

# KINGFISHER MONTHLY

FREE



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A KINGFISHER COUNTY  
CHRISTMAS

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LOCAL EATS

RIBBON CUTTING FOR CTTC'S  
NEW ANNEX BUILDING

Highlighting the Best of Kingfisher County  
MONTHLY EDITION NO. 11 NOVEMBER 2025



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Debbie Biehler, with Joy Hill, at the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the Chisholm Trail Technology Center's new Debbie Biehler Annex, named in her honor for her exceptional commitment to the Career Tech. Photo by All About Network Jack Quirk.

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# Editor's Note



**“News moves fast, but a photo can stop time.”**

**Jack Quirk – CEO & Founder, The All About Network**

I literally grew up in Television News, like, in it. My dad was an NBC Photojournalist, and I spent much of my childhood tagging along covering news.

After moving to Oklahoma, I launched KJ FilmWorks and found my way back into the news, working with KOCO 5, CNN, NBC, and The Weather Channel. But something kept bugging me: small towns like Hennessey and Kingfisher were being left out. Unless there was a tornado, a cow stampede, or some local disaster, the big outlets didn't pay attention.

In 2017, I created the All About Hennessey Facebook page, covering everything from school plays and business grand openings to parades and breaking news (and yes, the occasional cow stampede).

Eight years later, that little page has turned into The All About Network, covering six communities across north-central Oklahoma, including Kingfisher. Now, 11 team members, all working like caffeinated squirrels, bring you All The Stuff You Need To Know, 24/7-365.

And we're just getting started.

# Contributors



**Ivan Cabral**  
*Operations*

Ivan is the engine that keeps the All About Network running smoothly. As head of operations, he's responsible for the behind-the-scenes logistics that make everything tick from managing production schedules and coordinating distribution to keeping equipment, systems, and people in sync. Ivan is detail-oriented, highly organized, and always ready to jump in wherever needed. Whether it's troubleshooting a last-minute issue or streamlining workflow across teams, he ensures deadlines are met and standards stay high.



**Angela Bruner**  
*Digital Art Director*

As Digital Art Director for the All About Network and Designer for all publications, the role sets the creative vision across every platform. Responsibilities include guiding the network's websites and publication layouts to keep every campaign sharp, consistent, and on brand. Working closely with the team, fresh ideas are sparked, original artwork is developed, and multiple projects are managed with precision. Creativity blends with strategy to ensure each design strengthens the network's marketing direction, keeping the brand visually engaging across print, digital, and social platforms.



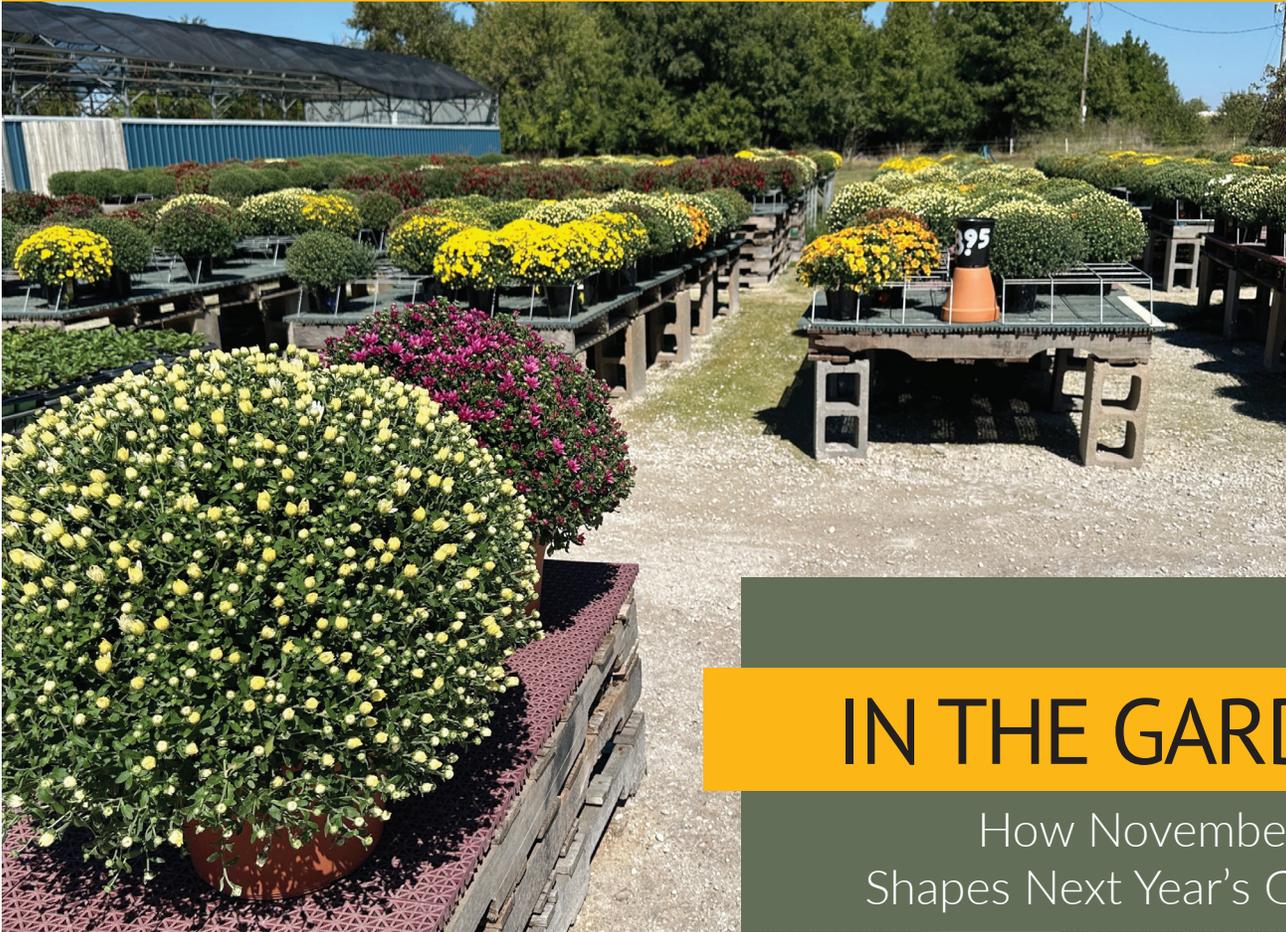
**Maitland Woody**  
*Multi-Media Journalist*

