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# Governor Reggie Wassana Presses Congress on Fort Reno Claim

Leaders of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes are once again carrying their fight for justice to Washington, D.C., as Gov. Reggie Wassana brings the long-disputed Fort Reno lands before federal lawmakers.

On March 17, Gov. Wassana was scheduled to testify before the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Subcommittee of the U.S. House Appropriations Committee, using the platform to elevate tribal priorities and reaffirm the tribes' enduring claim to their homelands in western Oklahoma. However, due to travel disruptions Wassana was unable to appear in person, having his written testimony entered into the congressional record instead.

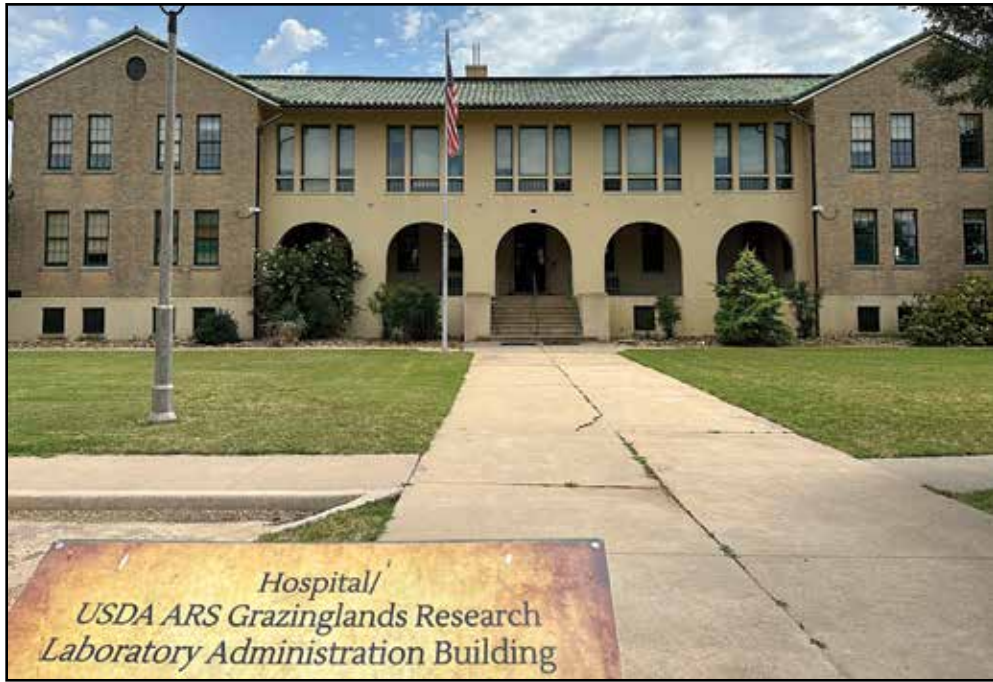
At the heart of the testimony is the Fort Reno property in Canadian County, land the tribes maintain was never lawfully taken from them. In his remarks, Gov. Wassana framed the dispute within a broader historical reality: a pattern of federal actions that steadily diminished the tribes' land base and disrupted their

way of life.

"Every agreement related to our homelands has resulted in a reduction of our land base and, with it, our way of life," Wassana wrote in his testimony to lawmakers, underscoring the generational impact of those losses.

The origins of the dispute date back to 1869, when President Ulysses S. Grant established a reservation of more than five million acres for the Cheyenne and Arapaho people. Just 14 years later, President Chester A. Arthur carved out approximately 9,500 acres for the establishment of Fort Reno, explicitly designating the land for "military purposes exclusively."

Tribal leaders argue that this lan-



guage created a clear expectation: if the land ceased to be used for military purposes, it should revert to the tribes.

That moment came in the mid-20th century. Over time, the federal government transferred the land to

civilian agencies, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Prisons. Today, the site houses federal research facilities and a correctional institution, uses the tribes say do not override their original claim. **FORT RENO** pg. 4

# Planting Seeds for the Next Generations

## Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes Office of Development and Advancement hosts Seeds of Seven Generations Gala

Latoya Lonelodge, Senior Reporter

(OKLAHOMA CITY) Gathering for an evening full of elegance, cultural entertainment in an upscale atmosphere, many invitations were sent to join the Seeds of Seven Generations Gala held March 14 at the First Americans Museum in Oklahoma City.

Heading the gala was the Office of Development and Advancement that was first established in December 2024.

Kassie Cross, project development officer for the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes Office of Development and Advancement said the office was built to enable the future by building a philanthropic foundation for the next generation to come.

Funds raised from the Seeds of Seven Generations Gala went directly to the Education Endowment fund, a financial foundation for providing annual scholarship and cultural enrichment opportunities for tribal citizens.

"What our office does, we fundraise, we'll host all the fundraising events, our main goal is to plant for the next generations, to plant these seeds, to make sure when that time comes, for instance, with this endowment, we're preventing any educational barriers for the next seven generations to come, that's our future grandkids, our nieces, our nephews," Cross said.

Cross said the gala had a goal of raising \$100,000 for the endowment fund. With

sponsorships and ticket sales as well as silent auction items that were sold during the gala, the estimated amount fundraised from the gala was \$122,644 for the education endowment fund.

"That's our main goal is to build that foundation, that way we don't have those issues with budget cuts, we're not having to cut back on our scholarships and we're able to push the education because education's the only thing that no one could ever take from you and it's your responsibility to get there and let's make a smooth path," Cross said.

The education endowment, Cross said is an investment and will provide scholarships, any educational needs that may arise and much more.

"Eventually we can have our own STEM classes, our own tech schools, this endowment is going to be utilized for long term revenue," Cross said.

Along with STEM camps, the endowment fund will help not only with scholarships, but with tutoring and any educational need and barrier to education, such as supplies and laptops.

"What we're planning today is going to impact the future of generations to come," Cross said.

Cross said the education endowment is only the first endowment, as they have plans



Keynote speaker Justice Yvonne Kauger is presented with a Pendleton blanket by Gov. Reggie Wassana and Lt. Gov. Hershel Gorham. (Photos / Latoya Lonelodge)

in the future for creating endowments for social services and elder care.

"This is just our first endowment, our first fundraising event, but there's many more to come, let's plant the seeds. Let's get that foundation built, when something's built off passion and prayers and community, it's going to thrive," Cross said, "I was blessed with eight committee members that have really taken a vision and these women are businesswomen, they're mothers, and they have busy lives, so that they were able to take time to put their thoughts into this and together, we were able to get this foundation going, every one of my committee members play their own special part in this."

With the lavish evening of the gala beginning with a VIP hour, guests socialized and were greeted with master of ceremonies Chance Rush. The Buddy Bond Color Guard presented the flag colors and invocation was presented by Chief Gordon Yellowman. Welcoming remarks were given by Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes Gov. Reggie Wassana and Lt. Gov. Hershel Gorham.

"We have to provide the youth with the opportunity to be educated, we set the foundations so that we can secure those opportunities for our tribal youth I think the tribes are understanding how important education is now more than ever," Wassana said.

Wassana said he believed the process would build the foundation to secure education opportunities that would really help the

tribe. "We're hoping what we're investing how we're going to do is going to be those key elements to making sure we're successful and we're going to give those tribal youth the opportunity that they can get an education," Wassana said.

Gorham explained more about the Office of Development and Advancement that was drafted by the legislature a year and a half ago to create the office at the tribes.

"Our legislature fortunately agreed with it and appropriated money to fund the office and they also allowed a full-time staff person and Governor Wassana signed off on it as well and agreed with the vision we had for everything in office," Gorham said.

With the creation of the office, Gorham said they wanted to create endowments not only for the education department but also for the health department and social services department.

"We always have to plan accordingly and so that was one of the reasons why I had wanted to create endowments, is to first focus primarily on our education endowment," Gorham said.

Guest speaker for the gala was Justice Yvonne Kauger, who was adopted by the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes. Cultural entertainment was presented by traditional grass dancers. Following dinner was glitz and glamor, as a lengthy fashion show en-



Artist Zonly Looman, holds up his finish artwork depicting a buffalo. Looman created the painting in a live paint setting during the gala to be auctioned off at the end of the night. From l-r: Nabholz representative, Lt. Gov. Hershel Gorham, Zonly Looman, Nabholz SW Region Pres. Michael Feamster, Gov. Reggie Wassana and Chance Rush.



# Groundbreaking Ceremony for Concho Elder Duplexes

(CONCHO, Okla.) A project years in the making finally came to fruition with the turning of soil, as shovels dug into the earth's soil signifying the groundbreaking ceremony of the long-awaited Concho Duplexes.

Held east of the Food Pantry in Concho, Okla., located off of Black Kettle road, shovels and construction hats paved the way for construction to begin as the groundbreaking ceremony for the Concho duplexes was held, where four elderly duplexes, including eight units, will be built.

Damon Dunbar, executive director of the housing department said in an earlier article published in the Jan. 1 Tribal Tribune, the project has been something he's tried to get off the ground several times.

