATION

CHILD CARE DEVELOPMENT TREATS DAYCARE CHILDREN



Kaw Nation Childcare Development kicked off festivities Halloween morning by organizing a delightful trick-or-treating event for daycare children at the Kaw Nation offices. Dressed in colorful costumes and armed with bags ready to be filled with treats, the children eagerly visited various offices, where they were warmly greeted by staff members handing out candy and toys.

The highlight of their adventure took place in the Title VI building, where the little ones cautiously approached a T-Rex and a giant chicken, both played by staff in inflatable costumes. This fun-filled experience not only created lasting memories for the children but also fostered a sense of community spirit during the festive season.



KAW NATION'S GOURD-GEIOUS COSTUME & PUMPKIN SHOWDOWN

Kaw Nation's annual Halloween festivities once again showcased the remarkable creativity and competitive spirit of its employees and departments. This year's costume and pumpkin carving contests elevated the bar of workplace entertainment, lending itself the vibrant organization culture of our workforce.

In the costume contest, individual winners emerged with standout performances that captured both imagination and humor. Maggie Miller's portrayal of the Mad Hatter brought whimsical character to life, while Brittany Fitzpatrick's Winnie the Pooh costume delighted participants. The most unexpected and entertaining entry came from Ladoma Bryan, who donned a giant chicken costume that became an instant crowd favorite.

The pumpkin carving contest proved equally impressive, with departments showcasing their artistic talents through intricate and clever designs.

The Kanza Human Development Division (KHDD) claimed victory with their Oscar the Grouch themed pumpkin, capturing the grumpy character's essence with remarkable detail. The Language Department's entry stood out by depicting a traditional Kanza story featuring a cunning coyote and dancing mice, highlighting the tribe's rich cultural storytelling. The Transportation Department rounded out the top entries with their creative "Trick or Treats" themed pumpkins.

Facebook voting determined the pumpkin contest winners, allowing community engagement in the selection process. Prizes ranged from tech-based rewards to gift cards, adding extra excitement to the competition. This annual tradition not only provides entertainment but also strengthens workplace camaraderie and celebrates the creative talents within Kaw Nation organization.





2024 KAW NATION CHRISTMAS PARTY

The 2024 Kaw Nation Christmas Party once again demonstrated the vibrant community spirit of our tribal citizens, bringing together families for a joyous celebration. Held at the Johnny McCauley Gymnasium, the event was a heartwarming demonstration of Kaw Nation's commitment to preserving cultural traditions and fostering community connections. The gathering began with an opening prayer by Tribal Council Vice Chair Robert Allen, setting a reverent tone for the festivities. Newkirk's Stagecoach Catering

& BBQ provided delicious refreshments, ensuring everyone enjoyed a hearty meal. The highlight for many was Santa Claus's arrival, accompanied by two helpers who distributed gifts to the excited children. As the celebration drew to a close, door prizes were raffled off, adding an extra layer of excitement to the event. Kaw Nation extended heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated volunteers and employees whose hard work made this memorable celebration possible, embodying the tribe's spirit of unity and generosity.



HOLIDAY KNIT-OFF

KAW NATION & KNBS EMPLOYEES COMPETE IN UGLY SWEATER CONTEST



THE WINNERS OF THE CONTEST WERE SELECTED THROUGH A VOTING PROCESS ON FACEBOOK.



1ST PLACE
IDA WILLIAMS



2ND PLACE
KAYLEE WILLIAMS



3RD PLACE
PHYLICIA PRICE

SHARING THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

Kaw Nation Business Services (KNBS) successfully organized Angel Tree programs at the Kaw Nation-owned Southwind Express and Woodridge Market, bringing joy to children in need during the holiday season. These initiatives, spearheaded by Lynzie Bowman and her family, aimed to provide gifts to local children aged 0-13, ensuring that every child could experience the magic of Christmas. Participants were encouraged to select an "angel" from the trees displayed at both locations, representing a child's wish list. With a deadline for gift submissions set for December 15, community members rallied together, donating toys and clothing to fulfill these wishes. Lynzie Bowman's efforts to "bless Kaw Nation kids this year with an abundance of toys" garnered support from local businesses and organizations, amplifying the impact of the toy drive. KNBS expressed gratitude to all who contributed, especially Lynzie Bowman and her family for their dedication in organizing the toy drive, emphasizing that such efforts make a significant impact on the lives of families during this festive time.



