

The STRAIGHT FORWARD



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FREE PressSM

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Serving Stilwell & Adair County, Oklahoma

Thursday February 16, 2023

The Teacher Feature

Story by John Bankel with Donna Boecher

Teachers mostly toil in obscurity but not in insignificance. Anyone who has gone through school probably has a teacher that will always stay in their memories. The patience of a teacher is practically divine. The knowledge of a teacher is vast. The nurture of a teacher is second only to mom and dad. Today's Teacher Feature brings Bell Elementary School 4th grade teacher, Teresa Keen, to the forefront.



Teresa enthusiastically tells about the book her students are reading: "Summer Of The Monkeys"

Teresa Keen: Expecting Excellence

When walking into Teresa Keen's classroom one gets the immediate impression that this teacher leaves no stone unturned in capturing the interest of her 4th grade students. The walls are filled with a myriad of colorful displays which highlight lessons learned. Teresa told me that at the beginning of the year the walls were bare except for a calendar. She fills them up as the year progresses. The displays provide reinforcement as well as a road map of where her lessons have led her students, not to mention providing an interesting decor to the room. Keen says she did not start off with a career in education. She earned a degree in Business Administration from NSU. The intention was to help her husband, successful Stilwell Attorney Ralph Keen, with the administrative end of his start-up law office. Having accomplished that, she went back to school to become a teacher. She earned a degree in Elementary Education and a Special Education certificate, again from NSU. After a successful tenure as a Special Ed teacher in Siloam Springs, Keen

heard about an opening at Bell Elementary for a 4th grade teacher. She was hired 2 years ago by Principal Tony Davidson. One of Teresa's favorite classroom resources is the local newspaper. Here is what she says about how she uses it: "I have always used newspapers in the classroom. Newspapers have been called 'the living textbook'. (I read that somewhere). Newspapers enhance skills in reading, listening, speaking, math, social studies and science. It enhances the students' critical thinking. Textbooks are usually several years outdated, but a newspaper comes alive with information that the students can relate to. Newspapers bring ideas and current events to life through a reliable source. The newspaper expands the curriculum with a boundless amount of information to use as background for contrast articles, how to form sentences, how to ask a good question." While referring to The Straight Forward FREE Press she said: "We enjoy the Dear John questions and answers, the vocabu-

lary word, searching for a word, the things to ponder, Pearls of Wisdom. We especially like the use of color in your publication and the history quotes with pictures. Like this week, Newton (1643-1727) and the jokes." "...In our classroom we utilize The Straight Forward FREE Press, Stilwell Democrat Journal and the Cherokee Phoenix. We find useful information in all 3 publications." As a final word for this writing, Teresa Keen commands her students' attention and expects excellence from each one. And her students' attitudes and performances show it! The following students were present for our visit: Twins: Kash and Kali Calhoun, Kotie Kay Stanley and Luke Sawney. Absent were: Jaelyn Scott, Kaiou Watie, Brance Sherer, Kyla Whitebuffalo and Naleah Cochran.



Kali Calhoun reading Straight Forward FREE Press.



Teresa Keen and Donna Boecher discussing faraway places before a world map.

PROVERB POWER

James 4: 7,8 KJV

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. knoweth us?



Zion Jets ORES State Champs 2023 Division 2 Beat Tenkiller Warriors 30-16.

Photo by: Frankie Duncan

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Check it out and enjoy!



STILWELL SPORTS SPOTLIGHT

Commentary by John Bankel

Stilwell Boys and Girls Basketball Update

This week's Spotlight starts with a correction of last week's report. The game with Muldrow was not the start of the state competition rather a regular season game which the boys won and the girls lost. The boys moved their season record to 17-2 while maintaining a #7 state ranking. The girls dropped to 10-7 on the year as they lost to a tough 11th ranked Muldrow squad. On Friday, February 10, the Indians and Lady Indians hosted the Spiro Bulldogs. Both

Stilwell teams won to finish out the regular season. The boys will start the state competition with a stellar 18-2 record while the girls are respectable at 11-7. State tournament play starts February 17-18 with the Lady Indians playing Jay at home on February 18 a 6 pm. The boys game is at 8 pm. The winner plays at Stilwell on Feb. 22 at 6 pm. The loser plays at Stilwell at 2:30 pm. The tournament follows a double-elimination format. Regionals will be held at

Verdigris on February 24 for the teams that survive the District competition.