"Housing affordability has consistently been the number one concern heard from our tribal citizens," Dunbar said.

The Housing Authority had successfully secured funding and was awarded the Indian Housing Competitive Block Grant (IHCBG) for \$6 million. The project will bring nine new duplexes to tribal land, including four elder duplexes and five family duplexes – marking Phase I of a larger, long-term housing vision.

The elder units will be two-bedroom homes measuring approximately 1,070 square feet and will be built east of the Concho Food Pantry. The family duplexes will offer three bedrooms and will be

located on the north end of the Concho campus, with all units including hardened FEMA-approved safe rooms, built in reinforced utility spaces to provide protection during severe weather.

The duplexes will target low income housing earning 80% or less of the area median income, with rent ranging from as little as \$100 to a maximum of \$450 per month.

Gathering in the clear field east of the Food Pantry, the groundbreaking ceremony began with invocation given by Roy Dean Bullcoming and Burl Buffalomeat. The ceremony opened with traditional flag and honor songs. Remarks were given by Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes Gov. Reggie Wassana, C-2 Legislator Milan Roman Nose, Jr., Ira Ellis, Housing Authority commissioner, as well as from representatives from the U.S. Army Corps, Narcomey Construction and the grant consultant.

"It's good to see that this project after all these years is actually coming to fruition and I want to thank Damon his staff and his crew and the board along with the legislators for helping make this possible," Wassana said.

Building the four new elderly duplexes at the site, Tim Jackson, with Narcomey Construction, said it'll include the phasing plans for expansion for future build sites as well, with additional funding from the programs at the other site which is the single family homes.



Dept. of Housing Executive Director Damon Dunbar welcomes guests to the groundbreaking site of the future duplexes to be built in Concho, Okla. (Photos / Chris Roman Nose)

"That's where they'll be five duplexes, the four duplexes here will serve eight families, elderly families, at the single family properties, there will be ten families served," Jackson said.

Working alongside the tribes for the project, Brandi Liberty, with the Luak Group, said the community has become like family to her.

"I know a lot of leadership as well as the housing authority and staff so to see a plan and a vision come to this point, so many people think that it's as simple as just writing a grant and you get a reward and you start and the project shows up overnight and it's not, it's a plan and it takes time," Liberty said.

Working at capacity, Liberty said

they've been helping to share that with the Cheyenne and Arapaho people so they have a place to call home sooner rather than later.

Finally seeing the project begin shovels in the soil, Dunbar said the project began when he was in Planning and Development and they were unsuccessful a few times with getting the grant.

"We finally got rewarded, it's been a couple years since we got everything rewarded but we finally got to this point, it makes me real proud, especially with the elders, we want to take care of the elders first, we'll be able to provide eight units for them, two bedroom units, ADA accessible so it will be a good deal for them," Dunbar said.



Gov. Reggie Wassana expresses his gratitude to the staff of the Dept. of Housing, the Housing Board and Legislators for all their work to make the building of duplexes a reality.



# Farm bill draft would permanently block return of Fort Reno to Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes

By Stephen Martin, NonDoc Media

(EL RENO, Okla.) Congressional language that has blocked the transfer of federal land at historic Fort Reno for more than a decade would become permanent under provisions in the pending 2026 farm bill, raising new questions about the future of the site and long-running claims to the land by the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma.

Reggie Wassana, governor of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, has repeatedly disputed arguments that prior federal settlements extinguished the claim.

"They say that we were paid for it," Wassana said in an interview. "We haven't been paid for it."

Wassana was scheduled to testify before the U.S. House Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies on March 17, but he did not appear after travel disruptions. His written testimony (embedded below) was entered into the congressional record.

In that statement, Wassana argued the Fort Reno property "sits on land taken from the Cheyenne and Arapaho by federal action" and that returning it would "acknowledge and remedy that dispossession."

He also pointed to internal federal legal findings, including a U.S. Department of the Interior opinion concluding the tribes have a "credible, equitable claim" to land not included in prior settlements.

A section of the current farm bill would amend a provision of the 2008 Food, Conservation, and Energy Act that bars the U.S. Department of Agriculture from declaring the Fort Reno Agricultural Research Service facility in El Reno as excess property or transferring it to another entity.

Previous versions of the restriction included an expiration date. The new language would remove that end date and effectively make the prohibition permanent unless Congress later changed the law.

The provision appears in the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026, the House Committee on Agriculture's long-awaited update to federal farm policy. Committee members approved the more-than-800-page bill in the early hours of March 4 after a marathon markup session lasting more than 20 hours, advancing it to the full House for consideration. The measure, the House's version of the next five-year farm bill, passed the committee on a bipartisan 34-17 vote and now moves to the chamber's floor as lawmakers attempt to replace the expired 2018 farm bill framework.

A spokesman for U.S. Rep. Frank Lucas (R-OK3), whose district includes the Fort Reno site and who chairs the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Conservation, Research and Biotechnology, said prior federal settlements resolved the tribes' claim and argued that continued congressional action is necessary to protect ongoing research at the site.

"The Ag Committee is intensely focused on advancing a Farm Bill through committee and on to the House floor as soon as possible," Lucas said in a January statement. "Fortunately, most of what typically gets passed in a Farm Bill was included in the recently enacted One Big Beautiful Bill, like updating the commodity support programs. This puts us in a much better position as we look towards passing what's left in a 'Skinny Farm Bill.'"

The Fort Reno dispute, however, has been thick for decades. The disagreement centers on roughly 6,700 acres of land west of Oklahoma City that was once part of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation. It later formed a U.S. Army post and is now largely administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as the Oklahoma and Central Plains Agricultural Research Center. Tribal leaders argue they were never compensated for the loss of the land and that it should have reverted to them when the Army stopped using it in 1948.

Unlike many federal land disputes, there is no active piece of legislation pending to transfer Fort Reno to the tribe. Instead, the recurring legislative action from Lucas has been the opposite: Language has been inserted into farm bill-related legislation to prevent USDA from disposing of the Oklahoma and Central Plains Agricultural Research Center property.

Tribal leaders say that matters because it keeps the status quo in place while the underlying disagreement remains unresolved.

Members of the House Agriculture Committee and its staff have defended the restriction as necessary to protect federally funded agricultural research at the site. A committee aide said the center's work "cannot be replicated anywhere else in the world" and that legislation will continue to support the facilities and the "specific requirements" needed for Agricultural Research Service activities.

USDA officials did not respond to requests for comment.

Fort Reno sits on land that was once part of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation, established in western Indian Territory after the Medicine Lodge Treaty of 1867. In 1869, President Ulysses S. Grant issued an executive order formally creating the reservation after tribal leaders discovered that the land they had been directed to occupy did not match what they believed had been promised in treaty negotiations.

Fourteen years later, President Chester A. Arthur set aside 9,493 acres of that reservation as the Fort Reno military reservation.

The U.S. Army used the site for decades, most prominently as a remount station that bred and trained horses for the cavalry. Fort Reno later became associated with African American "Buffalo Soldier" units stationed in the West.

After the Army's frontier era, Fort Reno shifted missions and became one of the Army's quartermaster remount stations. It served as a hub for breeding, training and shipping horses and mules, including during World Wars I and II.

The Army's reliance on animal transport declined as mechanization replaced horses, but Fort Reno continued remount activity into the mid-20th century before Congress transferred the property to the USDA in 1948.

That transfer turned the former military reservation into an agricultural research facility focused on grazing systems, wheat pasture and livestock production. For a time in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, it housed a baboon breeding program.

Before that shift, Congress had already carved out part of the reservation for another federal purpose. In 1937, land from the former Fort Reno reservation was transferred to the Department of Justice for construction of what is now the Federal Correctional Insti-

tution at El Reno.

Today, the prison complex occupies only a small portion of the land assigned to it, with the remainder historically used for agricultural operations.

Supporters of the research center argue the facility plays a unique role in studying grazing systems and wheat pasture livestock production in the Southern Plains. Earlier federal reviews noted that the El Reno laboratory offered capabilities that could not easily be replicated at other Agricultural Research Service sites.

Federal and tribal officials have debated the status of the Fort Reno lands repeatedly for decades.

In 1949, Oklahoma Congressman Toby Morris introduced legislation that would have returned roughly 6,900 acres of the property to the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes after the Army vacated the site. The proposal passed the House in 1952 but stalled in the Senate.

During congressional hearings on the bill, a 93-year-old Cheyenne man testified that tribal members had long believed the land would be returned once the military no longer needed it.

The tribes later pursued compensation through the Indian Claims Commission, which Congress created to hear certain tribal claims against the United States and award monetary settlements where appropriate.

In his testimony submitted to Congress this week, Wassana argued that prior compensation payments did not include the Fort Reno tract, noting that while the tribes received settlements for other reservation lands, "this payment did NOT include" the acreage set aside for military and later federal use.

"Returning Fort Reno to the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes is a concrete, lawful and moral step Congress can take to repair historical wrongs, restore tribal stewardship of ancestral lands and strengthen cultural and economic ties across Oklahoma," Wassana wrote.

