

# The STRAIGHT FORWARD



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# FREE Press<sup>SM</sup>

Volume 2 • Issue 37

Serving Stilwell & Adair County, Oklahoma

Thursday May 4, 2023

## Stilwell Track Team Enjoys Booster Club Dinner



### EDUCATION SPECIAL

### 2022-23 School Year Is Coming To A Close As Stilwell Strawberry Festival Draws Near

Students and teachers throughout Adair County are counting the days until the final school bell rings out the 2022-23 school year. Everyone is eager for Summer vacation to begin. Over this past school year, much has been accomplished both academically and in the athletic arena. The photos on this page are just a small sample of those achievements. Adair County schools get out earlier than most in Oklahoma. The reason for that stems from the robust strawberry farming that permeated this neck of the woods over the past several decades. The number of growers elevated Stilwell to be named "The Strawberry Capital Of The World." That monicker still stands today, although the number of growers has dwindled significantly. Strawberry growers needed summer spending money. It was only natural to have students pick the berries that were ripe for the picking as early as the first week in May. The schools adjusted their calendar accordingly. However, the number of students who can be found in the fields bending over looking for berries

on the vine has also dwindled and perhaps today is all the way down to zero? Be that as it may, there is a grower who is promoting strawberry farming among the youth of Adair County, having launched sort of a revival effort. His name is Bryce Miller from Miller Farms. He and his wife, Lindsey, are building quite a reputation with their prize winning berries and perhaps will play the role of spearheading a new era of Stilwell Strawberries. The celebration of the annual Stilwell Strawberry Festival 2023 takes place on Saturday, May 14. It is the longest running festival in Oklahoma and often attracts a swarm of as many as 30,000 people. The highlights of the Festival are the crowning of the Festival Queen and the auctioning off of the prize winning strawberries. Stilwell strawberries are exceptional in flavor, color and juiciness. If you have never tasted one, then by all means, come on down to the Festival! Meanwhile, the school clock keeps winding down to summer vacation. Wishing all a great Summer!



Stilwell Track would like to thank the Athletic Booster Club for the dinner after the Regional Track Meet yesterday. We did not leave hungry. Thanks for all you do for our Athletic programs.  
By: Kayna Fourkiller

Stilwell Track put on an impressive performance on Saturday at the 4A Regional Track Meet in McAlester. They will send 6 girls and 1 boy to the State Meet in Ardmore next weekend. The Lady Indians finished as Regional Runner-Up. Stilwell Track is coached by Nick Davis and Ryan Smith.

Competing at the State Meet will be:

- Windi Holmes(HJ, 300m hurdles, 4x200m relay, 4x400m relay)
- Prairie Holmes(HJ, 4x100m relay, 4x200m relay, 4x400m relay)
- Snowda Watie(LJ, 4x100m relay, 4x200m relay, 4x400m relay)
- Shannon Catron(4x100m relay, 4x200m relay, 4x400m relay)
- Kinley Catron(4x100m relay)
- Emily Cruz(800m run, 1600m run, 3200m run)
- Brayden George(1600m run)

# 4A STATE QUALIFIER

4X100 RELAY  
4X200 RELAY  
4X400 RELAY

**JUNIOR:  
SHANNON CATRON**

#### PROVERB POWER

Romans 8:1 KJV

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

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Check it out and enjoy!

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

Number 22

By Donna Boecher

Often Christians speak about taking time to go into their Prayer Closet to speak with God. Somewhere in my youth I made God's glorious countryside – my closet. It's the best! He surrounds and covers the open spaces with towering verdant trees; then HE dresses and redresses my closet, moment to moment, with magnificent blossoms in unbelievably beautiful colors and textures. Soon a

closet wall of peonies will be wide open in intense pink. The male "catkins" of my almost century-old oak have dropped, declaring there will be acorns from the lady oaks come Fall. Warmer temperatures are signaling my next seasonal "closet" project – pull out granny's lawn chairs and prepare them for painting. Metal lasts longer outside than treated wood, so I'll need to repair and re-

treat my two-person swing with teak or neem oil after a good sanding. Just another place to thank Him. Think I'll hoe a row of two for old-time flat-leaf Zinnia seeds near the swing and giant sunflower seeds eastward where the sun shines all day. How gorgeous it will be to have live color outside and cut blooms inside, yet all the while speaking to HIM in my closet.