Girls Wrestling Update

The Stilwell Girls Wrestling team competed at the Regionals held in Sallisaw. Adrianna Chronister will wrestle for first place while Josaline Blevins will try to claim a spot on the podium wrestling for 3rd place. Check out the QR Code to see the girls in action.



Cave Springs Class A district Champs Beat Arkoma Mustangs Saturday night 71-64. Photo by: Frankie Duncan



Dear John,

My husband and I allowed our son to have a dog. He begged for it and said "I will take care of it." He got a blue tick, redbone mix puppy and said "I'm going to teach him to hunt." The first month our son was sure to his word and took care of his pup. The second month things started to slip; it is 8 months and now it looks like "Old Howler" is my responsibility. He loves my shoes and is so polite he usually only chews up one of each pair. I purchased him chew toys and bones. He has learned to go outside to take care of his bathroom needs. My biggest gripe is his barking and howling. When I listen to my music he howls, the doorbell makes him bay like he has seen a raccoon. Now he barks at my cell phone ringing. The only thing Old Howler hunts is food in my kitchen. He escapes out of his dog pen, jumping over the fence or digging out. When he is outside our neighbors complain about his loud howling bark. He chases the cats. I've tried to take him for walks, he pulls me all over the neighborhood and I've lost 32 pounds. How in the world can I get my son to take an interest in his dog? I have a couple of offers from people who want the dog; should I give him away?

Dog Patch Mom

Dear Dog Patch Mom...have you talked to your son? When you do, explain the entire situation to him without going into the fact that he wanted the dog and now seems to have lost interest. You did not mention how old he is so Dear John will assume you can make him understand that this dog is better suited for a new home where he/she can exercise his/her God given talents. Having lost 32 pounds is usually a good thing, yet in your case it has come with a "heavy" price. Better to put the weight back on than to be weighed down with a constantly howling hound.

Sincerely,

Dear John

Have you got a question for Dear John? email to: dearjohn@writeme.com Real Name Not Used. Copyright 2023. All Rights Reserved.

Chuckles

My mother always used to say, "The older you get, the better you get. Unless you're a banana."

Betty White

Never miss a good chance to shut up.

Will Rogers

THE KIPLING KORNER

"Smells are surer than sounds or sights To make your heartstrings crack."

Vocabulary word – pleasure – a state or feeling of being pleased or gratified; source of enjoyment; amusement.

Ex. The crazy costumes on the dogs in the Parade of Barkus made me laugh.

The **STRAIGHT FORWARD FREE Press** 

Truth is Our Target
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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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Jillian Decker's Campaign Kickoff

Feb. 21 6-8 pm
Mid-County Baron Community Bldg.
FREE Food, Fellowship and T-Shirts...

Come on down!

REQUEST AN EMERGENCY BALLOT FOR THE MARCH 7 SPECIAL ELECTION

Registered voters who become physically incapacitated after 5:00 p.m. Monday, February 20 and cannot make it to the polls, still have an opportunity to cast their ballot. Adair County Election Board Secretary, Wilhite, said that state law permits voters who become emergency incapacitated after 5:00 p.m. Monday, February 20 to vote under special provisions. Wilhite said emergency incapacitation is something most voters don't think about. "Voting is our constitutional right, but life happens. Injury, illness, or even childbirth can prevent a voter from being able to go to the polls. That's why it's important to make sure voters know their rights in the event of an emergency."

If you or someone you know becomes physically incapacitated after 5:00 p.m. Monday, February 20 contact your County Election Board as soon as possible. Wilhite says Election Board officials will work with you to make sure you have all of the necessary information to cast your ballot. Forms and information can also be found on the Oklahoma State Election Board website at oklahoma.gov/elections.

The Adair County Election Board is located at 220 W. Division, Stilwell, Ok and is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Election Board officials can be reached at 918-696-7221 or by email at adair-county@elections.ok.gov.



Game 6 of 6: Final Game of this Kontest

The 5.0 Kontest is heating up and heading to the finish line. The winner will be declared in the March 2 issue. In the meantime, one can go back to any Game they might have missed and still submit a solution by simply going to the website: www.straightforwardfreepress.com for the back issues. The \$25 cash and calculator prize awaits. Today's Krypto uses the following numbers: 4, 6, 23, 9, 2. The answer is 12. Remember, you must use all 5 numbers and any combination of addition, subtraction, multiplication or division to write an expression that equals the answer. Give it a go! You might end up with a Krypto. It's fun!