In 1965, the federal government and the tribes reached a \$15 million settlement for lands ceded in 1891. However, the Indian Claims Commission's jurisdiction covered claims only through 1946, and Fort Reno was not transferred to the U.S. Department of Agriculture until 1948.

Some federal legal analyses later interpreted that settlement as resolving claims related to Fort Reno. Wassana and other tribal advocates have argued the site was not fully addressed in the claims process and should still be eligible for return.

At the center of the tribes' argument is what they describe as a two-track payment history that is often collapsed into a single claim that the federal government "already paid" for the land.

The first payment dates to treaty-era agreements tied to reservation land cessions in the late 19th century. The second came through the Indian Claims Commission process in the mid-20th century.

In an interview, Wassana said questions about the scope of those settlements remain unresolved.

"I'm hearing about a discrepancy of about 10,000 acres," he said, suggesting that historical accounting may not have fully reflected land carved out and retained for federal purposes.

The acreage matters because it roughly matches the size of Fort Reno's historic military reservation in its

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# Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes and Wind Harvest International Sign Letter of Intent to Bring Innovative Vertical Axis Wind Turbines to Lucky Star Casino

(LAS VEGAS, Nev.)

The Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes announced the signing of a Letter of Intent (LOI) with Wind Harvest International to install the first phase of Wind Harvest vertical axis wind turbines (VAWTs) at the Lucky Star Casino in Concho, Okla. The LOI was signed by Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes Gov. Reggie Wassana and Wind Harvest CEO Kevin Wolf at the Reservation Economic Summit (RES 2026) in Las Vegas, Nev. on March 23, 2025.

The agreement represents a significant milestone in the tribes' commitment to clean energy, economic self-determination, and sustainable development for their communities. Wind Harvest VAWTs will be sited adjacent to the Lucky Star Casino, one of the tribes' premier economic engines, providing renewable energy to offset operating costs and reduce the facility's carbon footprint.

"This agreement reflects our tribes' vision for a future rooted in both economic strength and environmental stewardship," said Gov. Wassana. "By partnering with Wind Harvest, we are taking a meaningful step toward energy independence for our people. The Lucky Star Casino is the heart of our economic activity, and powering it with clean, innovative technology is a proud achievement for the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes."

Wind Harvesters© vertical axis wind turbines are

engineered to operate effectively in a wide range of wind conditions, including the excellent but turbulent wind speeds close to the ground common in Oklahoma and across much of the Great Plains. Unlike traditional horizontal axis wind turbines, VAWTs are quieter, have a lower visual profile, and can be installed closer to buildings and infrastructure, making them better suited for casino and commercial deployment.

"We are honored to partner with Governor Wassana and the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes on this important project," said Kevin Wolf, Wind Harvest CEO. "Many reservations were gifted with excellent wind resources, but many tribes want turbines that are less intrusive and more wildlife

friendly than are currently available for industrial-scale projects. We are thrilled that our Wind Harvest VAWTs can help tribes achieve energy independence with assets that last for generations."

The signing took place at the Reservation Economic Summit (RES 2026), the nation's largest gathering focused on economic development in Indian Country, underscoring the growing momentum behind tribal clean energy initiatives. The LOI is the first step in developing a fully operational project that can help fulfill electricity demand in the immediate vicinity and attract large energy off-takers in the future.



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1600 E. Hwy. 66, Suite 8, El Reno, OK / P. O. Box 38, Concho, OK 73022

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Printed by Lindsay Web Press, Lindsay, Okla. The Tribal Tribune is the official newspaper of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes.

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# CACDC Announces Office Relocation and New CEO

(CONCHO, Okla.) Cheyenne and Arapaho Community Development Corporation (CACDC) is pleased to announce some changes that will lead to enhanced service and accessibility to their clients.

Effective March 30, 2026, CACDC offices are moving from 107 S. Rock Island Avenue in El Reno, Okla., to the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribal Service Center located at 4400 SW 21st Street in Oklahoma City. The new mailing address will be P.O. Box 270068, Oklahoma City, OK 73137.

## CACDC Hires New Chief Executive Officer

As of March 2, 2026, the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes named Christopher Coburn, MBA, as the new CACDC Chief Executive Officer.

Coburn (Cherokee and Muscogee Creek) brings decades of experience in finance and nonprofit leadership to this key position. Before taking on the role

as CEO of CACDC, Coburn spent over five years as CEO at the Mvskoke Fund, the Muscogee Nation's Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) and over two and a half years as CEO to Manzeska Ota Tsi (Place to Borrow Money), the Osage Nation's CDFI doing business as PBM Lending. Coburn was also on the Board of Directors for the Native CDFI Network for over five years.

In a statement, Coburn stated, "It's critical to keep people away from predatory lending. To do that, you've got to have cultural sensitivities that support Native values. Helping develop a strong knowledge of Financial Literacy is important. You also have to know how to connect with funders that are interested in funding the work that we do. Building a strong working relationship with tribal leaders and having an involved board are key partnerships to growing



*New CEO of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes' Community Development Corporation, Christopher Coburn.*

the financial institution. I am excited to bring the knowledge I've acquired in the CDFI space to serve Cheyenne and Arapaho tribal citizens and meet their financial goals in a responsible and fair way."

Coburn holds an MBA from Oklahoma Wesleyan University, and business degrees from Northeastern State University and Tulsa Community College. He also completed a non-profit leadership certificate from Neighborworks USA and the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes

## Silent Bid Vehicle Auction

LOCATION: Concho Powwow Ground, Black Kettle Blvd., Concho, OK 73022

Open to Tribal Members Only-APRIL 13-14, 2026      Open to the Public-APRIL 16, 2026

ALL SALES FINAL-ALL VEHICLES ARE INOPERABLE-AS IS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April 12	April 13	April 14	April 15	April 16	April 17	April 18
VIEWING ONLY	OPENING BIDS FOR CHEYENNE & ARAPAHO TRIBAL MEMBERS ONLY 9 AM-4 PM	OPENING BIDS FOR CHEYENNE & ARAPAHO TRIBAL MEMBERS ONLY 9 AM-4 PM Final Bids Due by 4 PM WINNERS NOTIFIED AT 5:00 PM	Payment for vehicle(s) due by 4 PM Money order or cashier's check made to: Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes	OPENING BIDS FOR PUBLIC 9 AM-4 PM Final Bids Due by 4 PM WINNERS NOTIFIED AT 5:00 PM	Payment for vehicle(s) due by 4PM Money order or cashier's check made to: Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes	ALL VEHICLES MUST BE PICKED UP NO LATER THAN 4 PM

**IMPORTANT DETAILS ABOUT THE SILENT AUCTION**

APRIL 13-14, 2026 IS OPEN FOR SEALED BIDS FOR CHEYENNE & ARAPAHO TRIBAL MEMBERS ONLY. TRIBAL MEMBER **MUST PRESENT CHEYENNE AND ARAPAHO TRIBAL ID IN PERSON.** No Exceptions. Vehicles not sold at 4PM on Tuesday, April 14th will be open for bids on Thursday, April 16th, 2026, which will be Open to the Public on this day only.

**INSPECTION:** Vehicles offered for sale are used and may contain defects not immediately detectable. Bidders may inspect the vehicle prior to bidding. Bidders must adhere to the dates and times listed for inspection/viewing. Vehicles will be located at this location only: 1) Concho Powwow Grounds (off Black Kettle Blvd.) **Bidders are encouraged to inspect vehicles prior to submitting a bid. (FINAL LIST AVAILABLE ON Monday, April 13, 2026). ALL SALES FINAL. AS IS.**

**Tentative list (subject to change):**

- 2010 Chevy Suburban-Inoperable
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- 2016 Ford E-450 (CNG)-Inoperable
- 2008 GMC Sierra-Inoperable
- 2016 Dodge Charger-Inoperable
- 2016 Dodge Charger-Inoperable
- 2016 Dodge Charger-Inoperable
- 2012 Ford F-250-Inoperable
- 2014 Ford Explorer-Inoperable
- 2013 Ford Fusion-Inoperable
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- 2013 Chevy Malibu-Inoperable
- 2008 Dodge Ram-Inoperable
- 2011 Ford E-350 Van-Inoperable
- 2015 Chevy Silverado-Inoperable

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BID FORMS WILL BE AVAILABLE ON MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2026

## FORT RENO

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Crucially, Fort Reno followed a different legal path than other reservation lands. When Congress broke up the reservation through allotment in 1892, lands reserved for military purposes were excluded. Because Fort Reno remained under military control until 1948, tribal leaders argue it was never included in claims later settled through the Indian Claims Commission.

That distinction matters. While the tribes reached a \$15 million settlement with the United States in 1965 over other lands, leaders maintain Fort Reno was not part of that agreement, a position supported by past federal analysis. A 1999 opinion from the Interior Department acknowledged the tribes hold a credible equitable claim to the property, and a 2009 federal appeals court decision left the question unresolved,

noting the land may not have been included in the earlier settlement.