## Straight Forward FREE Press

### Catching our readers up on missed articles from April 6, 2023

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

April 6, 2023

By Donna Boecher

My grandmother only had two books in the house. Number one – the Bible, number 2 – an old compilation of Readers Digest stories left by someone. Sundays I would be picked up by kin and taken to Grace Chapel at Horn to hear the "missionary ladies" – Gladys Bowman and Alma Allying speak or to First Christian Church in Stilwell. Other than that, there was week-day television viewing until 9, but only after supper when the dishes had been scalded and dried. I remember watching "original viewing" of Gunsmoke when I was 10. The back wall of Granny's ceiling-high

canning shelves was the site of the TV. PaDick and Granny's rocking chairs faced the brick fireplace. They just looked a little to the left to view. Uncle Node (Granny's brother) would ritualistically at 8 vacate his oak woven chair which was in the door gap between the living room and the dining room. He was always up by dawn for chores. Granny would have a full-blown breakfast when he returned from morning chores. There were no "slackers" in the home, everyone had their chores . . . their responsibilities. PaDick would pass on 24 April. My daughter was born on 24 April,

years later. Granny lived to see her and ask that we buy her a gold baby ring.

### The Road Not Taken Robert Frost - 1874-1963

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence  
Two roads diverged in a wood,  
and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.



Dear John,

My aunt gave me some cherries that she froze from her tree last summer. I made a pie to take to a funeral at church. I think it was the best-looking crust I ever made. There was one tiny problem when it was discovered that the cherries still had pits. The other ladies in the kitchen tried to find out who made the pity pie. I was so embarrassed, I blurted out, "why don't we leave the pie dish out to see who picks it up?" I can't believe I said that. Of course, I knew that the pie dish wouldn't be going home with me. Later I learned that our pastor's wife cracked her tooth on one of the pits. I just can't win. I feel kind of bad about that. I was thinking that I could send her a card and tell her that I'm sorry. I just don't want to put my name to it. I don't think the good Lord will send me to that other place for that do you?

The Cherry Pit

Dear Cherry Pit...Oh the trouble we seek as we spin yarns or, maybe better put, tell fibs. You could have told the truth right there on the spot as soon as your pity pie was discovered. The backlash would have been minor compared to the anxiety that your tall tale has caused you. As far as going to the other place because of this peccadillo, Dear John can assure you that a confession is in order for your conscience sake plus the Lord will forgive you. And the next time you bake a pie, check for pits.

Sincerely,

Dear John

Have you got a question for Dear John? send to: dear-john@writeme.com Real Name Not Used  
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**Vocabulary Word:** trick – practice meant to deceive or defraud; a mischievous act.

Ex. All the children say "trick or treat" on Halloween to get candy from their neighbors, but seldom do they "trick" the neighbors.



## Mark 12:30

King James Version

30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

### SCRIPTURE

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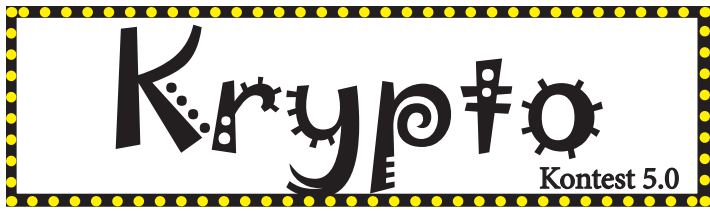
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Donna Boecher.....Editor  
John Bankel.....Co-Editor/Journalist  
Stephanie Cullinane.....Composer

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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# THE CONSERVATIVE VIEW

By Russell Turner

## PLAYING CHICKEN

I can remember stories about individuals playing chicken with their autos. Two guys would get on the road facing each other at a pretty good distance, then they would speed off at one another and the first one who would turn off of the road would be considered the chicken and the car remaining on the road would be the winner. In reality, it was a stupid challenge and there have been several crashes because neither one wanted to be called a chicken. What I am seeing taking place in our nation's capital reminds me of the game of chicken. The big difference is when two individuals play chicken with their lives and cars it only affects them, the battle going on in Washington is a struggle for the economic survival of our nation.

Biden and his cohorts are counting on the mainstream media to come to their aid and make the Republicans look bad before the American people. The Democrats are wanting a so-called clean debt-increasing au-

thorization so that they can continue to spend money that we do not have. On the other hand, the Republicans are demanding spending reductions along with increasing the debt limit. The Democrats remind me of a bunch of spoiled brat children who want to throw a fit if their parents don't give them whatever they want. I don't care how rich you think you are; if anyone does not use common sense in their spending habits, they will eventually go broke. We Americans passed that threshold about 31 trillion dollars ago.