Submit your solution by email to: themathguy@usa.com or snail mail to: Krypto Kontest 5.0 POB 885 Stilwell OK 74960

Searching for a Word – *abstinence* - the act or practice of refraining from indulging an appetite or desire.

Ex. For Lent I gave up eating chocolate for 40 days.



The Incomparable Christ

13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: Col 1:13

SCRIPTURE

Col 1:13 KJV

Scripture sponsored by:

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THE CONSERVATIVE VIEW

By Russell Turner

ABRAHAM AND LOT

As I look at the events that are happening in our country today, it has given me a huge appreciation of the biblical story of Abraham and Lot. In those days the relationship between Abraham and Lot became strained, and the best solution was for the two to go their separate ways; I guess in a way they came to a divorce agreement. Like many other Americans I watched the state of the union address by resident Biden. It is abundantly clear that he and his woke crowd do not look at life and government in the same way as I do.

I have heard many campaign speeches about the greatness of our nation. While those on the left worship at the altar of big government, we conservatives believe in freedom above all else. I could write several columns on the differences I have with our illustrious leader, but I will limit my responses to just a couple. I have the belief that government should stay out of our lives as much as possible, government should not be doing things for us that we can and should be doing for ourselves. The speech was full of proposals for more

perks from the government that someone, somewhere, would have to pay for. Biden keeps making the claim that no one making less than \$400k per year will not be paying more taxes, he continues the mantra that the rich and major corporations will have to pay their fair share. It is a fact that corporations don't pay taxes, they only pass the additional costs to the consumer. I know it, and Biden knows it as well. If more taxes are levied upon large businesses, the cost of their products will be increased to cover the additional cost and more money will come out of your pocket to buy the things you need.

Biden also brought up the subject of education. His solution is to spend more money and create more departments to give our children a free education. While he and other liberals complain that our test scores are not at the top of the list, there is one facet of education that we are rated number 1 on - we spend more on education per pupil than any other nation. The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting

a different result, it is time we spend the money we already have more wisely.

Biden also rambled about the need for comprehensive immigration reform. We already have immigration laws that he and his cronies are simply ignoring. Former president Trump had the border problem under control, so don't try to tell me that he cannot do his job and control our border. Biden also had the gall to complain about the fentanyl drug problem in this country; by his refusal to enforce our current border laws he has opened the flood gates for the drug cartels to ship that poison into our nation.

Big government makes slaves out of all of us. Government will enslave those who pay taxes and it makes the rest of society addicted to all of the programs that the liberals promote, in the end we are all slaves either by taxation or our dependence upon government. Every day I see the parallels of this country to the dilemma of Abraham and Lot. How long will it be until we Americans have to go our separate ways?

They Risked It All/It's the Truth MEMORIES OF FARM AND FAMILY

By Donna Boecher

#13

As I experience winter in Oklahoma, my prior home in New Orleans is in-the-midst-of parades which will culminate with Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) on February 21, 2023. The day begins and ends with parades by different "krewes." These crews, organizations of people (ex. Krewe of Zulu - dressed as Indians in hand-made feathered costumes), will walk or ride on floats while throwing trinkets or wrapped candy. Weeks prior, communities in Louisiana will have had parades. It is a time of excess prior

to 40 days of fasting - giving up a pleasurable food or activity. Many Catholic Christians will acknowledge their sins by having ashes applied on their forehead on February 22 (Ash Wednesday). This is an acknowledgment of sin and of Christ's 40 days in the wilderness which strengthened him to preach for 3 1/2 years of God's love before his crucifixion and resurrection. Each Friday from January 6th through Mardi Gras is celebrated with King Cake (an oval yeast braided sweet bread iced with Mardi Gras colors of

purple, gold, and green with a ceramic or plastic baby stuffed into the bottom). The cake is symbolic of the leavening of love expressed in Jesus as the Christ. Whoever gets the slice with the baby has a blessed day and traditionally brings the next cake to the event. It is a lovely tradition with a reminder of the Christ child who would bring the gift of salvation. If I can keep my kitchen warm enough next week, I hope to bake a King Cake. I will be making a new memory on the farm!



From Our Readers

Recreational Marijuana: Facts To Inform Your Vote On SQ820 PART 2.

Submitted by Jack Ogden

* Recent marijuana use (within 24 hours) directly affects parts of the brain responsible for decision-making, coordination, emotions and reaction time. It can impair important skills required for safe driving.

* Smoking any product, including marijuana, can damage the lungs: bronchitis, small blood vessel scarring, etc. It can increase the risk for stroke, heart disease and other blood vessel disease.