Despite this, opposition remains. Some members of Congress, particularly those tied to agricultural interests, have repeatedly inserted provisions blocking the return of the land, citing the importance of federal research conducted there.

Tribal leaders strongly dispute that justification, pointing to longstanding evidence that much of the research can and does occur elsewhere, including in partnership with Oklahoma institutions.

A shift appeared in November 2025, when a continuing resolution passed by Congress omitted the usual prohibition language. For the first time in years, that opened the door to a potential negotiated solution, one that could allow the tribes to regain their land while permit-

ting federal operations to continue.

However, that progress is now at risk. Proposed language in a pending farm bill would permanently bar the transfer of Fort Reno to the tribes, effectively closing the door on future negotiations.

For the Cheyenne and Arapaho people, this is not simply a policy disagreement, it is a question of justice long deferred.

As Gov. Wassana brought the issue directly to appropriators, he did so not only to challenge current policy, but to remind Congress of its responsibility. The outcome remains uncertain, but the tribes' position is clear: Fort Reno represents unfinished business, and the path forward must include honoring commitments made generations ago.

## FARM BILL

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broader footprint, including areas now administered by USDA and, separately, by the Department of Justice for the prison complex.

Tribal advocates argue that if the government's historical accounting treated only a subset of the reservation acreage as eligible for compensation, then no settlement has been reached for the remaining land.

The dispute resurfaced in the early 2000s when Congress inserted language into the 2008 farm bill prohibiting USDA from disposing of the Fort Reno research property.

Lawmakers at the time said the restriction was intended to preserve the facility and prevent the loss of agricultural research capacity.

Since then, Congress has repeatedly extended the restriction through appropriations measures and other legislation.

The latest extension was

attached to the American Relief Act of 2025, a disaster relief measure providing \$16 billion to farmers and ranchers for losses during the two prior years. That legislation extended the prohibition through Sept. 30, 2025.

The draft language in the current farm bill would remove the final expiration date that had previously required Congress to revisit the issue every few years.

By striking that sunset clause, the House's proposed legislation would convert what had been a temporary prohibition into a permanent restriction on transferring the land.

For congressional staff, the key fact is that federal law now repeatedly directs USDA not to treat the Fort Reno property as excess or surplus and not to convey or transfer it.

Tribal officials have described the recurring legisla-

tive language as a deliberate barrier and say they expect the issue to resurface again as lawmakers debate future farm bills.

Lucas has been the most visible federal lawmaker associated with the restrictive language in recent years. In the past, Lucas and his allies have characterized the land-transfer question as settled by prior compensation and emphasized the federal research mission at the El Reno facility.

What happens next is less a single decision point than a recurring legislative loop.

The 2018 Farm Bill expired in 2023 and has been kept alive through extensions, creating repeated vehicles for lawmakers to continue, or revise, riders affecting Fort Reno.

If the House's current language remains in the final legislation, the prohibition on transferring the property would remain in federal law

## Fort Reno — What Was Taken, What Was Paid, and What Still Matters

Submitted by Leah Burrows

I want to share some history about Fort Reno so our people can better understand what was settled—and what was not.

Fort Reno sits on land that once belonged to the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes. Our reservation was established in 1869, and not long after, in 1874–1875, the U.S. Army built a military post there during the Red River War. By 1883, about 9,500 acres of our land had been set aside for that purpose. Our people were told that land would be returned when it was no longer needed.

That never happened. Instead, after the military left, the land was transferred to another federal agency in 1948 and remained in federal hands.

Years later, in 1958, the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes filed a claim through the Indian Claims Commission, arguing that we had not been fairly compensated for lands taken by the United States—including the Fort Reno area. In 1965, the Tribes accepted a \$15 million settlement (Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribes v. United States, 1965). That agreement included a final judgment clause, which legally closed out all claims that were brought at that time. Because of that, the courts today consider these land claims resolved. But that does not mean the issue is truly settled.

The Indian Claims Com-

mission could only award money based on land values at the time—often from the 1800s. It did not allow for the return of land, and it did not account for the long-term loss of opportunity, resources, or our connection to that land. So while the legal claim may be closed, the bigger picture is not.

For generations, our tribes have continued to raise the question of Fort Reno. And even today, discussions about that land still exist at the federal level. That tells me this is no longer just a legal issue—it is a political one. If anything were to move forward, it would not happen in a courtroom. It would happen through Congress.

In my humble opinion, something of this size would take a coordinated effort. It would likely require experienced legal experts and strong advocacy at the federal level to work with Congress on any potential legislation. It would take planning, resources, and a clear strategy. So I think the real question for us is this: Should we look into what options might still exist for restoration, compensation, or some kind of agreement regarding Fort Reno?

This is not about blame. It is about understanding our history and deciding what we want going forward. At the very least, our people deserve to know the facts and have an open conversation about it.

# Honoring Traditional Medicines at Sinks Canyon State Park

Latoya Lonelodge, Senior Reporter

Honoring his traditional roots, Cheyenne and Arapaho citizen Billy Williams, a long time visitor of Sinks Canyon State Park in Lander, Wyo., is no outsider when it comes to navigating the lands of his ancestral home for plants and medicinal herbs.

Williams, a resident of Oklahoma City, has been visiting Sinks Canyon for over 50 years. He said he first went to Wyoming when he was 16 years old when his dad took him every summer and he would get involved with ceremonies.

"I look forward to going up there because it's a good atmosphere, always has been and they welcome you. everybody that goes up there, I still remember when I was young, the old men would say that they needed tea to drink, peppermint tea," Williams said.

As young boys they would hurry and go look for peppermint tea for the elders by the riverbank to be the first ones. Williams remembers a lot of his memories when camping and looking back spending his time in Wyoming.

"It was fun and then there's so much to see when you go up there," Williams said.

As a frequent visitor to Sinks Canyon State Park, Williams often is in search of sage and herbal medicines. Recently during the summer, Williams was in search

of sage, when an opportunity came about for Interpretive Park Ranger, Angelina Stancampiano to come up with the idea to incorporate signs for traditional medicine plants at the Sinks Canyon State Park. These signs would eventually include Williams picture on the signs as well his voice used to explain the traditional plants in the state park.

As a citizen of Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and originally from Oklahoma City, Stancampiano moved to Wyoming in 2021 and began work with the Wind River Reservation, discovering the differences between Indian territory and a more defined reservation system and what the differences are in Oklahoma and Wyoming.

"In Wyoming state parks, I had a great supervisor who was a trailblazer in ensuring that we were working with tribes for representation, I have a great relationship with the Easter Shoshone Cultural Center and I'm able to bring up ideas and get input," Stancampiano said.

A few years ago, Stancampiano did a service project and her idea was to create an ethnobotany garden at a park, where a garden was in-pot with a raised red bed in the shape of a Shoshone rose and then signs were put in to talk about the garden, the symbol and to identify the plants.

"The sign also talks some



*Billy Williams, Cheyenne and Arapaho citizen searches for sage in and around Sinks Canyon in Lander, Wyo., which eventually led to the creation of traditional medicine signs in the state park. (Submitted photo)*

about, like, um, why we ask some visitors not to collect plants, but then we encourage other visitors to collect plants. So kind of that dichotomy between leave no trace and allowing tribal peo-

ple to practice their culture," Stancampiano said.

Through this experience, Stancampiano said led to the creation of the signs that in-

**SINKS CANYON** pg. 6

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*Buddy Bond Color Guard*



*Model Brynlee Nowlin*



*The BC Drum Group performed during the event.*

## GALA

*continued from pg. 1*

sued by Indigenous fashion designers and their models. Ending the night was the presentation of silent auction winners as well as the bidding of a live painting.

As a committee member of the education endowment, Breanna Faris, director of Higher Education Scholarship Program for the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, explained that the education endowment would provide sustainability for students from early childhood all the way up to adult learners and well into the future. The education endowment passed the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes 10<sup>th</sup> Legislation in October 2025.

Faris said an endowment is a really great way for the tribes to be able to establish services well into the future.

"In a way that's really smart where you can account for things like donations, one time donations are great, but an endowment, once you secure a donation, it kind of keeps on giving, the endowment is just a really good way for the tribes to kind of exercise some of that educational sovereignty and sustainability," Faris said.

Funds donated to the endowment funds will go back into education in some fashion, Faris said.

"Whether it is through scholarships, but it's also not exclusive to higher education. I know a big part of this endowment will also be a potential charter school and any other education initiative the tribes decide to take on," Faris said.

Currently the endowment committee has five members along with Faris,

which include Dr. Carrie Whitlow, Dr. Natalie Youngbull, Quentin Roman Nose and Billy Sue Sutton.

In addition to the higher education scholarship funds, Faris said the intent is to eventually replace scholarship funds with endowment funds.

"The higher education scholarship program we receive, an allocation from the BIA every year, we also receive a large portion of gaming funds each year. So eventually the idea is that whatever the endowment raises, that money will replace gaming funds," Faris said.

Faris said the endowment committee will oversee the funds and will appoint a treasurer and secretary on the board.