Maitland is a dynamic Multi-Media Journalist for All About Kingfisher, known for her sharp instincts, creative eye, and commitment to capturing the stories that matter most to the community. Whether she's behind the camera, reporting in the field, Maitland brings a versatile skill set and a storyteller's heart to every assignment. She's skilled in video production, photography, writing, and digital content creation often juggling all four to bring local news to life. Her ability to connect with people and deliver compelling, accurate coverage makes her an essential part of the All About Kingfisher team.



**Amy Smith**  
*Business Development*

Amy is the friendly face of our sales team and the go-to for customers looking for real solutions with a personal touch. She has a natural talent for building relationships, understanding what clients truly need, and delivering results that hit the mark. With a solid grasp of our products and services, Amy communicates value clearly and confidently, whether she's chatting in person, over the phone, or online. She's organized, approachable, and always focused on making sure customers walk away happy and come back for more. Amy doesn't just sell, she connects, solves, and supports every step of the way.



# IN THE GARDEN

## How November Shapes Next Year's Garden

by Mauricia Taggart LaBlanc of Taggart's Garden Center

November brings thoughts of family meals, cold nights, and fall color to our minds here in Oklahoma. While we don't always have much to do in the cold months of the year, we should never put gardening completely out of our minds. During this month, the leaves will turn colors, things will die back, and the earth seems to go dormant. We should do things to help make our springs easier and enhance our local biomes, such as make plans for what we want to grow next year, being able to reflect on what worked and didn't work this last year, and take proper care of our ground until the spring warms it up.

Plans for next year don't need to be big and expansive, or even very detailed yet. This is the time to try to decide if you liked the size of your garden plot or if you want to do any major landscaping in the spring. If you decide that you want to expand the beds, November is a good time to put down compost or manure to help enrich the soil and feed the soil

over the winter. If the beds are too big for you, let the grass start to grow back, and that will help more in the spring to make the lawn thicker. If landscaping is on the agenda, now is a good time to start looking for what you like the look of and trying to plan what you want to get or move.

Looking back on the growing season of this year is often helpful in deciding what you want to grow for next year. For example, if you didn't have enough tomatoes for your household this year, you may need to decide to expand your area or even shift crops. Or, if you had more pollinators this year than you have had in previous years, you may decide to plant more host plants or pollinator-friendly plants. These observations are ones that are important to reflect upon throughout the fall and winter season so that you can have a more fruitful growing season next year.

Taking care of the soil and the insects that are hibernating is one of the biggest ways that you can

help your gardening success for next year. As the leaves fall and coat the ground, if possible, leave the leaf litter where it falls to encourage shelter and warmth for insects such as fireflies that hibernate in fallen foliage throughout the winter and early spring. If you decide to move the material, pile it in the forgotten corner of the yard or even use it as a mulch around your trees and perennials. Along with giving cover, the litter will break down and enrich the soil under it, and help add nutrition back into the ground without having to amend as much.

Learning to be a good steward of your area is beneficial not just for you and your family, but for the environment around you, and internally to help harbor a sense of belonging to something bigger than yourself. A little planning and thought can go a long way in preparing for another good season and will give you a leg up when the season starts!

# THE STAINED GLASS SISTERS



her eyes bright. Once a week, the three gather in that workshop, crafting beauty from glass and memory.

Bridget began stained glass work forty years ago, learning from Jane Hightower. Around the same time, their older sister Kathy quietly took up the same craft. For a while, neither knew the other was doing it, like two poets writing from different corners of the world. Kathy passed away from lung cancer in 2002, but her spirit lingers in their shared love of color and light.

The sisters spoke fondly of a trip to Ireland, taken to honor Kathy's wish. They remembered green hills, laughter, and moments stitched together like pieces of stained glass, fragile yet radiant.

