

The STRAIGHT FORWARD

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FREE PressSM



Volume 2 • Issue 21

Serving Stilwell & Adair County, Oklahoma

Thursday December 15, 2022

MERRY CHRISTMAS



Entry parlor feeling a lot like Christmas



The Splendid Iconic Howard Hotel



Howard Hotel 3d floor honeymoon suite decked out in bridal white.

Watts Howard Hotel Held Annual Christmas Open House

Commentary by John Bankel

On two consecutive weekends, Dec. 2,4 and Dec. 10,11, the Howard Hotel halls were decked with more than "boughs of holly." Phyllis Hagan, renowned Adair County historian and the hotel's owner since 1992, went all out once again in decorating this Adair County Watts showpiece for the annual Christmas celebration. The hotel's reputation has spread far and wide so that not only folks from Adair County come to visit but many others as well. Among the many visitors

are folks that were Phyllis Hagan's students during the many years that she taught in Watts and ran the school library. I was standing nearby as two guys engaged her in a lively talk about those good old days. These two men still addressed Phyllis, in an almost reverend tone, as "Miss Hagan." Indeed, Miss Hagan is an esteemed denizen of Watts and has a litany of stories to tell and tell them she does exceptionally well. The Howard Hotel has a rich history starting with the day it opened its doors in 1912

to serve the passengers and employees of the railroad, whose tracks are directly across the highway, OK 59. If each room, which are located on the second and third stories, could talk, we would find out about the people that have rested their heads on the pillows of their beds. Meanwhile, Miss Hagan is always ready to share the many memories of her times at the Howard Hotel. For all the nostalgia buffs among us, the Howard Hotel Christmas Open House is a great place to spend some holiday time.



Second floor alcove pretty as a picture



John Bankel taking a taste of a sweet treat



Phyllis Hagan's scintillating smile lights up the room.



An inviting platter of Shelly's Sweet Treats...



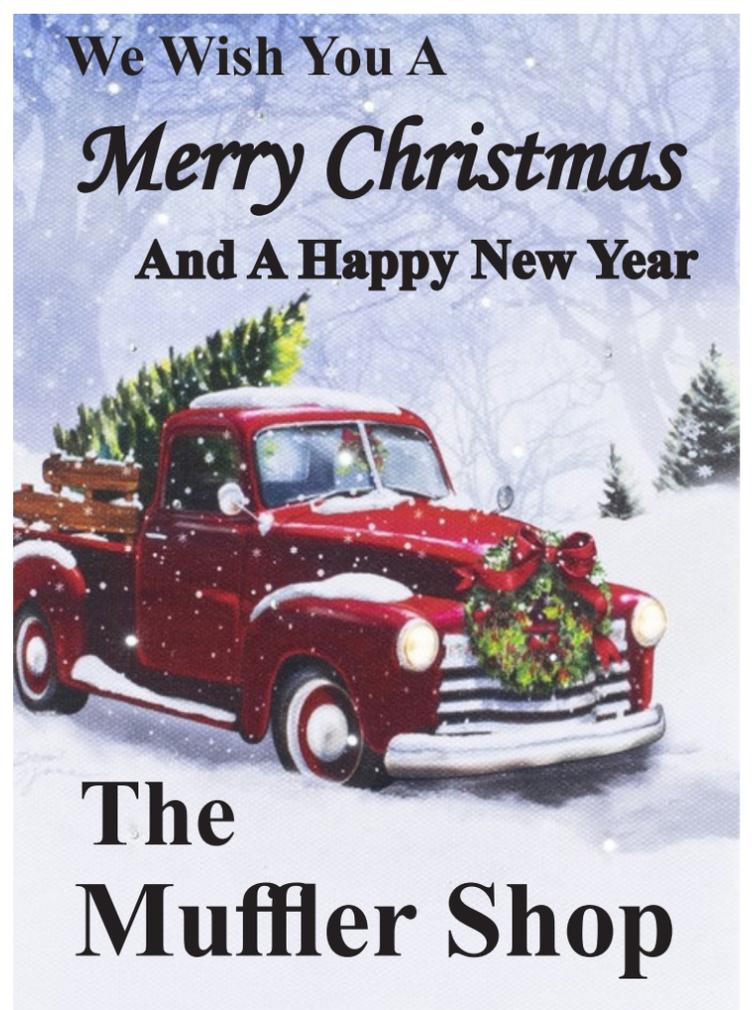
PROVERB POWER

Proverb 22:1

A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver or gold.