While still planning for the education endowment funding and how it will be used as far as scholarships, Faris said the same guidelines will continue to be followed as they continue to receive BIA funding, unless it is decided to establish a separate scholarship program. Although, the education endowment would not be just for scholarships, it would impact education across the board.

"Anytime the tribes can think about sustainability for generations to come, I think that's always a positive, I think that's, you know, what we have to start thinking about as a tribe, is what sustainable changes can we make so that we, as a tribal government, can continue to provide for our tribal citizenry long into the future after we're gone," Faris said.



*Models showcasing indigenous fashion designer pieces.*



*Cultural entertainment was performed during gala.*



*MC Chance Rush is presented with a Pendleton blanket by the planning committee along with tribal leadership. Pictured l-r: Kelsey Condulle, Lt. Gov. Hershel Gorham, Chance Rush, Gov. Wassana, Debbie Lindsey, Nicolette Casula and Chief of Staff Teresa Dorsett.*

# SINKS CANYON

continued from pg. 5

cluded Williams at the Sinks Canyon State Park. Stancampiano has also been a friend of the family of Williams and his daughter Amanda for years.

"I was working on this project for a couple years and Bill and Amanda were up here for Sundance and Amanda said to me don't tell anyone but my dad needed to collect some sage so he took some and I'm like no, Amanda, I love that, I'm glad he did, that's what we welcome and so she shared the pictures with me and so I just loved that image of Bill, he looked so happy to be gathering in this beautiful park," Stancampiano said.

The signs were installed in the summer of 2025 and were grant sponsored. Stancampiano said they're durable outdoor signs, made to last a decade. With the signs costing \$800 a piece, Stancampiano said they are a significant investment and the thought is that they'll last many years.

"They have a metal base and are concreted into ground, it's a very permanent outdoor wayside," Stancampiano said.

Along with sage, other traditional medicines grown at Sinks Canyon State Park are Yarrow, bitterroot, cedar and many more.

Williams was asked to narrate on a plant that is poisonous but looks like a good plant.

"It's called humas and it's purple, it's good for eating and cooking, but then there's another plant that looks just like it, if you pick the wrong plant, you're going to get sick messing with the wrong plant, so I elaborated on it," Williams said.

Using his voice to narrate through QR codes on the trails, Williams said hikers could use it along the trails, as hikers may pick the wrong plants while hiking.

"It's interactive, all they'd have to do is push a button and they can hear me talking about the differences in plants, how to be careful to pick the right ones from the wrong ones, you know, so that's interesting," Williams said.

Using traditional plants for healing, Williams can remember times when he was in need of herbal remedies.

"That plant that I spoke of, the northern tribes, they still use that plant, like in cooking and some of them eat it and sometimes it's used for healing, like if you have a cough or something," Williams said.

Remembering when he had a constant cough that would not go away for six weeks,

Williams was offered a tea made from traditional sage and his cough was instantaneously healed.

"I mean within 20 minutes I quit coughing, I had been coughing for six weeks and I said, man that stuff really worked," Williams said.

Being a part of the project and being the face of the signs made for traditional plants at Sinks Canyon, Williams has been eye opening and a significant experience for him.

"I've always learned as a young man, my uncle always told me that knowledge is good, if you use it in a proper way and warning people about plants that look alike, it can be totally different, that was pretty eye-opening to me," Williams said.

Healing from traditional medicines, Williams has experienced firsthand what it means to be sick and use herbs to rid sickness.

"Maybe I can help somebody because there's no telling. Who's going to pass by there and actually listen to this and gain some knowledge and then spread that to other people, you know?" Williams said.

With Sinks Canyon State Park attracting 600,000 visitors yearly, the signs are sure to gain significant attention, as they are located on the Sinks to Rise Trail.

For the state park, Stancampiano said getting the signs installed has been significant for tribal citizens as they have been concerned about collecting traditional medicine plants in the park because of worrying about getting in trouble. Which, Stancampiano said more times than not is other visitors making comments about not being about to collect plants versus a person in uniform giving them a hard time.

"We've made it a concerted effort to ensure that tribal folks know that it's welcome, while still saying you're not supposed to collect the root of plants, just the stems and the leaves, asking people to be respectful of the area. I made a statewide brochure to talk about it too, just trying to ensure that tribal people feel welcome, not only to visit our sites, but to practice their culture at our sites," Stancampiano said.

Having Williams's picture on the sign on the state park's most popular trail that explains that can impact a number of visitors, Stancampiano said.

And for Stancampiano, getting the signs



installed as a ranger was an accomplishment as she's very cognizant of how signs at parks represent tribal peoples, both in her work in Oklahoma and Wyoming.

"So often, it's using past tense, it's black and white, it's ancient history versus a living, vibrant representation of tribal peoples that are still here. My supervisor that I talked about, Kyle, and I have presented on this at multiple national conferences to other parks folks, like how to successfully work with tribes, what are some really seamless, easy ways to incorporate tribal culture into what we're doing at parks," Stancampiano said.

Other parks that have incorporated traditional plants signage such as Sinks Canyon State Park are Bear River State park in Evanston and Medicine Lodge State Archaeological Site in Hyattville.

"I have a good relationship with Bill and



Amanda and they've been really helpful and have been spitballing ideas off of them and giving insight into various tribal cultures and Indian country, to make sure that the efforts are approached respectfully," Stancampiano said.



# Oklahoma tribes unite against prediction market apps operating outside of gaming compact

By Rick Maranon

(TULSA, Okla.) Oklahoma's tribal nations said a new wave of "predictive betting" apps is threatening their exclusive gaming rights in the state and the revenue they share with Oklahoma.

Tribal leaders gathered at River Spirit Casino in south Tulsa to begin organizing a coordinated response to the rapidly growing platforms, which they said operate outside the laws that govern gambling in Oklahoma.

For decades, legal gambling in the state has largely been limited to two options: buying a lottery ticket or visiting a casino operated by a tribal nation.

Now, tribal leaders said technology is changing the landscape.

Instead of traditional sports betting apps, they're raising concerns about predictive market platforms like Kalshi and similar services that allow users to place money on the outcome of future events — from sports and politics to global conflicts.

The companies behind those apps said users aren't gambling. Instead, they argued people are trading future contracts tied to possible outcomes, similar to buying or selling stock. Tribal

leaders strongly disagree.

"These predictive markets threaten not only our sovereignty, but also Oklahoma — which we fought so hard to have exclusivity and control gaming in Oklahoma," said Jacob Keyes, chairman of the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma, during the meeting.

The meeting was organized by the United Indian Nations of Oklahoma (UINO), a coalition of tribal governments working together on policy issues.

Leaders said the goal is to create a unified strategy to challenge predictive betting platforms that are already accessible on mobile devices across the state.

Shawnee Tribe and UINO Chief Ben Barnes said the rapid expansion of technology means the tribes must be ready to adapt.

"Technology is going to continue to advance, and we need to be ready for those advancements," Barnes said. "We need to be ready to regulate and step into those areas."

Barnes and others argue companies offering predictive markets have moved into Oklahoma without complying with state gaming laws or federal regulations governing tribal gaming.

Many leaders believe the delay in legalizing traditional sports betting in Oklahoma has created an opening for these apps to fill the gap.

For years, tribal nations and Governor Kevin Stitt have disagreed over how sports betting should be legalized. That stalemate has kept traditional sportsbook-style wagering from launching in Oklahoma.

"These last eight years have been a struggle for tribal nations," Barnes said. "But we've gotten through it by working together and also working with our state legislature."

Tribal leaders said their concerns go beyond sovereignty.

They claim predictive betting platforms lack consumer protections, including safeguards to ensure users get paid or to verify the age of those placing bets.

Christie Modlin, secretary for the Indian Gaming Association, speaking during Tuesday's discussion, said some high school students are already using the apps.

"Students, high school students are already on these platforms betting," Modlin said. "There's no way for age verification. There's no revenue sharing. There's no

geofencing. There's no licensing."

Leaders also worry about potential conflicts of interest tied to global events being wagered on through predictive markets.

At the same time, tribes said the financial impact could be significant.

Under existing tribal gaming compacts, tribes share a portion of casino revenue with the State of Oklahoma. If betting shifts to platforms outside that system, tribal leaders warn both tribes and the state could lose money.

"The state could look at how much the tribes pay in each year, and they could look at it again next year and see a dip," Modlin said. "The predictive markets will affect how much we are giving."

Companies like Kalshi argue they are operating legally under federal laws governing financial futures contracts, not gambling.

In court filings, Kalshi said its platform complies with federal regulations and that those laws supersede state gaming restrictions and tribal compacts.

The debate ties back to the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988, which established the federal framework for tribal gaming. The law

allows tribes to operate casinos on tribal land but requires agreements, called gaming compacts—with states to determine what types of gaming are allowed.

Tribal leaders argue predictive betting platforms bypass that framework entirely.

Meanwhile, legal battles over predictive markets are expanding nationwide.