Their motto is simple: If Taryn can make stained glass, anyone can! Their windows now glow in faraway places, including a church in Guatemala, the Kingfisher Hospital chapel, and the Center of Family Love in Okarche. Taryn and Megan have worked in stained glass for thirty-three years, mastering the Tiffany technique, wrapping each piece in copper before soldering it into place, as if binding light together with fire.

As I sat in the corner, sunlight poured through the windows, scattering gold across the table where Megan worked. She measured, traced, and fitted each shard with quiet precision. The window taking shape before me would outlast us all, a testament to hands guided by love.

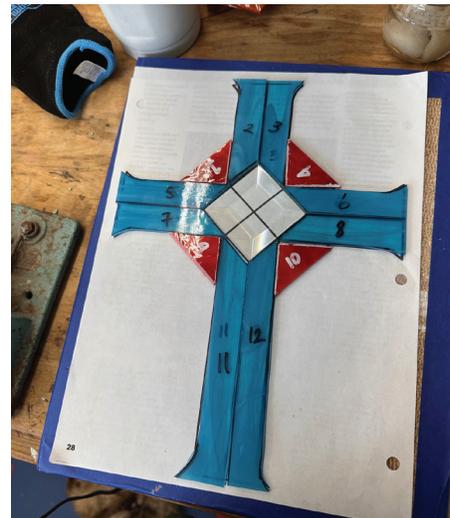
Before I left, Bridget said something that stayed with me: "What is broken is made new in beauty."

She could not have known how heavy my heart had been or how deeply I needed those words. Maybe forgetting that check was not an accident after all. Maybe God was simply guiding me to that small workshop by the alley, to three sisters who mend the broken with light.



## All About Network Bonny Flesher

*Staff writer and resident of Kingfisher, Oklahoma. She contributes to "All About Kingfisher" through her column "Transitions by Bonny," where she shares local stories and insights. Her work reflects a deep connection to the Kingfisher community and its history.*



This week, my heart felt heavy, maybe from the world's turmoil or one of those quiet moods that drift in without warning.

On Thursday, under a soft autumn sun, I texted my lawn guy, Randy Kuehn, to add me to his list. I had forgotten to leave the check in our usual hiding spot, and mid-meeting my phone buzzed: "Did you forget something?" Embarrassed, I drove to his house afterward to hand it over. His wife, Taryn, came out to the porch, her smile warm and familiar. We're all retirees from Pioneer Telephone, so we lingered, swapping names and stories like old friends. That's when the real story began.

I had long known that Taryn and her sisters made stained glass, their luminous work gracing windows around town. When I mentioned writing about their art, her eyes lit up. "Come by tomorrow," she said. "Use the back door." It was the kind of invitation that promises coffee, laughter, and a little magic.

The next afternoon, gravel crunched under my tires as I turned down the alley to their shop. Two friendly dogs met me at the door, tails wagging. Inside, I found Taryn with her sisters Bridget and Megan. I knew Bridget from her years as an ER nurse, steady hands and a calm heart. Megan, the youngest, also a nurse, smiled easily,

# Strong Backs, Old Souls, and Jobs Done Right: Grunt Work Guys



Do you have a honey-do list that reads more like a novel than a checklist? Are the weeds winning the war? And that garage, is it one box away from becoming a storage unit? Then it's time to call the **Grunt Work Guys**.

So, who's the guy bold enough to take on everyone else's grunt work? That would be Kingfisher's own **Robert Barnett**, the kind of worker who shows



**For Robert, it's never just a job; it's about making life easier for his neighbors.**

up early, brings a respectful, old-soul demeanor, and doesn't quit until the job is done right. For Robert, it's not just about finishing a task; it's about making life easier for his neighbors. His girlfriend, Remington, runs the marketing side (and dreamed up the name and logo), leaving Robert to focus on the heavy lifting.

What kind of jobs land on their list? Their services stretch as wide as Oklahoma skies: trimming trees before they swallow the house, hauling off junk you swore you'd "deal with later," clearing out

garages packed with forgotten hobbies, sprucing up flowerbeds, or even hanging Christmas lights. And yes, he'll sweep your chimney too, because soot and Santa don't mix.

But here's the real difference: ask the widow in Okarche whose pergola he rebuilt, or the elderly couple who now sleep more easily because he installed six smoke detectors. For Robert, it's never "just a job." As he puts it, "We'll always do whatever it takes to leave our customers with results beyond what they imagined." Add in affordable rates, flexibility, and a willingness to travel, and you've got a crew that's as reliable as it is hardworking.

So, what do customers say after hiring him? They brag about Robert's smile, his "yes, ma'am/no, sir" manners, and how he somehow makes even the toughest jobs look easy. Kingfisher may be home base, but word is spreading fast. Robert and Remington are proving that strong backs, local roots, and genuine care never go out of style.

So, when your to-do list is longer than your weekend, whether it's dirty, heavy, awkward, or just plain annoying, they'll happily do the grunt work for you. Reach them at **(405) 318-9810**.





# RIBBON CUTTING FOR CTTC'S NEW ANNEX BUILDING

By AAN Jack Quirk

Chisholm Trail Technology Center in Omega held a special ribbon cutting ceremony on October 14, 2025, to celebrate the dedication of its newest building in honor of Debbie Biehler and her 38 years of exceptional service to students, staff, and the community.

