

# The STRAIGHT FORWARD

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**FREE** Press<sup>SM</sup>



Volume 2 • Issue 24

Serving Stilwell & Adair County, Oklahoma

Thursday January 19, 2023

## SPECIAL FEATURE

### Adair County Artist Vibe

Story by John Bankel

Adair County is home to many a talented artist or artisan, ranging from musicians, to painters, to writers, jewelry crafters and a luthier or two. In today's Artist Vibe we meet a couple who have begun a journey in which they incorporate their love of the Gospel with their gifts of making beautiful hand crafted jewelry and making beautiful musical instruments all for God's glory. Meet Jason "The Guitar Man" and his wife Cherokee "Faith, Feather and Leather" Moppin.

I first met Jason and Cherokee at the 2022 Stilwell Strawberry Festival. They had a booth in the southwest corner of the Courthouse parking lot. As an amateur guitar player, I was drawn to the display of some unusual looking stringed instruments that had a box for a body and only 3 strings. The friendly folks at the tent gave me a complete rundown of the "cigar box" guitar, but more than that, their fervor was fueled by something else as they spoke openly about their faith. At that time they told me that they were in the process of moving from Prairie Grove to Stilwell. I bought one of the "cigar box" guitars and a "cigar box" amp that runs on a 9 volt battery. It was just the other day when I was planning on doing an Artist Vibe feature, that Jason and Cherokee came to mind. They now live in Stilwell, in the same house in which Cherokee was born and raised, with 3 school age daughters. From the time this couple met at a family gathering in Hinesville, Arkansas, where Cherokee discovered that her nephew married Jason's cousin, Destiny had arrived. A year and a half later, they married and Jason's life began turning around through the strength of Cherokee's faith. He had grown up in a musical fam-

ily and had picked up the guitar at an early age. At around the age of 10, he decided that bluegrass was his thing. He became a plumber and a welder, alongside his music. He told me that his dream was to someday build and repair guitars. That dream began to crystallize in a most unusual way. It was in 2020, during the pandemic, that Jason got laid off. I asked him how he took that news? He said, "I felt a great weight had been lifted from me." With much prayer and encouragement from his helpmeet, Jason decided on going after his dream. Loaded with a full supply of cigar boxes, he began fashioning instruments and together they launched Christian Custom Guitars and Repairs and their mission of spreading the Good News. They began touring various venues, not so much to sell but to tell. Cherokee showed me four small "bottles/vials," each with a cork. When someone comes to the booth, perhaps a member of the younger set, she asks, "Would you like to hear 4 true stories?" Who can say no to that? She picks up the vial that has a tiny star in it and explains how the star was seen by the Magi, who had looked for it over the centuries and led them to the Christ Child. Then she picks up the sec-

ond vial, the one that has a tiny cross in it, and tells about the Saviour, who died thereupon for the sins of the world and promise of eternal life. Next she shows the vial with the tiny dove in it and tells about Noah seeing the dove with an olive branch in its beak heralding the end of the Flood, and about the dove that descended on the head of Christ as he was being baptized by John. And finally, the fourth vial containing a tiny mustard seed and how faith as small a mustard seed can move mountains. She said she has had youngsters that keep coming back and bringing someone else with them to hear those stories. Is that how faith moves mountains? Each one of her jewelry pieces, besides being ornamental, bears witness to her faith and is intended to glorify the Lord. There is so much more to tell about Jason and Cherokee, two faithful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, but space and time constrains me. For now, the rest of the story will be told as their lives continue to unfold. The QR codes below allow the reader to see and hear Jason playing one of his cigar box guitars and a most unusually cute one string "canjo." Enjoy!



Jason playing the cigar box guitar.



Jason playing the canjo.



Jason and Cherokee, partners in art and ministry



The cigar box workshop...



Each cigar box will become a guitar box...



Jason's custom electric...



Faith, feather and leather unique ornamentation...



One of Jason's finest...