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THE KIPLING KORNER

A Dog for Jesus

"I wish someone had given Jesus a dog.

As loyal and loving as mine.

To sleep by His manger and gaze in His eyes

And adore Him for being divine . . .

Well, the Lord has a dog now,

I just sent Him mine."

MOMENTS WITH MARIE

By Donna Boecher



Serial No. 16
Michael decided he needed to check back into the history of the Campbells. He checked through the information that Marie had gotten from Ancestry. Rachael appeared to be the natural daughter of Rachael and Miles Campbell; there was a death certificate online for Miles, her father. He had died a year after Rachael's birth date. Spouse was listed as Rachael A., but the information stopped there. There were no documents indicating children or Miles' siblings. Miles could have buried information to protect his innocent daughter. Had her

mother been hiding? Had the Campbells disposed of Rachael's mother? Had her so-called father murdered his own brother. That was a horrific idea, but a possible fact. It followed that they had kidnapped Rachael and reared her as their own to be in control of the fortune. What composed the fortune and where had it gone? Was it just money? Rachael Ann had tried to hide, but "the Campbells" had caught up with her. That was it! Once her mother was dead, Rachael on her 16th birthday would be the only person between Miles' brother and the MONEY.

Dear John,
I used to look forward to family holidays. The house was so full of laughter, voices, and scents of good food. The problem is everyone in my life has died, moved away and children have their own families. This year I'm not going to put up a Christmas tree. It just reminds me of how alone I am. I've tried to meet new people, I went to the senior center and some of those "old people dances". It's kind of funny that it reminds me of high school drama and the guys are still looking for the same thing. I tried to visit with my daughter about this, she was embarrassed and said old people get diseases too. All I wanted to do is dance. It's obvious I can't talk to her about it. So, I decided to give myself a gift and go on a cruise. My children are upset that I will not be here to watch their Christmas joy. I've had enough Christmas cheer in my life and now grandma wants to get her groove back. How do I deal with a family who thinks I've lost my mind? Granny's Got Game

STILWELL SPORTS SPOTLIGHT



Commentary by John Bankel

Indians Emerge As The "Big Dawg"

After the Indians disposed of Checotah in their first home game, they traveled to Vinita for the "Big Dawg Shoot-out" tournament. In 2021, the Indians came away with the first place trophy. They were looking to repeat the feat. They found themselves in the final game and took on the Claremore Zebras and came away with a convinc-

ing 69-55 win to emerge as the "Big Dawg" once again. Codey Petree (MVP) and Tyrus Teehee made the All Tournament Team. The Stilwell boys basketball team is on a roll. Come on out and watch these boys play and cheer them on. The Indians are now 4-0 and ranked #13 in the State in Class 4A.



The Indians win the Vinita Big Dawg Shoot-Out 69-55 over the Claremore Zebras!! Codey Petree(MVP) and Tyrus Teehee made the all tournament team.

Dear Granny...although the Christmas season is supposed to be a time of great joy, cheer and mirth it is not that way for everyone. You have, no doubt, experienced many a flavorful holiday with good company. Yet, just like everything else in one's life, seasons come and seasons go. There is nothing wrong with seasoning your new season with the spice of a new adventure. Dear John admires your spunk. A cruise will surely bring fresh company and fresh joy to what otherwise could have been a sorrowful lonely affair. As far as your relatives are concerned, let them enjoy themselves as they wish while secretly admiring "granny got game."