Throughout her career, Biehler has embodied the Center's mission of service, leading with compassion, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to others. Her impact on the district continues to inspire all who work and learn there. The newly named building, which now houses CTTC's Welding program and the new Electrical Trades program, stands as a lasting tribute to Biehler's legacy and to the district's focus on student success. Her belief that serving others is more valuable than being served remains a guiding principle for the Chisholm Trail community.

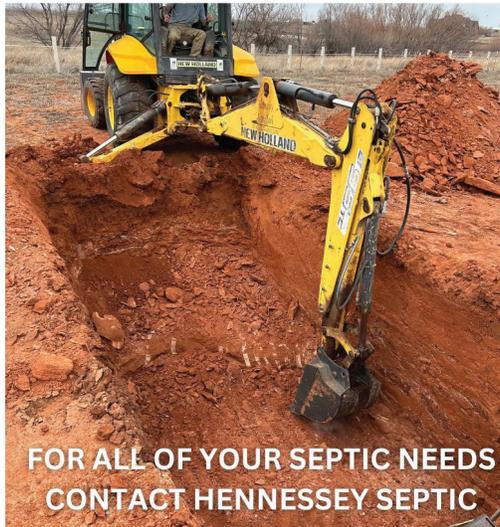
During the ceremony, guests joined board members and administrators for photos, toured the new facility, met instructors and students, and enjoyed refreshments in celebration of the milestone.

The event also reflected on the district's humble beginnings, from early board meetings held in borrowed spaces to what was once known as Chisholm Trail Vocational Technical School. Today, as Chisholm Trail Technology Center, the district continues to honor those founding values of service, perseverance, and community, the same values exemplified by Debbie Biehler.



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# Neighbors Helping Neighbors: The Story of the Kingfisher County Food Bank

For more than fifty years, the Kingfisher County Food Bank has been a cornerstone of compassion, providing food and hope to neighbors in need.

The food bank was established in the 1970s, when local churches and the Kingfisher County Department of Human Services recognized a growing need among families struggling to make ends meet. Together, they created a community-based food distribution network that continues to serve Kingfisher County today.



When Danica Kramer began volunteering in 2004, the food bank operated out of The Upper Room in Kingfisher under the direction of Bill and LaDonna Kochenower. In 2006, her mother, Meliah Ratcliff, assumed leadership and moved it to the First United Methodist Church. In 2020, the food bank relocated to its current home at the Nazarene Church in Kingfisher.

Danica took over operations in December 2021, continuing her mother's work and ensuring the mission remains strong. For her, the food bank has always been about community and faith. "It's an opportunity to serve our Lord and Savior with the funds, food, and supplies He provides to help our brothers and sisters in difficult times," she says. "Philippians 4:19 reminds us, My God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Every can, every box, every dollar comes from His provision."

The program primarily assists low-income families, elderly residents on fixed incomes, single parents, disabled individuals, and others facing hardship throughout Kingfisher County. Before 2020, the food bank served about 70 families annually. That number rose to 135 families in 2024 and already 110 families

as of September 2025, with more expected during the holidays.

In 2022, the food bank distributed 1,018 food boxes. That increased to 1,214 in 2023 and 1,471 in 2024, with projections of 1,600 boxes for 2025. Despite this growth in need, monetary donations have declined, forcing adjustments to stretch limited resources. "We've had to cut back on the amount of food in each box just to make our funds last," Danica explains.

Eligible families apply for assistance through a simple process. Families of four or fewer receive one supplemental food box every 30 days, and larger families receive two boxes, reapplying annually to remain eligible.

To keep the shelves stocked, the food bank purchases non-perishable items each month from 4T's Family Market in Hennessey and welcomes community donations of both shelf-stable and refrigerated foods. Commonly needed items include fresh produce, milk, eggs, meat, bottled water, hygiene products, baby supplies, and cleaning items.

Operating costs average \$5,000 per month, making monetary donations vital. A \$65 donation provides one food box, while \$115 provides two. Contributions can be mailed to P.O. Box 92, Kingfisher, OK 73750, or made online at [www.kingfishernaz.org](http://www.kingfishernaz.org) (click "Donate" and note "Food Bank" in the memo). Food drives, fundraisers, and direct food donations are also encouraged

# Kingfisher County Corners: Lacey

By Dr. Sara Jane Richter



If you turn west at the stoplight in Hennessey at the intersection of US 81 and US 51 and drive ten miles, you'll come upon Lacey, a Kingfisher County location that started as a little farming community in the 19th century. Officially, Oklahoma Territory at

the time of origination, Lacey came into existence in 1890 with the establishment of a post office. An Iowa Congressman named John F. Lacey helped solidify the Oklahoma Territory Land Runs, so this new town took his surname to thank him on behalf of the Territory. The land run that opened Kingfisher County and allowed for the creation of Lacey occurred on April 22, 1889.