### PROVERB POWER

Psalm 23:4 NKJV

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For thou art with me ; Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

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is now ONLINE on Google!  
[www.straightforwardfreepress.com](http://www.straightforwardfreepress.com)  
Check it out and enjoy!

# MOMENTS WITH MARIE

By Donna Boecher

Serial No. 19

Having hit pay dirt, Marie and Michael started looking for a small, out-of-the-way cheap motel, hotel, or boarding house where Rachael might have disappeared in plain sight. They could imagine Rachael looking for a safe haven! If she had chosen a boarding house, the family or

individual might still be letting rooms. Sure enough, on checking the thin telephone book with Organ numbers, a Boarding House was listed in bold print – located in the oldest section of Organ. The boarding house had been the main house on a large ranch which had been sold and broken up into small-

er saleable acreages. The ranching family had given Sylvia, their cook, the 1880s main house; it was the best “retirement package” she could have received. Flipping through the sign-in ledge, page 50 had Rachael Campbell’s scrawl. She’d checked in on a Monday at midday.

## AS TIME GOES BY

**As time goes by,**

You will loosen your grip on that rock, The one you always thought was home, And you will realize that home is not a place, It’s a state of mind. **Let it go.**

**As time goes by,**

You will learn to see yourself more clearly, The girl who was always too much of one thing, And too little of another, was actually Everything she needed to be. **Let her out.**

**As time goes by,**

You will let the simple things become the big, And you will allow the big things to become the simple, And that readjustment will be, The day you really start to live, **Let it be.**

**As time goes by,**

You will be forced to say goodbye many times, and your soft little heart will shatter but, It will still beat and that will bring you, All the purpose you need. **Let it beat.**

**As time goes by,**

You will stop choosing wealth over peace, you will stop choosing money over time, and you will see that the treasures you need, Are in the smiles and the laughter. **Let them in.**

**As time goes by,**

The moments you remember when your life flashes past, are never the awful memories my friend, it’s the joy, the summer nights, the lazy days with loved ones, the midnight chats and the morning hugs, **Let them happen.**

**Vocabulary word – vacuum – a space empty of matter.**

**Ex. My office was a vacuum having nothing but an empty table and one chair.**



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Donna Boecher.....Editor  
John Bankel.....Co-Editor/Journalist  
Stephanie Cullinane.....Composer

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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Dear John,

I have a friend who likes to store his junk at my house. A few years ago, he left five antique tractors in my front yard. He wanted to use the tractors to build one for himself in my husband’s shop. Then his ex-wife came back into the picture, and she didn’t like him working on tractor engines. He suddenly forgot about the old stuff he left at my house. He is too busy going out with his ex-wife and has forgotten all about me. The other day a couple of young men came looking for tractor parts. It was very lucky that the old tractors in my front yard have the parts they need. Looks like his loss is my gain. I’m selling the parts, and the left-over metal will be hauled away to the junk yard. Do you think that after storing his things for so long I’m entitled to some profit?

Mrs. Goodwrench

Dear Mrs. Goodwrench,

Your friend, no doubt, had good intentions when he dropped his tractors off and thus gave not much thought to any inconvenience they might impose on you. Yet we know the old saying about "good intentions," at least us older folks do. There is a point in time when property can be considered abandoned and in your case that point has probably arrived. Not only that, but you have most likely earned the right to be compensated for storing those tractors, so selling their parts will give you some relief. And finally, since his ex is once again running his life, those tractors will likely never cross his mind nor ever run again. Sell away Mrs. Goodwrench!