A new class-action lawsuit filed this week against Kalshi claims the platform refused to pay out certain wagers tied to political events in Iran. Plaintiffs allege users placed bets on whether the country's Ayatollah would leave power before March 1. After he was reportedly killed in a U.S. bombing, the lawsuit claims Kalshi denied payouts by invoking a clause stating that death did not qualify as "leaving office."

The suit seeks \$54 million in damages. Kalshi said it issued refunds and reimbursed fees to users who lost money amid the confusion.

Back in Oklahoma, tribes said they plan to take their concerns to lawmakers in Oklahoma City and to federal officials in Washington, D.C.

"We need to do what our ancestors did and be activ-

ists," Keyes said. "Get out in front of our legislators and let them know the damage that it does to Oklahoma."

The broader fight over sports betting in the state is still unfolding.

A proposal at the Oklahoma Capitol would allow voters to decide whether to legalize traditional sports betting, potentially bypassing the governor.

Last fall, the Oklahoma City Thunder publicly backed the idea and partnered with tribal nations to push for legalization.

"We're thrilled that we're talking about it," Thunder Vice President Will Syring said at the time. "We've got the right people in the room... We feel that 2026 is our year."

They said any sports betting plan must protect tribal sovereignty while giving fans new ways to engage with games.

For tribal leaders meeting in Tulsa this week, the message was clear: they believe the future of gaming in Oklahoma is already being reshaped—and they want a seat at the table before it moves further outside their control.



CHEYENNE AND ARAPAHO TRIBES HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

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Must be enrolled  
The winners of the Cheyenne Princess and the Arapaho Princess will be announced at a dance in August, the dates are yet to be determined  
Winners for the Cheyenne Princess and Arapaho Princess will be crowned at the annual Labor Day Powwow  
Applicants cannot be married or in a relationship and cannot have any children.

## PENNY A VOTE

Start collecting April 15, 2026 – all collections must be completed by the day of the dance in August at 7 p.m. with date to be announced.

**NOTICE: HOLIDAY CLOSURE: All Tribal Offices will be closed on Monday April 6 in observance of the Easter Holiday. Offices will reopen at 8 am Tuesday April 7.**




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### CIV-2026-0021

CHEYENNE & ARAPAHO TRIBES OF OKLAHOMA  
FILED MAR 09 2026  
IN THE TRIAL COURT IN THE TRIAL COURT  
CHEYENNE-ARAPAHO TRIBES OF OKLAHOMA DOCKET PAGE  
P.O. BOX 102 FILM IMAGE  
CONCHO, OKLAHOMA 73022 COURT CLERK  
Tawny Melendez DEPUTY

In the Matter of the Application of: )  
CAYDEN DAMREN BROWN ) Case No. CIV-2026-0021  
DOB: 06/07/1999 )

To Change His/Her Name

#### NOTICE BY PUBLICATION

TAKE NOTICE, that CAYDEN DAMREN BROWN has filed in this Court for Petition for Name Change, as follows, to wit; from CAYDEN DAMREN BROWN to CAYDEN DAMREN GOODBLANKET, SR. and that the same will be heard by the Cheyenne and Arapaho Trial of Concho, Oklahoma in the Courthouse located at 100 West Black Kettle Boulevard, P.O. Box 102, Concho, Oklahoma, 73022, on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of **MAY, 2026 at 10:00 A.M.**, and any written protest may be filed in the case, prior to the date set for the hearing.

Issued this 9<sup>th</sup> day of MARCH, 2026.

*Tawny Melendez*  
Tawny Melendez, Deputy Court Clerk  
Cheyenne-Arapaho Trial Court

### CIV-2026-0022

CHEYENNE & ARAPAHO TRIBES OF OKLAHOMA  
FILED MAR 09 2026  
IN THE TRIAL COURT IN THE TRIAL COURT  
CHEYENNE-ARAPAHO TRIBES OF OKLAHOMA DOCKET PAGE  
P.O. BOX 102 FILM IMAGE  
CONCHO, OKLAHOMA 73022 COURT CLERK  
Tawny Melendez DEPUTY

In the Matter of the Application of: )  
ANDREA RENEE PHEMISTER ) Case No. CIV-2026-0022  
DOB: 07/03/1977 )

To Change His/Her Name

#### NOTICE BY PUBLICATION

TAKE NOTICE, that ANDREA RENEE PHEMISTER has filed in this Court for Petition for Name Change, as follows, to wit; from ANDREA RENEE PHEMISTER to ANDREA RENEE PHEMISTER and that the same will be heard by the Cheyenne and Arapaho Trial of Concho, Oklahoma in the Courthouse located at 100 West Black Kettle Boulevard, P.O. Box 102, Concho, Oklahoma, 73022, on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of **MAY, 2026 at 10:00 A.M.**, and any written protest may be filed in the case, prior to the date set for the hearing.

Issued this 9<sup>th</sup> day of MARCH, 2026.

*Tawny Melendez*  
Tawny Melendez, Deputy Court Clerk  
Cheyenne-Arapaho Trial Court

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### PG-2025-0033

CHEYENNE & ARAPAHO TRIBES OF OKLAHOMA  
FILED MAR 11 2026  
IN THE TRIAL COURT IN THE TRIAL COURT  
CHEYENNE-ARAPAHO TRIBES OF OKLAHOMA DOCKET PAGE  
P.O. BOX 102 FILM IMAGE  
CONCHO, OKLAHOMA 73022 COURT CLERK  
Tawny Melendez DEPUTY

In the Matter of the Guardianship of: )  
G.A.S. ) Case No. PG-2025-0033  
Minor Child, )

The Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribes to: REA ROQUE  
UNKNOWN ADDRESS

#### NOTICE OF HEARING BY PUBLICATION

The above-styled case is hereby set for hearing in the Trial Court of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of **APRIL, 2026, at 10:00 A.M.** in the courtroom, 100 Black Kettle Boulevard, Concho, Oklahoma.

**YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED TO APPEAR**, on the above date and time indicated for presentation of your case before the above-entitled Trial Court. You have the option to appear in person or through Zoom. To appear via Zoom, you will need a smart device such as a desktop computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone. Your smart device will need a camera, microphone, and a stable internet connection. If you do not have access to a smart device, you can use a non-smartphone or traditional telephone.

Parties must use the following in order to log in or join the meeting.

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  - Meeting ID: 452 425 1494
  - Passcode: Court2021
- Phone conferencing for non-smartphone or traditional telephone users:
  - Telephone number: 1 (360) 248-7799
  - Meeting ID: 452 425 1494
  - Passcode: 854454251

Dated at the Trial Court this 11<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2026.

*Tawny Melendez*  
Tawny Melendez, Deputy Court Clerk  
Cheyenne and Arapaho Trial Court

### PG-2026-0010

CHEYENNE & ARAPAHO TRIBES OF OKLAHOMA  
FILED MAR 10 2026  
IN THE TRIAL COURT IN THE TRIAL COURT  
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P.O. BOX 102 FILM IMAGE  
CONCHO, OKLAHOMA 73022 COURT CLERK  
Tawny Melendez DEPUTY

In the Matter of the Guardianship of: )  
K.O.J.R. ) Case No. PG-2026-0010  
Minor Child, )

The Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribes to: ASHLEY HUDGINS AND KYLE ORANGE, SR.  
UNKNOWN ADDRESS

#### NOTICE BY PUBLICATION

TAKE NOTICE that Brenda Byrd, has filed in this Court a Petition for Guardianship of Minor Child, K.O.J.R., and is hereby set for a Hearing to be heard by the Cheyenne-Arapaho Trial Court of Concho, Oklahoma in the Courthouse located at 100 W. Black Kettle Boulevard, P.O. Box 102, Concho, Oklahoma, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of **APRIL, 2026 at 10:00 A.M.**, at which time you may appear and show cause, if any you have, why said relief should not be granted.

**YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED TO APPEAR** on the above date and time indicated for the presentation of your case before the above-entitled Trial Court. You have the option to appear in person or through Zoom. To appear via Zoom, you will need a smart device such as a desktop computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone. Your smart device will need a camera, microphone, and a stable internet connection. If you do not have access to a smart device, you can use a non-smartphone or traditional telephone.

Parties must use the following in order to log in or join the meeting.

- Video conferencing for smart device users:
  - Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4524251494?pwd=S2RCentUZWV0OFMzMl50RkxkTGh0Q109> or <https://zoom.us/join>
  - Meeting ID: 452 425 1494
  - Passcode: Court2021
- Phone conferencing for non-smartphone or traditional telephone users:
  - Telephone number: 1 (360) 248-7799
  - Meeting ID: 452 425 1494
  - Passcode: 854454251

Dated at the Trial Court this 10<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2026.