* Marijuana use has been linked to social anxiety, depression, suicide and schizophrenia. It's unproven if marijuana use directly causes these issues, but it may make symptoms worse.

* Vaping THC-containing products is linked to lung injury and even death. The higher the concentration, the higher the risks.

* Edible marijuana (food and drinks) takes longer to reach the desired effects. The delay may increase the

amount consumed, which may lead to poisoning or serious injury.

* Poly substance use. What is that? It is the use of two or more drugs close together, e.g., marijuana with alcohol, marijuana with opioids, marijuana with many prescription medications, can increase the risk for impairment and harm to the brain and body.

* Some people who use marijuana will develop marijuana use disorder. In spite of the health and social problems it causes, they cannot stop using it. Approximately 30% of users will have this disorder. The risk of developing this disorder is higher in people who start using marijuana during youth and those who use it more frequently.

* Marijuana as medicine: the Food and Drug Administration has approved one plant-based marijuana drug (Epidiolex, approved

for seizures associated with two rare forms of epilepsy). It has approved two medications developed in the laboratory that mimic THC: Dronabinol and Nabilone. These medications are used to treat nausea in cancer patients receiving chemotherapy and to increase appetite in AIDS patients. Voting is a privilege and a duty for all eligible citizens. When we have an election to express our opinion, we should exercise that opportunity. I urge you to become informed on this important decision. Please consider the long term effects on public health and safety for your family and neighbors. Make the effort. Normally, in a one-issue election, the turnout is low. That means a small proportion of eligible voters will make the decision. Make your vote count.

LAST WEEK TO REQUEST ABSENTEE BALLOTS FOR MARCH 7 SPECIAL ELECTION

The deadline to request absentee ballots by mail is approaching. Applications must be received by the County Election Board no later than 5 p.m. Monday, February 20.

Adair County Election Board Secretary, Jan Wilhite, says absentee voting is available to all voters and can be submitted several ways. "In Oklahoma, no excuse is needed to vote by absentee ballot, and it's easy to apply! Voters can submit their application online, in-person, by fax, mail, or even email." Voters can apply online using the OK Voter Portal at oklahoma.gov/elections/ovp. Applications are also available at the County Election Board or can be downloaded at oklahoma.gov/elections.



Wilhite reminds voters that only the applicant can submit his or her own absentee ballot application. It is against the law to submit an absentee ballot application for another person. Voters who submit their application in-person at the County Election Board will be asked to provide proof of identity. Voters with questions about absentee voting should contact the County Election Board at 918-696-7221 or adaircounty@elections.ok.gov.

The Adair County Election Board is located at 220 W. Division, Stilwell, Oklahoma and is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

WHAT'S SO PUNNY?

Pun Fun

Here we go again with more PUN FUN, where all puns are intended. So get your funny bone ready to be tickled or your face to be smiled. Puns are a great way to make light of your life. Get a load of these "dad jokes."

1. Heard Mentality: How do cows stay up to date? They read the Moo-spaper.
2. Close Shave: What do you call a line of men waiting to get a haircut? A barberqueue.
3. Bee Buzz: What do you call a beehive without an exit? Un-bee-leave-able.

4. An Exercise In Futility: I asked my date to meet me at the gym but she never showed up. I guess the two of us aren't going to work out?
5. Jamming: I found a wooden shoe in my toilet today. It was clogged.

Gotta stop for today. Laughter can wear one out. As a matter of fact, one can die laughing, but, then again, that is not a bad way to go! More PUN FUN coming your way in the next issue. Keep on smiling; keep on laughing!

ADAIR COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

Commentary by John Bankel

Westville Yellowjackets

The Yellowjackets traveled to Colcord on Friday, Feb. 10 to take on the Colcord Hornets in a non-district game. Westville ended up on the short end of a 57-46 score. They next play Howe in a non-district away game on Feb. 13. Game time is 7:30.

Westville Lady Yellowjackets

The Lady Yellowjackets ran into a tough Colcord squad on Friday, Feb. 10 losing 47-28 in a non-district away game. They

next play Howe preceding the boys game. Game time is 6 pm.

Cave Springs Hornets

The Cave Springs Hornets notched an impressive win to capture the District Championship on Saturday, Feb. 11. The next step in their quest for a state title will be at the Regionals held at Quinton. Game time not available.

Watts Engineers

No results were available at press time.