Sincerely,  
Dear John

Have you got a question for Dear John? email [dear-john@writeme.com](mailto:dear-john@writeme.com)  
Real Name Not Used  
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## They Risked It All/It’s the Truth MEMORIES OF FARM AND FAMILY

By Donna Boecher

Remember life at 7, 8, 9, and 10 years of age?? A farm spells ADVENTURE. The privacy of rural acreage! Sauntering alongside a shallow creek bed to the perfect swimming hole; smoking dried grapevine cigarettes while “visiting” the two-hole wooden out-house located in a wooded acre between the house and the vegetable garden; completing the chore of emp-

tying the white enameled “slop jar” with its wire bail handle, and feeding wheat “shorts” to the pigs along with the vegetable peelings. Since my Granny had a huge garden (40’x40’), there were always enough “thick” peelings to slop the hogs. She peeled that way on purpose – just for the pigs or maybe the chickens. BUT, you never give the pigs onion or tomato peel-

ings! Now I know the why! Solanine (in unripe tomatoes) CAN BE TOXIC and onion peelings ARE toxic for pigs. Don’t know if she knew why, but GRANNIES ARE ALWAYS RIGHT. Now you know. You may not be able to carry out a slop jar, but I know you have something special to do with and for your GRANNY. Go ask her.



# ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

COMMENTARY BY JOHN BANKEL

## Today's Trail Treks To.. The Rear View Mirror...Part 3

### What Watts Once Was

We pick up this story, as told by 1984 Watts High School valedictorian Lynette Langley, from where we left off in Part 2.

For several years Watts lived up to the claims of its promoters, and the town flourished. Unfortunately, its entire economic system was based almost completely upon the business generated by the railroad workers. This was Watts' fatal flaw. During the Depression of the 1930's, rail traffic decreased drastically, and, slowly but surely, the town began to die.

The introduction of the diesel engine was another blow to the once-booming railroad town. Unlike the old coal-fueled engines that stopped in Watts to take on coal and water to produce their steam power, the diesel-powered models

went much farther without refueling. Many of them began to pass through Watts without stopping.

As time went on, trucks took more and more business away from the railroad. The turntable was no longer needed, and was taken out in the 1950's. By the late 1950's, the trains only slowed up at Watts to deliver and take mail, using mail pouches and hooks. Even this service ended in the 1960's when trucks began to haul the mail. One by one, the once-prosperous businesses in Watts folded up. There was not enough industry to keep the town going without the support of the railroad.

Stay tuned for the rest of the story coming as Part 4 of "What Watts Once Was" in the next issue.

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

John Bankel is a freelance journalist and retired High School math teacher who can be reached at: write-wright@journalist.com  
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## Recycle Day Has Moved

Adair County Litter-Free & Green Recycle Day has moved to a new location beginning January 21st. Previously they have set up at the District 2 Barn on Hwy. 59 N but will now be behind Vonnie's Pawn Shop at 101 West Walnut. Patrons will enter the alley from 1st Street and after unloading they will exit onto 2nd Street. In addition to the normal recyclables, they will be collecting electronics at the January event. This includes televisions, computers, laptops, and tablets. Hours for pickup will be 9am to noon. For more information call Cathy at 918-696-1178 or Joyce at 918-696-7316.



**FOOTPRINT VALENTINE**  
- "From the tips of my toes to the bottom of my heart...". This is such an adorable idea!! More here:



# WHAT'S SO PUNNY?

## Pun Fun

The question is, "Do you like Questions?" Or how about questions that have funny answers? And questions that have funny answers become funny questions. Funny how that works? So how about a few of those for today's PUN FUN?

1. A Real Cackler: Why did the chicken go to the gym? To work on its pecks.
2. Sawyer's Tale: GUESS WHAT I SAW? Wood...
3. Once Around The

Table: Who built King Arthur's Roundtable. Sir Cumference.

4. Right Tool: And what kind of saw did Sir Cumference use? A Circular Saw.

5. Pachiderms Matter Too: Why was Dumbo sad? He felt irrelephant.

No question about it. These funks were sure to tickle your funny bone so keep your tickling going until the next PUN FUN where laughter always awaits. Adios!