The left and their media allies are very good at applying pressure on anyone who does not go along with their perverted ideas, most of them do not have the background to understand the sweat and hard work that goes into accumulating wealth. My parents and my whole family had to work for whatever we have; I have found that work will make you appreciate the value of money. We are not like the Biden

family organization who rake in money from foreign countries, many of whom are our sworn enemies. I believe that the House of Representatives will pass the Republican bill, but it will face an uphill battle in the Senate, and Biden has vowed to veto it if it makes it to his desk.

In the past, the Republicans have always blinked at the last moment and the liberals have always won their game of chicken. They will claim that the Republicans are jeopardizing the economy of our nation, they are even claiming that the Republicans are holding them hostage. I urge the Republicans to hold their ground, if they do blink and allow the liberals to have their way the economy will crash due to endless debt and frivolous spending. Sadly, there is no good answer to the dilemma we are in, it is hard to avoid a crash when you are on the road playing chicken with a bunch of idiots driving head on towards you.

## Oklahoma Scholarship Competition Awards Eight Freshman Scholarships



Eight of our Freshmen received a \$1,000 scholarship from the 2023 Oklahoma Scholarship Competition. Legacie O'Neal, Piper Blackburn, Aspyn Cochran, Hayden Cothren, William Tate, Lane Long, Elijah Diver, and Lili Sosa.

**Searching for a Word:** – escapade – a playful or mischievous act intended as a joke.

Ex. The children put a rubber mouse under their teacher's desk to scare her.



### Week 5

Hello Krypto fans. This Kontest is on the verge of ending. However, due to the fact that there were 2 weeks with no print copy available, Krypto Kontest 6.0 is now extended an extra 2 weeks. This is week 5. The Kontest now will end in Week 8. If you have not gotten into the game, now is your chance to score some points and maybe snag the prize: \$25 Cash and a new calculator. Today's Krypto has an answer of 25. You are playing with 4, 9, 19, 22, 7. Remember, you must use all 5 numbers, without repetition, and any combination of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to write an expression that equals the answer. Try it out. It is challenging and fun to find a solution. And when you do, you can email it to: themathguy@usa.com or snail-mail to:

### Week 4

3 Weeks down and 3 to go before the end of this Kontest. The race is still open for anyone to win. The prize is \$25 Cash and a brand new calculator. But don't wait too long; before you know it, this opportunity will be long gone. Today's Krypto has 13 as the answer. You are playing with 23, 7, 16, 25, 8. Remember, you must use all 5 numbers and any combination of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to write an expression that equals the answer. Some Kryptos are easier than others but if you do not at least give it a try, you will never know if you can do it. Besides the challenge it is always brain teasing fun!...Give it a go!

### Week 3

Hello all you Krypto Kontest fans! Week 3 is here. There is still plenty of time to get in on this iteration of the Kontest and win the \$25 Cash and Calculator prize. So, while you are resting and wondering what to do, why not get your pencil and paper out and fiddle with these numbers: The answer is: 18 and you are playing with 2, 9, 12, 5, 23. Remember, you must use all 5 numbers and any combination of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to write an expression that equals the answer. Give it a shot and have some Krypto fun!

### Week 2

This 6 week long Kontest moves into Week 2. For this time around the answer is 22. You are playing with: 9,12,4,5, 15. Remember, you must use all 5 numbers and any combination of addition, subtraction, multiplication or division to write an expression which equals the answer. Give it a twirl. It may just surprise you how much fun it is and maybe you will emerge as the winner of the \$25 cash and calculator prize. Voila!

### Week 1

The answer is 4. You are playing with:

7, 13, 23, 6, 2. Remember you must use ALL 5 numbers with any combination of addition, subtraction, multiplication or division to write an expression that equals the answer. Give it a try? It is a ton of fun!

# ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

COMMENTARY BY JOHN BANKEL

## Today's Trail Treks To MEEP MEEP

Just a reminder that The Roadrunner and Wile E Coyote are still going round and round. They have matriculated to the American political scene and have taken on new personages. Instead of a cartoon on TV, the cartoon is more a cartoonish melodrama than an actual cartoon. The leading characters in this melodrama? One is known as "The Orangeman", aka, Donald J Trump, a figure for The Roadrunner. The other is known as the "Furtive Fool," aka, the democrat party, a figure for Wile E Coyote. How long has it been since the "Furtive Fool" first started his attempt to nab "The Orangeman?" The time line started when "The Orangeman" first announced his candidacy for POTUS. At every step of the way, the "Furtive Fool" attempted to throw a monkey wrench into "The Orangeman's" agenda. Recall the Russian Collusion hoax? Followed by 2 impeachment hoaxes. Included in that mix were lawsuits against "The Orangeman's" com-

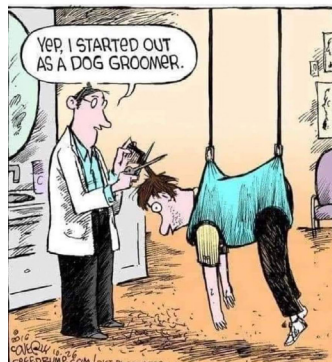
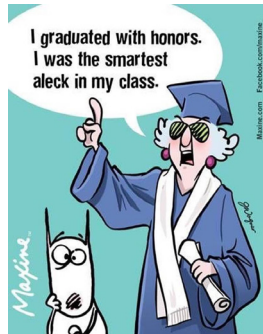
panies. And then there was the fake news about the so called "insurrection." Recently released Video footage shows more of a walk in the park with the Capitol Police serving as tour guides than an armed insurrection. The reality of the phony "insurrection" has been gas lighted and categorically denied by the "Furtive Fool." In each of those aforementioned episodes, it appeared that the "Furtive Fool" had gotten the goods on "The "Orangeman" and the "anvil was about to drop." In the cartoon, Wile E Coyote has yet to nab The Roadrunner. All we hear is the hollering of "MEEP MEEP" as The Roadrunner whizzes by the befuddled Coyote. The latest attempt by the "Furtive Fool", the indictment, has brought the democrat party to a new low; even lower than their head Fool's basement. Political theater has never been this rich before. We can thank the democrat party for bringing us this version of "The Roadrunner." Catch him if you

can. He is "The Orangeman." All we can say is, "MEEP MEEP."

Today'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. Vaya Con Dios!

John Bankel is a freelance journalist and retired High School Math teacher and can be reached at: [writewright@journalist.com](mailto:writewright@journalist.com)

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## STILWELL SPORTS SPOTLIGHT

Commentary by John Bankel

### Kids Get A Kick Out Of Soccer

It does not take much to entertain kids. Just give them a ball and let them kick it around and run after it. That's all it takes! No cell phones needed! If you ever want to see genuine organized chaos, go see a kid's soccer game. I ended up at Carson Park on Thursday, April 20. I ran into some folks that I knew who had a kid or two playing: one in the 4,5, and 6 age group. The other in the 7,8. The games are played on a scaled down field with much smaller goals. There are between 4 and 5 players on a side, instead of the

usual 11. The kids are genuinely engaged in the pursuit of a rolling ball. The spectators, all either sitting on lawn chairs or standing, are heard fervently and continuously yelling, "Kick it!" "Kick it!" And the kids are just as fervent in trying to kick the ball. Sometimes they completely miss and are left with an astonishing look on their incredulous faces! Funny! And sometimes they only manage to kick someone's shin. Funny! It appears they have no concept of playing a position since they constantly cluster around the

ball as bees surrounding a hive. There is no goalie, so the net sits there just waiting for a rolling soccer ball to invade its seemingly cavernous opening. The younger group has only a faint notion of kicking the ball in the direction of the goal and, yet, nonetheless the ball ends up there every once in a while, but usually by pure accident. "Kick it!" Kick it!" is the cry of happy soccer kids and their mother's and father's. Sure beats computer games!

## WHAT'S SO PUNNY? PUN FUN

Sometimes PUNS deviate from the conventional word play. Today we have an assortment of jokes that are not only funny, but are clever to boot and don't fit into the conventional pun mold. One might say, "They are a hoot." Some may take a moment of thinking before they register but that's ok as long as you get a laugh out of it. So, your funny bone will feel a tingle and your ribs will feel a tickle and you may find yourself breaking out in unabashed laughter. That's what PUN FUN is all about!

science is what hurts when all your other parts feel good.  
4. Elevating Thoughts: All those who believe in psycho kineses, raise my hand.  
5. Pass The Cheese Please: The early bird may get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.