Sincerely,
Dear John

Have you got a question for Dear John? email: dearjohn@writeme.com
Real Name Not Used.
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Remember the days of "black and white" television? No? Well, let's revisit those days. Our first TV a 14" x 12" Philco housed in a 3' x 2' wooden frame. Programing in black and white. Saturday night, parents might allow children, if everything was prepared for church (shoes polished, bath taken, and clothes laid out), to watch TV until 10 pm when the National Anthem and the "fuzzy screen" ended the broadcasting. The stations would interrupt the programing in emergencies with alerts. In Oklahoma, at my grandmother's home, there was no TV until all the chores were done and the supper dishes washed and scalded. "Gunsmoke" fit her time frame. As a child in Texas, our small post-WWII home had the TV in

my small bedroom. Both supper and watching TV were part of family time. Everyone would sit on my bed or pull in a kitchen chair. "Gunsmoke" was our favorite. It was an all-American series, the historical fiction of our Old West. It had THE prime-time slot. In the mid-1960s we watched beautiful "Kitty" age gracefully, only this time it was for 10 years in technicolor. Suddenly they cancelled without warning!
Today we have color television and a readily available library of film from silent film forward and Matt Dillon still rides the range. We don't need to disrupt "family time." Technology allows us to put our lives in proper order – God and family.

14. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

SCRIPTURE
John 1:14 KJV

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straightforwardpress21@gmail.com
The Straight Forward Free Press is sponsored by "The Golden Mind Learning Foundation Inc.", a non-profit, faith-based, community outreach organization.
Printed by: FREE Press Printing Co.
Donna Boecher.....Editor
John Bankel.....Co-Editor/Journalist
Stephanie CullinaneComposer
PROVERBS 29:2-"When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn."
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Vocabulary word – mockery – object of scorn or ridicule.
Ex. The first graders made a mockery of the five year old who could not say his A, B, Cs


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25th Wedding Anniversary Celebration



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No gifts please, just your presence.

**WHAT'S SO PUNNY?
Pun Fun**

Ah, it is that time of the year! And what time is that? Time for more puns! And yet, then again, any time is a good time for more puns. Puns are a year around thing and always ready to tickle some ribs. So get ready because here they come:

1. I want to die peacefully, in my sleep, like my

grandfather...Not yelling and screaming like the passengers in his car.

2. When life hands you a melon, you might be dyslexic.

3. Don't you hate it when someone answers their own questions? I do.

4. I know that they say that money talks, but all mine says is "Goodbye."

5. My wife just found out

that I replaced our bed with a trampoline. She hit the ceiling!

We could probably bounce around and get some more, but then again, one can only take so much PUN FUN. Hope your laughter will soon die down and you won't get fired for guffawing off!

THE CONSERVATIVE VIEW

By Russell Turner

SIDEWALK SUPERINTENDENTS

I have found that it is very easy to cast blame or criticize someone for the actions they take to solve a problem. Being involved in the building trades, I have seen countless individuals sit back in an easy chair and find all kinds of fault with the people actually doing the work. I have also seen that many of these so-called experts have little to no practical experience about the job they are critiquing. That same kind of mentality also rears its ugly head when it comes to politics.

In the just-completed midterm election, some of the elite politicians in the Republican camp have been quick to blame Donald Trump for the loss of house and senate seats in various states. In my opinion, if all of those casting blame for the losses would have got off of their backsides and done a little more work instead of throwing a sack full of rocks at Trump, the vote tallies may have put our candidates over the top. Donald Trump is the closest thing to a human being the energizer bunny, no one worked harder

than him right up to the election time. Too many prominent Republicans got the rank and file overconfident about a red wave for the Republicans. Fortunately, the conservatives did capture the House, but the Senate was a much harder task to take on. When the results came in, many of the hotly contested races were decided by a single percentage point. I just wonder if the elites in the Republican party ever considered the possibility that those races would have been lost by many more points if Trump had not worked for those candidates.

Some of those candidates have been pressured to renounce Trump after their defeat. The governor candidate from Arizona, Kari Lake, was pressured to renounce Trump; her answer was clear and to the point, "NEVER". Before the Republican elites start writing Trump's political obituary, I want to remind them of something. I have run for public office on several occasions and have held political office. In my campaigns, I had people stab me in the back and I had people who

believed in me and did all they could to get me elected. I can assure anyone that I will never forget either one of the two groups. For those who supported me un-conditionally, it is a debt that I will pay back with my un-conditional support when they need it. We need to remember that in those close races roughly half of the voters supported the candidates that Trump helped. I am not saying that all of those voters will vote for Trump, but I do believe that the vast majority will.