*Tawny Melendez*  
Tawny Melendez, Deputy Court Clerk  
Cheyenne and Arapaho Trial Court

### PG-2025-0016

CHEYENNE & ARAPAHO TRIBES OF OKLAHOMA  
FILED MAR 11 2026  
IN THE TRIAL COURT IN THE TRIAL COURT  
CHEYENNE-ARAPAHO TRIBES OF OKLAHOMA DOCKET PAGE  
P.O. BOX 102 FILM IMAGE  
CONCHO, OKLAHOMA 73022 COURT CLERK  
Tawny Melendez DEPUTY

In the Matter of the Guardianship of: )  
A.W. ) Case No. PG-2025-0016  
T.W. )  
A.M. )  
Minor Children,

The Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribes to: MARIECIA PARKER  
TIMOTHY WOLFTONGUE  
UNKNOWN ADDRESSES

#### NOTICE OF HEARING BY PUBLICATION

The above-styled case is hereby set for hearing in the Trial Court of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of **APRIL, 2026, at 10:00 A.M.** in the courtroom, 100 Black Kettle Boulevard, Concho, Oklahoma.

**YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED TO APPEAR**, on the above date and time indicated for presentation of your case before the above-entitled Trial Court. You have the option to appear in person or through Zoom. To appear via Zoom, you will need a smart device such as a desktop computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone. Your smart device will need a camera, microphone, and a stable internet connection. If you do not have access to a smart device, you can use a non-smartphone or traditional telephone.

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  - Meeting ID: 452 425 1494
  - Passcode: Court2021
- Phone conferencing for non-smartphone or traditional telephone users:
  - Telephone number: 1 (360) 248-7799
  - Meeting ID: 452 425 1494
  - Passcode: 854454251

Dated at the Trial Court this 11<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2026.

*Tawny Melendez*  
Tawny Melendez, Deputy Court Clerk  
Cheyenne and Arapaho Trial Court

## OBITUARIES

## OBITUARIES

**Keely Rae Black****My Farewell**

If you're reading this, it means my time here has come to an end a little sooner than anyone expected. While that may bring sadness, I hope it also brings a smile or two when you think about the moments we shared.

Keely Black, born March 3, 1977, in Clinton, Okla., and raised in El Reno, Okla., lived a life surrounded by love, memories and the people who meant the world to her.

I was blessed with a family who filled my life with meaning. Being an aunt was one of my greatest joys. My nieces and nephews filled my heart in ways words could never quite explain, and watching you grow was one of the greatest gifts of my life.

I hope you remember me for the laughter we shared,

the hugs that lasted a little longer than necessary, and the love I tried my best to give every single day. If I ever made you smile, helped you through a hard moment, or made you feel loved, then I lived my life well.

Please don't spend too much time being sad for me. Instead, tell stories, laugh loudly, and hold the people you love a little closer. Life is precious and far too short not to fill it with kindness, joy, and love.

She leaves behind those who meant the most to her, her older sister Kahlea Black, her brother-in-law Michael Cooke, her beloved nieces Kamia Cornelius and Miklahea Black-Cooke, and her great-nephews Durrant Black, Damian McNac, Christian McNac, Dominic McNac, and Dakota McNac.

Thank you for being part of my story. Carry my love



with you, just as I carry all of you in my heart.

Until we meet again.

Keely Rae passed away on March 10, 2026 – wake services were held March 13 at the Concho Emergency Response Center in Concho, Okla. Funeral services were held March 14, at the same venue, followed by an interment at the Concho Indian Cemetery under the direction of Huber Benson Funeral Home.

**Deanna Gardipee**

Deanna Gardipee died March 5, 2026, at her home in Oklahoma City. Deanna was born on Sept. 9, 1979, in Browning, Mont. In 1998, she graduated from high school in Browning. She was a member of the Blackfeet Nation and participated in Sun Dance. Deanna enjoyed being with her dogs, Princess, Lulu, and Remi and being out of doors riding her bicycle and taking walks. She was a diehard Oklahoma City Thunder fan. She loved green apples.

She is survived by her mother Angelina Bates of Geary, Okla., son and daughter-in-law, D'Angelo

Sleeper and Baleigh Standingwater of El Reno, Okla., daughter Kaylianne Sleeper of Yukon, Okla., brothers, Leslie Bates and Waylan Upchego (Nicole), all of Geary; sisters, Geneva Hungary and Jamie Bates both of Oklahoma City and Gari Bates (Jordan Warden) of Geary and a granddaughter Denise Sleeper.

Her father, Gilbert Gardipee, brother Melvin "Sonny" Bates Jr; and stepfather Melvin Bates Sr. preceded her in death.

An all-night wake service was held March 15 at the Concho Emergency Response Center in Concho,



Okla. Funeral services were held March 16, at the same venue, followed by an interment at the Concho Indian Cemetery under the direction of Huber Benson Funeral Home.

**Candace Rae Chavez**

Candace Rae Chavez was born Dec. 23, 1987, in Clinton, Okla., to Raymond Anthony Chavez and Regina Candice Blindy. She passed away March 10, 2026, in Canton, Okla., at the age of 38. Candace graduated from Geary High School in 2006 and continued to make her home in Geary. She first devoted her time to raising her three children, Mariah and Derrick and Ivan, and later worked at the Geary Nursing Home. Candace enjoyed going to the casino, doing arts and crafts, cooking, and baking. She always wanted to make sure everyone was fed and was known for putting others before herself. Candace had a gift for meeting someone once and becoming lifelong friends. Her greatest joy was spending time with her children and supporting them in all of their activities. She was a member of the Baptist Church and was saved and baptized at the First Baptist Church in Geary. Candace was also a descendant of the Sand Creek survivors.

Survivors include her

three children, Mariah Grace Pratt of Geary, Derrick Tyler Lee Pratt of Geary, and Ivan James Chavez of Hinton; her mother, Regina Candice Blindy Twohatchet and husband Finis of Watonga, grandparents, Anita Campbell of Hinton and Roger Tenequer of Snyder, Okla., brothers and sisters, Steve Tyler Hicks of Hinton, Zachary Lee Chavez of Hinton, and Denton Chavez and Debra Chavez.

She is also survived by numerous aunts, uncles, and cousins including Roxanna Campbell of Geary, Ronald Allen Tenequer of Hinton, Yolanda Chavez of El Reno, Jesse Chavez and wife Tammy of El Reno, Freedom Wofford and husband Bobby of Norman, Lisa Chavez of El Reno, Destiny of Watonga, Jazarae of El Reno, Legacy Raven of El Reno Brooke Davidson of Ardmore, Sebastian Davidson of Ardmore, Ashley Blindy of Oklahoma City, Ronald Blindy Jr. of Lawton, and Angus Blindy of Oklahoma City, along with many other relatives and friends.



She was preceded in death by her father, Raymond Anthony Chavez; brother Derek Thomas Hicks; grandparents, Raymond Chavez, Wanda Nicholson, Emery Campbell; and great-grandparents, Jim and Pearl Gamble, Josephine North Blindy, and Angus Blindy.

A traditional all-night wake service was held March 18 at the Gib Miles Emergency Response Center in Geary, Okla. Funeral services were held March 19, at the same venue, officiated by Rev. Waylon Upchego and Rev. Jay Mule, followed by an interment at the North Family Cemetery under the direction of Turner Funeral Home.

**Victor Mendoza**

Victor Mendoza, aged 43, of Thomas, Okla., passed away March 24, 2026, in Oklahoma City. Victor was born on March 18, 1983, to Ramon and Charlene (Lime) Mendoza, in Clinton, Okla.

Victor dedicated his life to serving others, allowing his own journey to become a ministry of hope and encouragement. He founded Victor's Journey, a faithbased outreach created to support individuals facing addiction and those walking the path of recovery. He dreamed of establishing sober living homes and was passionate about teaching "Be Free" and "Breakthrough" classes. His love for Scripture was evident in the many Bible verses he committed to memory.

Victor developed a strong work ethic early in life, beginning his career in auto body work as a young man. He carried that same dedi-

cation into his years in construction and the oil field, where he was known for his reliability and determination.

He also pursued martial arts at Seighty Grappling in Weatherford, training in Jiu-jitsu with the same focus he brought to every part of his life. He had almost earned his Blue Belt, a testament to his discipline, perseverance, and commitment to personal growth.

He is survived by his daughter Izabella Selene Mendoz, son Urijah Ramon Mendoza, his parents, Ramon and Charlene Mendoza, of Thomas, brother Robert Lime and wife Vivian of Clinton, Travis Mendoza, sister Mary Burns and husband William Burns of Clinton, and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts, uncles and friends.

He is preceded in death by his brother Jesse Mend-



za; maternal grandparents, Robert and LaVerne Lime, paternal grandparents, Gonzalo and Petra Mendoza.

Wake services were held March 29 at the Clinton Emergency Response Center in Clinton, Okla. Funeral services were held March 30 at the Freedom Worship Center in Thomas, followed by an interment at the Mound Valley Cemetery under the direction of Kiesau Lee Funeral Home.

**Everett Louis Oldcamp**

Everett Louis Oldcamp of Broken Arrow, Okla., passed away March 19, 2026. Everett was born Dec. 28, 1965, in Talihina, Okla., to Howard and Lena (Gould) Oldcamp. He married Linda Thomas on March 8, 2026, in Broken Arrow, OK.