This 4th-class post office located in Lacey finally closed in 1909, as rural mail delivery started in 1902, and therefore ended the need for a postmaster or postmistress to man the station. Lacey joined the other 18,000 post offices nationwide that closed in the same decade for the same reason. Without mail collection and distribution, proximity to larger towns, and the lack of a railroad stop, Lacey faded into oblivion. However, residents didn't give up hope of revitalizing their



community. In 1921, Lacey opened a school which remained viable until 1968, when it was annexed to Hennessey's public schools.

The school cafeteria remains an active community gathering spot and now has a mural painted on the wall of what the school looked like when in operation.

The Lacey store remained in operation up through the 80s, when the oil boom faded, so did the store. Now, Lacey has fallen into "ghost town" status where the livestock population outnumbers the human residents.

Photos by AAN Jack Quirk



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# A Kingfisher County Christmas

## MISTLETOE MAGIC TO LIGHT UP MAIN STREET DEC. 11

**HENNESSEY** – Get ready, it’s almost time for **Mistletoe Magic and the Lighted Parade!** The annual holiday celebration rolls down **Main Street Hennessey** on **Thursday, Dec. 11**, bringing all the sparkle, music and small-town Christmas cheer we love.

But the parade is just the start. Downtown will be buzzing all evening with holiday activities. Santa will be at **The Mercantile**, there’ll be warm drinks, crafts, sweets,

After the parade, stick around on Oklahoma Street for the **Hennessey Lions Club gift certificate giveaway**. To enter, just bring your local Hennessey shopping receipts dated between Nov. 1 and Dec. 10 to Interbank to get your tickets to drop in the hopper that night and you could walk away with a little Christmas cash.

Mistletoe Magic is more than a parade, it’s a community tradition that keeps Main Street glowing and spirits bright.



The fun kicks off with the lighted parade at 6 p.m. Lineup starts at the pool parking lot on Mitchell Road, so grab your lights, tinsel and creativity! Anything that shines is fair game. Floats, trucks, tractors, golf carts, even bikes! If it rolls, light it up!

And don’t forget the **4T’s Family Market Shopping Cart Decorating Contest** – because only in Hennessey can a grocery cart become a sleigh on wheels.



**DOVER:** Christmas morning may bring presents, but Christmas magic begins with the Christmas Parade rolling down Main Street on Saturday, December 6 at 11:00 a.m., bringing out all the small-town sparkle we love.

When the last float passes, stroll over to Dover Christian Church where the chicken and noodles are served warm, the conversation is easy, and the smiles are contagious. Stick around to greet Santa, it's the perfect chance for little ones to share their wish lists and for families to snag a classic holiday photo.

# Christmas



**KINGFISHER:** Christmas isn't just marked on the calendar, it's a big deal. From glowing lights to time-honored traditions, this town goes all out, turning the holidays into pure magic.

The festivities begin with Pink Friday on November 21, a shop-local celebration where you'll find one-of-a-kind gifts for everyone on your list. That same evening brings the Kingfisher Chamber's annual tree lighting, visits from Mr. & Mrs. Claus (plus their reindeer!) at Block 35, and plenty more to kick off the holiday cheer.

Next up on the holiday calendar is Kingfisher Winter Nights, where the hard work of countless volunteers transforms Kingfisher Park into a glowing wonderland of lights and cheer. Families can drive through, stroll the winding paths, or hop aboard the festive train for a holiday adventure that feels straight out of a storybook.



This year brings an extra touch of magic – a towering 55-foot Christmas tree from Northern Michigan, standing five feet taller than last year's, will illuminate the park entrance. The official tree lighting ceremony kicks off Friday, November 29th, at 5:30 PM at Kingfisher Park, marking the start of the season's most dazzling display.

Visitors can enjoy the lights all season long, and if you stop by on a Friday or Saturday night, you just might catch a visit from Santa himself – ready for photos, wish lists, and plenty of holiday smiles.

Kingfisher Winter Nights is more than a display; it's a hometown tradition built on community spirit, volunteer effort, and the simple joy of coming together to celebrate the season. Then, the season reaches its peak with the Kingfisher Chamber's Vintage Christmas Parade on Saturday, December 6 at 6:00 pm. Thousands gather for this spectacular show where the floats are grand, the lights are bright, and the spirit of Christmas soars straight to the stars.

Because in Kingfisher, Christmas isn't just celebrated, it's shared. It's community, tradition, and a little extra sparkle that makes the season unforgettable. Around here, they don't just celebrate Christmas... they sleigh it.

# THANKSGIVING AND THE HEART OF GRATITUDE

by All About Network Maitland Woody

Thanksgiving has always carried a mix of tradition, history, and personal reflection. While the holiday traces its roots to early harvest celebrations, most famously the 1621 gathering between the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag people, its modern meaning often goes beyond the historical meal. It has become a time to pause, to gather with family and friends, and to focus on gratitude in a world that rarely slows down.

Gratitude, at its core, is about recognizing what we have rather than what we lack. It does not ignore hardship. Instead, it shines a light on the moments of kindness, the relationships, the second chances, and even the small victories that carry us through difficult times.

Thankfulness is the outward expression of this gratitude. It is the words spoken around the table, the hugs after a long absence, the silent prayers of appreciation, the laughter shared over dessert. In those moments, people realize that gratitude does not depend on perfection. It grows strongest when life is messy, uncertain, or challenging.