Before we start putting all of our faith in the ruling elites of the Republican party, we need to look at what is driving them. Are they putting the fate of the country as their top priority, or are they merely wanting to preserve their position of power? We all need to be very careful of allowing ourselves to being manipulated in the blame game by some sidewalk superintendent. We need to use that grey matter that rests between our ears; if we will do that one thing, we might just come to another conclusion.

THE CONSERVATIVE VIEW

By Russell Turner

I TOLD YOU SO

Any of you who have ever read my past columns know that I place very little faith in the mainstream media in our country, and that also includes social platforms as well. For those of us who keep up on current events, we have seen the blatant bias that has infected our culture. For any of us to make an informed decision who to vote for, or to trust, we must have access to all points of view. At one time the internet was the ultimate source of free speech; but with the recent release of the Twitter Papers by Elon Musk, it is proof that that is not the case anymore.

While the case of the current Twitter release is just the beginning, there are reports that more document dumps will be released soon. The system that we have allowed to infect our country would make the Chinese leader Mao Se Tung proud. It is alleged that our own FBI pressured Twitter to not allow any posts of the story concerning the Hunter Biden laptop. It was alleged by the FBI that all of the story was Russian disinformation, even though they had no proof to back it up. We were in the process of electing a president to lead this country; we, the citizens, have a right to know if the people we are voting for have been compromised by foreign governments.

Even today the mainstream media refuses to do an in-depth report on the issue. I guess the media has a rule to ignore anything that might make the liberals look bad, but God help any conservative that might have spit on the sidewalk. In the case of

Donald Trump, he was hounded by the liberals in the media from the get-go; he often referred to the swamp and fake news, now the Twitter papers are proving that he was telling the truth.

The FBI and the DOJ are supposed to be law enforcement agencies, not the arbiters of who needs to be our elected leaders. According to various news articles and opinion pieces, if the American people had known about the laptop story, our current resident in the white house would have never been elected. We Americans can be very gullible, but we do have enough sense to know that when people from various foreign countries give someone huge sums of money, they expect something in return. This practice is at the least unethical, and at the most treasonous; it is called influence peddling. The people involved in this practice are not concerned about the everyday people in this nation, they are only interested with increasing their bank account. At one time our country was rich and powerful enough to absorb influence peddling, but that is not the case today. Nations such as Russia and China have stated they are going to become a superpower and leave the United States in the dust.

Thank God for Elon Musk for making the Twitter papers available to the average citizen. For many years those of us who could see the bias in the media were labeled as being radicals or heretics for talking about it. All I can say now is, I TOLD YOU SO.

Dreamstar Connections 2022-2023



Snowflake Court from left to Right Snowflake Princess Ariel Kirkpatrick, Snowflake Queen Akela Goldman, Snowflake Supreme Kinsley Baird, Snowflake Supreme Denny Scott, Snowflake King Keevon Unger, Snowflake Prince Bobby Pohl.

Searching for a Word – travesty, a de-based, distorted, or grossly inferior imitation.

Ex. The stories about Tarzan were a travesty of Mogli from Jungle Book, but I quite enjoyed them.



Obituaries.....



On November 30th, 2022 Philip Eldon Engle was called home to be with his Lord and Savior at the age of 72.



Charles Edward Dye, son of Jack and Colleen (Smith) Dye, was born on February 20, 1947 in Checotah, Oklahoma and passed from this life on Thursday, December 1st, 2022 in Fayetteville, Arkansas at the age of 75 years, 9 months and 9 days.



Bill Sawney was born May 25, 1932, to Thomas Sawney and Stella (Gonzales) Livers. Bill would take his last breath at home surrounded by loved ones on December 6, 2022.



Ronald Eugene Allen, 72, of Westville, OK went home to be with his Lord and Savior on December 5, 2022.



Shyann Denise Alverson, was born on April 21, 1995 in Stilwell, Oklahoma and departed this life on Saturday, November 26, 2022 in Tahlequah, Oklahoma at the age of 27 years, 7 months and 5 days.



Community Bulletin Board

Stilwell Community Choir meets Tuesday, December 27, at First United Methodist Church, 7 pm. For more information contact Mary Catherine 918-696-9061

Bethel Church Service: 1st Saturday of the month and last Saturday of the month, service at 5 p.m.-? Rodney Chuculate.