THE ROVING REPORTER IN AND OUT AND ROUNDABOUT STILWELL



This Baby Never Looked Better

Saw this one parked outside Ed's Auto. The owner, Jody Johnson, said he recently acquired this 1953 Ford Custom 2 door

sedan with a 302 V8 and an automatic transmission and a snazzy paint job. It is a classic oldie that never looked better!

Obituaries.....



Renetta Faye Nakedhead
December 15, 1976 ~ January 27, 2023 (age 46)




Sue Ann Smith
February 23, 1956 ~ February 5, 2023 (age 66)




Linda Carol Colston
December 10, 1960 ~ February 4, 2023 (age 62)



Presidential Fun Facts
Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) is the only U.S. president who was also a licensed bartender. He was co-owner of Berry and Lincoln, a saloon in Springfield, Illinois.

John Quincy Adams (1767-1848) would often skinny dip in the Potomac River.

Congratulations to our 3 lady wrestlers who competed today at Regionals in Sallisaw. Adrianna Chronister went 3-0 (qualified for state) Josaline Blevins went 2-1 and Jackie Morales went 1-2. Adrianna will wrestle in the finals tomorrow while Josaline will be wrestling for 3rd place.

The Lady Indian Wrestlers





ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

COMMENTARY BY JOHN BANKEL

Today's Trail Treks To A GIANT POT HOLE

Pot holes are a highway hazard. Road crews make a living out of filling them and it seems that that job is a never ending battle. Bad weather conditions are the main culprit for creating these annoying and dangerous fissures. Oklahoma roads are no exception. However, there is another kind of pot hole that may soon be plaguing our fair state. On March 7, voters will be deciding on State Question 820: The Legalization of Marijuana, aka, POT? Proponents of this measure tout the tax windfall this will create; some estimates are in the neighborhood of \$800 million dollars annually going into the state coffers. Yet, these folks largely ignore the downside. One only

has to look at states that have already gone down this road and see how they have fared? One such state is one of our neighbors, the state of Colorado. "Rocky Mountain High" has taken on a new meaning or perhaps a new "demeaning" since pot became legal. Colorado continues to sink deeper and deeper into a hole having gone from a conservative society to one of extreme liberalism. Look around and see what liberals do to a society? The demise into which Denver has sunk is not only astounding but could also be irreparable. Imagine Tulsa and OKC sinking into a similar hole and if those two cities become another Denver, then surely the rest

of the state will follow? Oklahoma would become a "giant pot hole." I will cast my vote on March 7 to do my part to put a lid on the pot. Here is hoping you will do the same.

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

John Bankel is a freelance journalist and a retired High School math teacher who can be reached at: writewright@journalist.com

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Community Bulletin Board

Stilwell Community Choir meets Stilwell Community Choir meets Tuesday, at First United Methodist Church, 7 pm. For more info 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.

Dates for 2023:

Jan 21, Feb 18, March 18, April 15, May 20, June 17, July 15, Aug 18, Sept 16, Oct. 21, Nov 18, Dec 16

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



Dist. 27 DA, N. Jack Thorp spoke at Adair County Republicans meeting...



The Hardin Report

Adair County Republican Party Meeting

Report by John Bankel

On Thursday, Feb. 11, the Adair County Republicans held their first meeting since October 2022 at the Stilwell Depot. Newly elected Dist. 1 Commissioner Charles Boecher and newly elected County Assessor Teresa Turner gave updates on their first months in office. Both stated that things are going well and they are looking forward to continued learning of their respective offices. District 86 State Representative, David Hardin, also gave an update on the new legislative

session, which began Feb. 6. (For the Hardin report please see "The Hardin Report" on a QR code elsewhere in this issue). The featured speaker was District 27 DA, N. Jack Thorp. He spoke at length about the marijuana growing operations in Oklahoma along with State Question 820, whereby voters will determine the legalization of recreational marijuana use. The feeling of the folks in attendance was a "No" vote.

QR for the weekly Legislative Update - 2/9/2023. I'm honored to serve the great people of House District 86. Please feel free to call me with any questions, concerns, or to discuss issues. The best way to reach me is to either call or text me on my cell phone, 918-507-2811 or call my office at 405-557-7394.

Presidential Fun Facts

Harding was obsessed with poker and once bet an entire set of priceless White House China and lost it.



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Presidential Fun Facts

Calvin Coolidge liked to have his head rubbed with petroleum jelly while eating his breakfast in bed.

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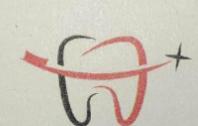
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