There you have it! Your ribs probably cannot take any more tickling and your funny bone may be out of joint from all the laughter but that is ok as long as your nose is not out of joint.

Here is hoping that you will find humor in everything you do, for without laughter life becomes a droll experience. Stay tuned for next week's PUN FUN.

1. Money Sense: Borrow money from a pessimist... they do not expect it back.
2. Halves Have It: Half the people you know are below average.
3. Oh Bother: A con-



## The Hardin Report

QR for the weekly Legislative Update - 4/20/2023. 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.



The Stilwell Lady Indians Softball fall just short of making the state tournament. They fall to Dickson 8-5. Congratulations on your season and we can't wait until next year.

### THE KIPLING KORNER

"This is a brief life, but in its brevity It offers us some splendid moments, Some meaningful adventures."

# Obituaries.....




**Francine (Galcatcher) Frogg**  
October 21, 1957 ~ April 13, 2023






**Janet C Handle**  
August 21, 1946 ~ April 15, 2023 (age 76)






**Tracy Lynn (Pennington) Moore**  
March 18, 1966 ~ April 17, 2023 (age 57)


**Kenneth Anthon Block**  
January 17, 1933 ~ April 11, 2023 (age 90)

**Betty Delois Burke**  
September 22, 1933 ~ April 13, 2023 (age 89)

**Audrey M (Broad) Gass**  
October 17, 1932 ~ April 19, 2023 (age 90)




**Betty Lou (Stevens) Keeter**  
March 11, 1928 ~ April 22, 2023 (age 95)



When I get to work, the first thing I do is hide . . .



. . . because they say a good worker is hard to find!



## Community Bulletin Board

**Adair County Litter-Free & Green** Litter-Free & Green Recycle Day  
Schedule: April 15, May 20, June 17, July 15, Aug 18, Sept 16, Oct 21, Nov 18, Dec 16. Location: Behind Vonnie's Pawn Shop at 101 W. Walnut St, Stilwell OK. Hours: 9am to noon. For more info. contact Cathy at 696-1178 or Joyce at 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 **Bethal Church** Everyone Welcome

**Mother's Day is May 14, 2023**

# ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

COMMENTARY BY JOHN BANKEL

## Today's Trail Treks To The Perils Of Safety

When I was a kid, bicycle helmets did not exist, nor did knee and elbow pads. I rode my bicycle like a daredevil on the streets of Chicago, sipping on a bottle of a nickel coke and nibbling on a cady bar with no hands on the handlebars. Turning a corner with no hands was a breeze. I never gave a thought of coming to a crashing halt or falling off my bike. And when I sometimes did crash, I picked myself up, got back on that bike and rode away. That two wheel critter and I were a harmonious whole. Seatbelts in cars did not exist. I went roller skating on the cement sidewalk in shorts and a tee-shirt. When I fell, because of some crazy move I was trying for the first time, I picked myself up and kept skating, many times with a skinned knee or elbow

or both. Getting hurt was never in my mind, but having a blast was. Apparently my mother and father had no reservations either. If I came home with a skinned knee, my mother did not freak out and lament in anguish. In those days, it was all a part of growing up. Today is different. The so called "safety measures" that exist today for the kids do the opposite of what they are intended for. Instead, kids today are mollicoddled and bubble wrapped to the point where both the parents and child exist in a constant state of fear and worry! How safe is that? Perhaps a helmet or knee pads or a seatbelt can protect a child from injury but what about the long term damage that a child can suffer to its psyche? Stifling a child's natural tendencies to live

a "daring" existence for the sake of safety measures that our society has imposed upon our children can have a long term perilous effect. Let the children play freely is the best remedy for the perils of safety. They will live more fulfilling and interesting lives. As the saying from the old days goes: you can bet your bottom dollar on that!

Today'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. Vaya Con Dios!

John Bankel is a freelance journalist and a retired High School Math teacher who can be reached at: [writewright@journalist.com](mailto:writewright@journalist.com)  
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Litter-Free & Green Earth Day poster contest winners. Top photo is Ms Vanderheiden's 3rd grade at Stilwell. They won the judges pick and the bottom photo is Mrs. O'Neal's 3rd grade at Maryetta winning the peoples choice award. We treated them with cupcakes. By: Cathy Dillard Unger



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and let not your hands be weak.

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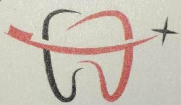
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