Adair County Litter-Free & Green Adair County Litter-Free & Green will change its location for the Recycle Day event beginning January 21st, 2023. The new site will be behind Vonnie's Pawn Shop at 101 West Walnut Street in Stilwell. Patrons will enter from 1st Street, proceed into the alley directly behind the pawn shop, and exit onto 2nd Street. "We believe that this location will work better for our volunteer workers and the public since it is centrally located," says Cathy Unger, Co-Chair.

The hours of operation and types of recyclable items that are accepted will remain the same: paper, cardboard, glass, plastic #1 and #2, metal, plastic grocery bags, aluminum, and clothing that is clean and in good condition. You can find a more detailed list on our Facebook page under Adair County Litter-Free & Green. Below is a list of projected recycle dates which will only change if there are inclement weather conditions that day. For more information, you may contact Cathy Unger at 918-696-1178 or Joyce Radtke at 918-696-7316.

Flint Lodge Monthly Breakfast from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. the first Saturday of each Month. Flint Lodge is located at 83705 Hwy 59 South, Stilwell. 12 & Older: \$8.00, Children: \$4.00 and under 5 Free
10:00 Sunday Morning Service Bethel Church Everyone Welcome

ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

COMMENTARY BY JOHN BANKEL

Today's Trail Treks To.. A Solitary Soldier's Celebration

God has placed warriors, both men and women, among us. We call them soldiers. They unflinchingly serve to protect our shores from enemy attacks. And when we are attacked, they jump into the fray with complete disregard for their own lives.

Such is the heart of the warrior. We must not take their bravery for granted. It is because of their service that we can once again enjoy this holiday season in peace. There once was a Marine who penned the following poem, which reminds us of all those

bravehearts that have gone before us or are yet serving who may be forgotten or feel forsaken at home or in some foreign land at this time of the year. May its lyrics stir your heart to thank the Lord for the Warriors Among Us.



"A Soldier's Silent Night"

'Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone, In a one-bedroom house made of plaster and stone. I had come down the chimney, with presents to give and to see just who in this dwelling did live. As I looked all around, a strange sight to see, no tinsel, no presents, not even a tree. No stocking on the mantle, just boots filled with sand. On the wall hung pictures of far distant lands. Medals and badges, awards of every kind, a sobering thought came alive in my mind. This house was different, it was dark, it was dreary. I had found the home of a soldier, I could see that most clearly. The soldier lay sleeping silent, alone. Curled up on the floor in his one-bedroom home.

His face was so gentle, room in such disorder, Not at all how I pictured a U.S. soldier. Was this the hero, of whom I'd just read? Curled up on a poncho, a floor for a bed? Then I realized the other families that I saw this night Out there lies the soldiers who are willing to fight. In the morning around the world, children would play Grown-ups would celebrate a bright Christmas day but they all enjoyed freedom, each month through the year, because of soldiers like the one lying here. I couldn't help but wonder how many lay alone, on a cold Christmas Eve, in lands far from home. The very thought brought a tear to my eye. and I dropped to my knees and I started

to cry. The soldier awakened, I heard his rough voice, "Santa, don't cry, this life is my choice I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more. My life is my God, my country, my Corps." The soldier rolled over, and drifted to sleep, I couldn't control it, and I continued to weep. I kept watch for hours, so silent and still. as both of us shivered from the cold night's chill. I didn't want to leave him on that cold, dark night. This guardian of honor, so willing to fight. Then the soldier rolled over with a voice soft and pure. He whispered, "Carry on Santa, it's Christmas Day, all secure." One look at my watch and I knew he was right, Merry Christmas my friend, May God bless you this night.



For today, this week's Trail has come to an end. Perhaps we will meet again, around the bend my friend. May your Trail end up on the right side of the fence and may

the Joy Of Christmas usher you into a splendid New Year!

John Bankel is a freelance journalist and a retired High School Math teach-

er who can be reached at: writewright@journalist.com
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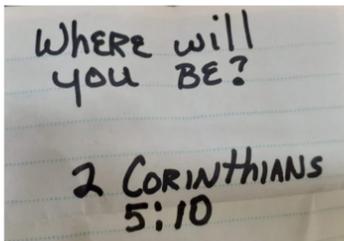
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