PRESERVING CULTURE

KNES EDUCATES STUDENTS DURING
MINI-POWOW ASSEMBLIES



Kaw Nation Education Services recently organized a series of educational mini-powwows at Peckham Public School and Newkirk High School, showcasing Kaw Nation culture to local students. These events featured Kanza youth performers and volunteer singers, offering an engaging way for young community members to connect with their heritage.

Leroy Enloe, who also served as the Master of Ceremonies for the 2024 Kaw Nation Powwow, hosted these exhibitions. His expertise and

guidance were invaluable as he explained the various types of regalia and dances, from traditional to fancy dance styles. Enloe's comprehensive approach helped the young audience understand the rich symbolism and history behind each element of the performances.

The mini-powwows proved to be an interactive and educational experience. Students learned about the significance of eagles in Native American culture and the historical evolution of different dance styles. The highlight of the events

was the invitation for spectators to participate in round dances, allowing them to directly engage with Kaw Nation traditions.

These cultural exhibitions not only entertained but also fostered a deeper appreciation for Kaw Nation heritage among local students. By bringing these performances to schools, KNES has taken an important step in preserving and sharing their cultural legacy with the broader community.



Nourishing Our Community

Kaw Nation's Meat Bundle Initiative

On November 15th, Kaw Nation held a charitable event to distribute meat bundles to Tribal Citizens at the former Southwind Casino location in Newkirk, Oklahoma. This initiative aimed to support families during the holiday season by providing high-quality meat products.

The event featured drive-up service, where volunteers distributed assorted beef products to Kaw Citizens. These meat bundles were sourced from Butcher House Meats, an Osage-owned facility located in Hominy, Oklahoma. Butcher House Meats operates a state-of-the-art, 19,000-square-foot processing facility that opened in 2021. This state and federally-inspected establishment offers top-quality beef, pork, and bison, with much of their product coming from Osage Ranch. This facility has been making significant strides in addressing food insecurity since its establishment.



Kaw Nation's collaboration with Osage Nation for this event highlights the strong inter-tribal cooperation in the region. By prioritizing funding for this initiative, Kaw Nation demonstrated its commitment to supporting its citizens and ensuring food security during the holiday season. The event also made accommodations for elders by allowing third-party pickup, ensuring that all Tribal Citizens could benefit from this generous offering.

This meat bundle distribution event represents an important step in fostering community support and inter-tribal collaboration. The Kaw Nation's initiative not only provides immediate assistance to its citizens but also strengthens ties with neighboring tribes. As the event proved to be a success, there are plans to continue this valuable program in 2025, further cementing its place as an annual tradition that benefits the Kaw community.



Empowering Health

Promoting Wellness and Community Engagement in 2024

The 2024 Kanza Health Fair, a cornerstone event for the Kaw Nation community, brings together the diverse services and programs offered by the Kanza Health Clinic in a single, comprehensive showcase. This annual gathering, held at the clinic's Newkirk facility, kicks off with an invigorating early morning wellness walk, where participants earn a coveted signature sweatshirt upon completion. The fair seamlessly integrates the clinic's medical, dental, and pharmacy services, alongside specialized programs such as the Women's Health Program and Diabetes Clinic. Collaborating with health organizations from across the region, the

event offers preventive screenings, including blood pressure checks, along with other evaluations. Educational booths provide valuable information on nutrition, fitness, and wellness, mirroring the clinic's commitment to community health education. Representatives from the clinic's various departments, were on hand to discuss their services and schedule future

appointments. This holistic approach to community wellness reflects the clinic's year-round commitment to providing accessible, quality healthcare to tribal citizens and the broader community. The Kanza Health Fair serves as a vital platform for health education, early detection, and community engagement, embodying the clinic's mission of fostering a healthier future for all attendees.



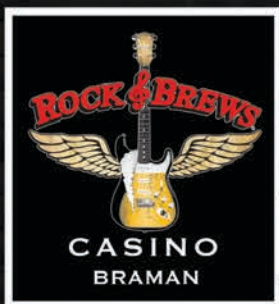


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