Thanksgiving, then, is less about one day of food and more about a mindset. It is a time to notice the blessings, big and small, that fill ordinary days. It is about taking stock of the people who make life meaningful and choosing to see abundance even in seasons of scarcity.

At the heart of Thanksgiving is a simple but powerful truth: gratitude turns what we have into enough.



# FROM THE ARCHIVES

## The People's Photography: Real Photo Postcards

by The Chisholm's Aliessia Jones



At the turn of the twentieth century, a new form of communication swept across the United States: the postcard. While many postcards were mass-produced with predesigned images, a particular type known as the Real Photo Postcard, or RPPC, offered something far more personal. These were not prints from a publisher but actual photographs developed onto postcard-sized paper, with space for a message and an address



on the back.

The first commercially available photographic postcard stock appeared in 1899 under the Velox brand. Kodak soon made the process even easier with the introduction of the Model 3A folding camera in 1903. This camera used postcard-sized negatives, allowing families and traveling photographers to create their own mail-ready images. By 1906, postcard collecting had become a national craze, and RPPCs were part of everyday life.

What made RPPCs special was not

only their novelty but also their accessibility. In large cities, photography studios were already common, but in rural areas such as Kingfisher, Oklahoma, professional portraits were still a luxury. RPPCs gave ordinary families a chance to document their lives, share travel experiences, and preserve memories in an affordable, portable format. Many were placed in albums, tucked into family Bibles, or mailed across the country. They became, quite literally, snapshots of everyday life.

Historians and collectors can identify authentic RPPCs in several ways. Many include white handwritten captions scratched directly into the negative, a distinctive hallmark. Others can be dated by the stamp boxes printed on the back, which often carried the brand name of the photographic paper. Names such as VELOX, SOLIO, CYKO, AZO, and ARGO are key indicators, and the changing stamp box designs allow experts to narrow down production dates, sometimes to within only a few years.

The subject matter of RPPCs was just as varied as the people who made them. Families posed in their Sunday best, farmers photographed barns and livestock, and travelers captured distant landscapes. Professional photographers often sold images of local events, from community celebrations to disasters such as fires or floods. Soldiers, too, turned to RPPCs, creating keepsakes that connected them to loved ones while recording the experiences of war. In many cases, these postcards are the only surviving photographic record of such moments.

Today, RPPCs are valued not only by collectors but also by historians who see them as essential pieces of visual



**Aliessia Jones is the Collections Specialist at The Chisholm Museum in Kingfisher, where she oversees digitization, trains scanning volunteers, and manages social media. She earned bachelor's degrees in Humanities, Museum Studies, and Art History from UCO, and is currently pursuing a master's in Library and Information Sciences with an archives focus at OU.**

culture. They preserve details that written records often overlook: the look of storefronts on a dusty main street, the clothes of schoolchildren, or the expressions of neighbors at a county fair.

At the Chisholm Museum, our collection of Real Photo Postcards reflects this rich history. Whether blank keepsakes or mailed with brief notes, they capture community life in Oklahoma. These postcards remind us that history is not only about great events or famous figures but also about the small, personal moments preserved by ordinary people. They connect us to the past in a way that feels immediate and personal, showing us that even in a time before smartphones and social media, people were just as eager to share their lives through pictures.





# Kingfisher County Fare: Sunrise Cafe

by Dr. Sara Jane Richter



## Dr. Sara Jane Richter

*Sara Jane enjoys the social experience of dining out, but she also values the importance of eating in. Growing up, her family traveled across the country, cooking together and trying different restaurants. As adults, she, her brother Kevin, and sister-in-law Debbie continue to love exploring new eateries. Food has always played a significant role in her life, especially since her parents, Russel and Pauline, owned several restaurants. Originally from Hennessey, Sara recently retired after teaching at universities in Oklahoma for 43 years.*

On a fine, fall morning, I decided to head to the Sunrise Cafe in Kingfisher for a late breakfast. My brother decided to come along as he enjoys a hearty breakfast as well. We'd always had good eats here, so it came naturally to want to return to the restaurant.

The place was busy with an early lunch crowd, and the food delivered to the diners looked particularly appealing. A ham sandwich on a hoagie roll accompanied by onion rings plus a chicken fried steak dinner being delivered to diners nearby certainly

caught my attention. However, lunch notwithstanding, we decided to order breakfast. Kevin requested pancakes and bacon and coffee and milk. I, on the other hand, ordered coffee and the Gravy Train menu item. The pancakes, thick and hearty, were as big as a barrel top, and the Bacon came out perfectly curly and crisp.

The Gravy Train arrived and didn't disappoint. There was a lot of food on that plate and the biscuits were thick and tasty as were the over easy eggs. The Sunrise Cafe features

omelets of all sorts, including Hawaiian. They prepare breakfast all day long, from 6:00 a.m. until closing at 2 p.m. seven days each week. The price is more than reasonable for all plates.

The next time we strike out for the Sunrise at 1504 S. Main, we'll order

lunch and enjoy a change of pace. The Sunrise Cafe provides diners with a far-reaching, classic dining fare menu, so you really cannot make a bad decision here. The owners take great pride in the fact that the Sunrise has been family-owned for twenty years with their specialty being breakfast dishes. Go and enjoy breakfast or lunch! Bon Appetit!