### AMERICAN LEGION POST 102

American Legion members of post 102 Invite the public to join us for the Sweetheart dinner and dance \$10.00 donations at the door

**WHAT:** SWEETHEART DINNER AND DANCE

**WHEN:** FEBRUARY 11 2023

**TIME:** DINNER 5:00PM PRESENTATION OF AWARDS 7:00 PM  
DANCE 8:00 PM TILL 11:00 PM

**WHERE:** AMERICAN LEGION POST 102  
9TH OLIVE  
STILWELL OK

## ADAIR COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

Commentary by John Bankel

Watts Engineers

The boys and girls teams played the Cave Springs Hornets on Friday the 13th. At press time, no scores were available.

Westville Yellowjackets

On Friday the 13th, the Westville Yellowjackets boys basketball team took on the squad from Oktaha and came away with a disappointing loss in a 61-57 squeaker. The next game will be January 24 at Keys. Game time is 7:30 pm. The score for

the Lady Jackets was not available at press time. They will play at 6 pm before the boys game at Keys.

Cave Springs Hornets

On Friday the 13th, the Cave Springs Hornets boys and girls were scheduled to play Watts. No results were available at press time. The Hornets boys and girls next have a home game vs Hulbert on January 17. Girls start at 6pm followed by the boys.

## Community Bulletin Board

**Stilwell Community Choir meets Stilwell Community Choir meets Tuesday, January 24th 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

Searching for a Word – abundance, a great or plentiful amount.

Ex. Being married with children I had a true abundance.



# Obituaries.....



**Juanita Colleen Miggetto**  
September 1, 1942 ~  
January 10, 2023 (age 80)



**Frankie Sim Gonzalis**  
February 10, 1961 ~ Decem-  
ber 29, 2022 (age 61)



**Anthony Robert Smart**  
September 16, 1938 ~ De-  
cember 31, 2022 (age 84)



**Athena Sue (Drywater) Lurks**  
September 22, 1973 ~ January 5,  
2023 (age 49)



# STILWELL SPORTS SPOTLIGHT

Commentary by John Bankel

## Indians and Lady Indians Basketball

The Indians maintained their winning ways on Tuesday, January 10 when the Muldrow Bulldogs came to town. The Bulldogs had the fight taken out of them early as the Indians shellacked them with a resounding score of 82-33. The Indians now own a stellar record of 10-2 and continue to blaze a trail that should take them deep into the battle for the Class 4A State title. Stilwell next travels to Spiro to take on the Spiro Bulldogs who come into the game with an overall record of 2-7 with 1-5 in district play.

### Lady Indians

The Lady Indians have had their ups and downs this season, sometimes putting on a dazzling display of ball handling and shooting. Indeed, in their home game on Tuesday, January 10, versus the Muldrow Lady Bulldogs, they throttled Muldrow while taking a 32 point advantage into halftime. The second half turned into a disaster as the Bulldogs fought their way back to turn what looked like a sure loss into a stunning win by a score of 51-46. Stilwell Travels To Spiro

On Friday, January 13, the Indians and Lady Indians traveled to Spiro to take on the Spiro Bulldogs. Both the Boys and Girls tacked on wins as the Boys throttled Spiro by a score of 66-40 while the Girls blasted their opponent by a hefty margin, 51-36.

The Indians and Lady Indians both play in a Fort Smith tournament starting Jan 19 thru Jan 21. The Indians enter the contest ranked #10 in the State Class 4A division with a stellar record of 11-2. GO INDIANS!



Battle of the boards!



Flying high to score!



Boy's Score Board



Girls Score Board



Stilwell poised to shoot!



Up and In!



January is school board appreciation month and we'd like to thank our members individually each week!

Donna Wheeler is our Stilwell School Board Vice President. Thank you for your service in helping Stilwell children thrive! #stilwellspirit

Psalm 28:7

7 The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

**SCRIPTURE**

Psalm 28:7 KJV

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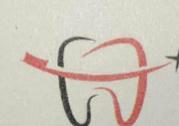
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Isaiah 9:2  
Luke 2:32

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Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak.

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**Granny's Words of Wisdom:**  
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Rick Stubblefield, Agent

Me: "I'm still tired from all the crossfit this morning."  
My co-worker: "It's pronounced 'croissant' and you ate 4 of them."

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