Everett, a graduate of Clinton High School class of 1984, was a man whose passions brought warmth and joy to those around him. He had a deep love for traveling, particularly enjoying visits to the beach and South Carolina, places that brought him great happiness. Everett expressed his care for others through his cooking, delighting in preparing comforting home-style meals for family and friends. An avid bowler, he participated in a league and continued to enjoy sports throughout his life. Everett was also a devoted fan of Elvis, a passion that added to

his vibrant character. Above all, he treasured his family, especially the young ones who affectionately called him "Pop Pop." Everett's loving spirit and devotion to those he cared for will be fondly remembered by all who knew him.

He is survived by his wife Susie Thomas of the home, sons, Jacob Oldcamp of Broken Arrow, Michael Watkins and wife Tara of Broken Arrow, Joshua Thomas, Devin Middleton of Broken Arrow, daughters, Cayden Flud of Broken Arrow, Kloe Flud and husband Morgan of Broken Arrow, Megan Walker of Whitefield, Okla., Marleta Fletcher of Clinton, Okla., Elizabeth Pierson and husband Kyle of Tulsa, Okla., sister-in-law, Chelle Flud of Broken Arrow, grandchildren, Payge, Pyper, Jordan, Eli, Cheyanne and Ember and a host of nieces, neph-



ews, family and friends.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Howard and Lena Oldcamp, brother Neil Henry and sister Leandra Bearshield.

Wake services were held March 24 at the Clinton Emergency Response Center in Clinton, Okla. Funeral services were held March 25, at the same venue, followed by an interment at the Colony Indian Cemetery under the direction of Kiesau Lee Funeral Home.

deepest sympathies during this hard time of loss may memories give strength may the love of your dear ones help you through the days ahead



**DID YOU KNOW?**

The Tribes offer up to \$500 to help honor your loved one with a beautiful headstone. Now is the perfect time to ensure they have a meaningful marker at their final resting place. We understand that making these arrangements can be emotional and overwhelming, so if you have any questions or need assistance, please reach out to us.

We're here to support you every step of the way.

**CHEYENNE AND ARAPAHO TRIBES  
BURIAL PROGRAM**

(405) 422-7594

[burial@cheyenneandrapaho-nsn.gov](mailto:burial@cheyenneandrapaho-nsn.gov)



FOR THE APPLICATION

# ATHLETES' SPOTLIGHT

By Latoya Lonelodge, Senior Reporter

## Cayden Little Coyote, Seiling High School

(SEILING, Okla.) Empowering herself with each deadlift and squat, tribal youth, Cayden Little Coyote, 17, embraces her inner strength she never knew she had.

Standing 5'6, Little Coyote competes in the 220-weight class for the Seiling High School girls power lifting team, where she recently went to state and placed 11<sup>th</sup>.

Born in Lawrence, Kansas and raised in Seiling, Okla., Little Coyote had always competed in other sports such as fast pitch and slow pitch softball, but wanted to try something new. So she tried her shot at powerlifting her freshman year in high school.

"I actually quit softball, my freshman year. I knew my mom wanted me to stay

in a sport, and so I chose to do power lifting," Little Coyote said.

What Little Coyote has come to love the most about powerlifting is the energy it gives her when everyone is cheering everybody on.

"It's just you and the weight, basically, you're trying to push and you're on the spotlight and usually I don't like spotlights, but I really just enjoy it because it's not a team sport, well, it is a team sport, but you compete individually," Little Coyote said.

Little Coyote's biggest motivation for continuing to do powerlifting has been her mother.

"I don't have an older brother and so I want to be strong for my parents to help them, to do everything, like our ceremonies and just to build muscle," Little Coyote

said.

Toward the beginning of the season, what Little Coyote looked forward to the most was getting medals at every meet, cherishing every moment and making it to state.

"I really set this goal to make it to state, and to get new PRs," Little Coyote said.

In powerlifting, individuals are tested on three categories, which include squats, bench and dead lifts. Little Coyote's personnel record for the season for squat was 275, her bench PR was 130 and her dead lift was 285.

Ending the season as a senior, Little Coyote admits she was emotional and was sad, but overall she was glad she did powerlifting for another season.

"To be able to push myself and get new PRs on my lifts and to medal," Little Coyote said.

Maintaining a 3.98 GPA, Little Coyote best manages school and sports by getting her work done in class. She also juggles other extra curricular activities that include cheer, band and is also the president of her senior class.

Since joining the powerlifting team, Little Coyote has noticed her confidence has grown.

"I can like go and talk to people. Like I'm more social, I've made a bunch of friends at different meets and I cheer on others and they cheer me on," Little Coyote said.

With powerlifting requiring strength and consistent training in the gym, Little Coyote stayed in the gym five days a week as part of her practice schedule, focusing on her bench and squats.

As a powerlifter, the two things that come to mind to always have, that are important, is an energy drink and God she said.

"It gets me through every single meet," Little Coyote said.

And through her years powerlifting, what the sport has given Little Coyote the most is confidence.

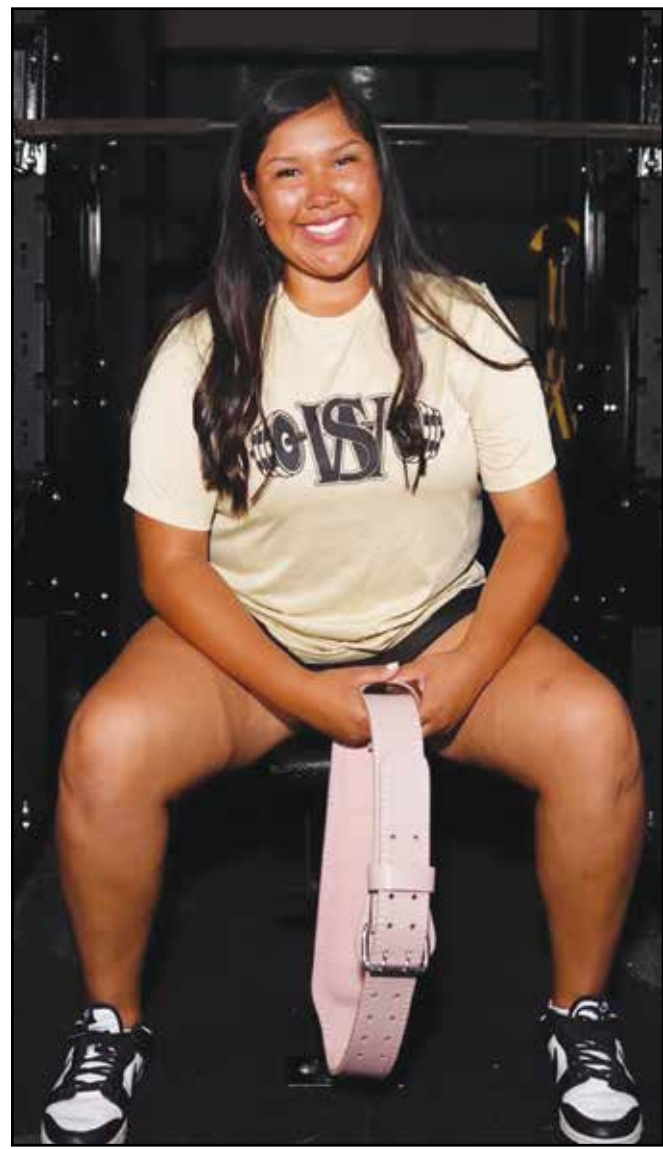
"To be confident in myself and that if I push myself and do the best I can, then I won myself," Little Coyote said.

Overall, when she's getting ready to bench or squat or lift, Little Coyote said there's no other moment like the spotlight that powerlifting gives her, as it empowers her to feel strong.

"It makes me feel all the other people yelling at me and cheering me on, it makes me feel supported," Little Coyote said.

After graduation, Little Coyote plans to continue her education at the university level.

*Cayden's parents are Hannah and Chase Sissom. Her grandparents are Karen Little Coyote, Randal Redhat, Betty and Floyd Sissom. Cayden's siblings include Cameron Little Coyote, Rien, Bryant and Gertrude Sissom.*



**Lucky Star CASINO**

# Cash in Bloom

**CASH DRAWINGS SATURDAYS IN APRIL!**

Don't Miss Your Share of **\$162,500 in CASH!**

One name will be drawn every hour from 7pm to 11pm for **\$1,000 in CASH** at Concho, Clinton, Canton, Watonga, Concho Travel Center and Hammon and one name will be drawn every hour from 7pm to 11pm for **\$500 in CASH** at the Cheyenne and Arapaho Travel Center.

**Earn entries starting Monday, March 30!**

**5x FRIDAY** With five times entries on Fridays!

- Ten (10) points equals one entry
- Winner may only win once per Saturday
- See Players Club for full details

Winner must be present to win and may only win once per promotional period. Promotions valid during Players Club hours only. Management reserves all rights to cancel or modify any or all promotions without prior notice. See Players Club for full details on this promotion. ©2026 Lucky Star.

CHEYENNE and ARAPAHO TRIBES

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