November is here, and that means Thanksgiving is near—so let the “foodapalooza” begin! I don’t know about you, but to me, Thanksgiving is all about the.....DRESSING! One of the best sides to go with your turkey or ham is homemade dressing. Don’t get me wrong--boxed dressing is a lifesaver. But if you ever want to go old school, here’s my favorite homemade version from my mom, and I’m honored to share it with you!

## Thanksgiving Dressing

Ingredients:

- 2 French Bread loaves
- 1 loaf of cornbread, or use a box of Jiffy mix
- 1 cup onion, diced
- 1 cup celery, diced
- 1 cup cooked turkey, diced
- 2 ½ pints of chicken or turkey broth
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- ½ tablespoon salt
- 1 tablespoon sage
- ½ tablespoon poultry seasoning

Steps:

1. Cut all the bread and cornbread into 1-inch cubes and lay them out on sheet pans. Cover with a dish towel and let them dry out until they’re dry and crisp, 24 to 48 hours. You will need 2 quarts of bread cubes and 1 quart of cornbread cubes for the recipe.
2. In a large skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Sauté the diced onion and celery until softened. Stir in the



**Paula Leffingwell is a lifelong Kingfisher resident and the Junior and Senior counselor at Kingfisher High School, where she is dedicated to helping students navigate their final years and prepare for life after graduation. She also serves on the Kingfisher Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors (2023–2025), supporting local growth and community initiatives**

3. turkey, broth, pepper, salt, sage, and poultry seasoning. Mix until well combined and heated through.
3. Place the dried bread and cornbread cubes in a large bowl. Gradually pour the wet mixture over the bread, gently turning the cubes with a large spoon to ensure all are coated to your preferred moisture level. Taste and add extra seasoning if needed.
4. Pour ingredients into your casserole dish, cover, and bake 1.5 hours at 325



By Libby Seiger

# Where the Wind Blows

The sounds and signs of an Oklahoma Storm

There's a certain quiet that settles over Oklahoma right before a storm. The air feels heavy, the birds go still, and the world seems to pause. Anyone who's lived here long enough knows: that silence means something's coming.

We Oklahomans learn to read the sky without ever being taught. We watch our parents stand on the porch, arms crossed, eyes on the horizon. We notice the greenish tint in the clouds, the low roll of thunder, the uneasy hush of cicadas. Before long, we can feel the shift in our bones.

When the wind stirs, it's more than air moving, it's a story starting. The trees sway like they're whispering to each other. The smell of rain drifts in, sharp and earthy. The screen door rattles, the chimes clatter, and the sky begins to rumble low and deep.

Everyone knows the rhythm. Someone checks the radar, flashlights come out, the dog starts pacing. The news hums quietly in the background while rain taps at the windows and lightning cuts across the dark. It's the familiar song of home - wild, beautiful, and a little unnerving.

And just as suddenly as it began, it's over. The air smells clean again, frogs start up their chorus, and neighbors step out barefoot on damp porches to check the sky.

Our storms can be fierce and unforgettable, but they remind us of how alive this land is, and how it breathes and hums right along with us. When the wind blows, Oklahomans listen. Not just for the storm, but for the sound of home.



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# Happily Ever After



Life has a funny way of working out, and **Luke Strickland and Doris Broyles** are proof that God has a sense of humor.

Both grew up in Kingfisher, Oklahoma. Doris moved there in 1978 at age 15, while Luke arrived a year earlier at 14. They were only twelve days apart in age. Doris married her husband, Lynn, in 1980 at 17, raising a son, a daughter, and welcoming nine grandchildren. Luke, who had worked with Lynn since he was sixteen, had two stepchildren, four grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren from a previous marriage. Over the decades, their families became part of the same tight-knit community. Kingfisher is full of memories. Doris recalls helping make a wedding cake for Dawn Maxwell, one of Luke's sisters, and in a twist of fate, her own daughter was in that same wedding. Life in the small town has always been woven with familiar faces and shared stories.

After Lynn passed away on August 20, 2023, Doris faced the challenge of starting over. Eight months later, an ordinary trip to Walmart

changed everything. She ran into Luke, they struck up a conversation, and he soon asked her out. Their friendship blossomed into a natural, loving relationship built on honesty, laughter, and companionship.



When Luke decided it was time to marry Doris, there was no grand speech. He simply said, "Come on, let's go to the courthouse." Doris thought he meant paperwork, but he was proposing on the spot. She laughed, said yes, and they signed the papers. They were married on Sunday, September 14, 2025, in a simple ceremony with no flowers or fuss, just the two of them, happy and certain of their love.

Family remains at the heart of their story. Together, they have blended their lives into a lively, multi-generational family filled with laughter and memories. Doris says, "I love that Luke keeps me on my toes," and Luke quietly adds, "We get along really well." Looking ahead, Doris smiles, "We're looking forward to lots of happy years together."

Life may not follow the plan we imagine, but for Luke and Doris, it led to an unexpected, enduring, joyful love, guided every step of the way by God's sense of humor.

**Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Luke Strickland!**

# THE TEACHER'S PATH



Mrs. Micah Hensley, Reading Specialist for  
Kingfisher's Gilmour Elementary School.

Sometimes, all it takes is one person to see something in you that you did not see in yourself. That is the story of Micah (Mueggenborg) Hensley and the unexpected path that led her to a career in education.

Micah grew up in Kingfisher, Oklahoma, surrounded by the close-knit community she still calls home. She graduated from Kingfisher High School in 2016 and went on to Oklahoma State University, earning her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education in 2020 with an Early Childhood endorsement.

Teaching was not always part of Micah's plan. Growing up deeply involved in agriculture through FFA, livestock judging, and parliamentary procedure, she assumed she would pursue a career in that field. When she started college, she enrolled as an Animal Science major. During her senior year of high school, however, she worked as an aide at Gilmour Elementary for Mrs. Tammy Themer,

and that experience changed everything. Mrs. Themer noticed how naturally Micah connected with students and encouraged her to consider education. Although intrigued, Micah was not completely convinced. Once she began her Animal Science courses, though, she realized her heart belonged elsewhere. She changed her major to Elementary Education, and the rest, as they say, is history.

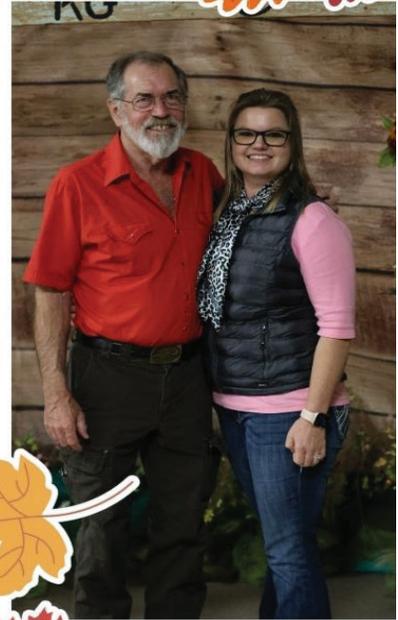
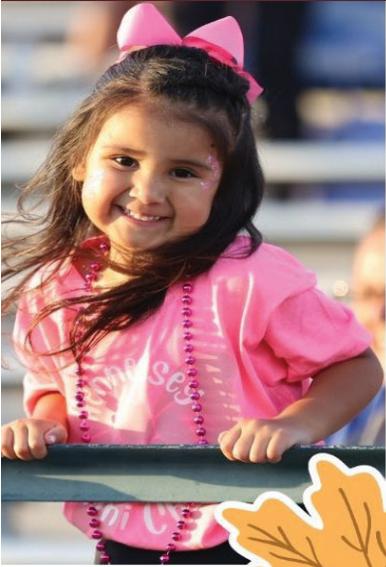
Micah began her teaching journey at Highland Park Elementary, completing her student teaching in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a challenging start that taught her flexibility, creativity, and the importance of connection. She then taught first grade there during the 2020-2021 school year. In the fall of 2021, Micah joined Kingfisher Public Schools as a kindergarten teacher. She loved working with her "littles," students full of curiosity and joy who, as she says, "think their teachers have hung the moon." A year later, in 2022, she transitioned into her current role as Gilmour Reading Specialist, helping students develop a lifelong love of reading. Micah continued to grow professionally, earning her master's degree in Reading and Literacy from Oklahoma State University in 2023. This year marks her sixth year of teaching and her fifth at KPS. Her favorite part of the job is witnessing that "lightbulb moment" when her students learn to read and see themselves as readers for the first time.

Outside the classroom, Micah's life is full of joy and motion. She married her husband, Kyler Hensley, in August 2023. Kyler grew up in Mooreland, a small town east of Woodward, and now works as a physical therapist at Mercy Hospital. Micah often jokes that although she has lived in Kingfisher her entire life, Kyler somehow knows more people around town than she does. Together, they share a one-and-a-half-year-old son, Holden, who keeps them on their toes.

When she is not teaching or chasing her toddler, Micah enjoys spending time with her family and cheering alongside Kyler during college and NFL football season.

From a high school aide uncertain about her future to a reading specialist shaping young minds, Micah's story shows that sometimes it only takes one person, like Mrs. Tammy Themer, to recognize your potential and encourage you to follow it.

# PARTING SHOTS



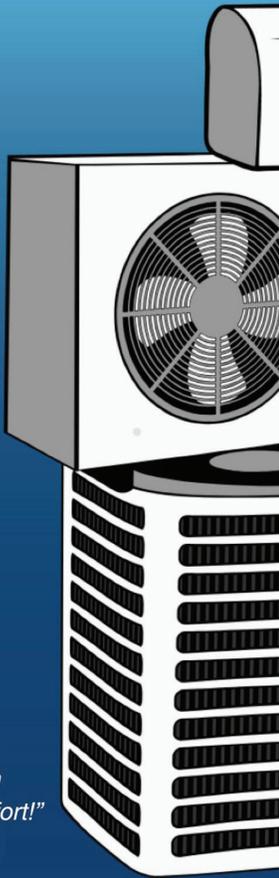
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