FOREWORD

At times in the WESTVIEW Editorial Office, we feel as if we are facing an impossible task — to try to produce perfect copy. Maybe we would be less bothered by our problem if we didn’t carefully read each issue after its publication.

Just about the time we thought we were finished with the faux pas in the Winter 1988 issue, we came across some more: Klaassen was incorrectly spelled Klaasen on p. 18, a line of Mr. Klaassen’s article was deleted on the same page, and the mere addition of an s on the word chief on p. 29 implied that Geronimo committed suicide.

Maybe the list goes on, and it causes us embarrassment; but we think that we prefer to know about our typos and paste-up errors instead of not being told. Anyway, we plan to continue to depend on everyone to help us in a variety of ways. There’s always the possibility, of course, that we make errors for the purpose of checking up on our readers.

Not all the help we get is the kind previously mentioned in this piece. Some of our contributors such as Margie Snowden North of Erick help us in other ways; for instance, in the “Future Issues” feature this time, we are listing several new themes that Margie suggested. We are grateful to her. Our readers and contributors continue to be our foremost helpers.

Thankful,

Leroy Thomas
Editor

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WESTVIEW
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Mrs. Maxine Wilhelm, author of "Searching for the True 100th Meridian" (p. 33 — WESTVIEW, Winter '88), has given us permission to publish a letter from one of our readers.

Museum of the Western Prairie
P.O. Box 574
Altus, OK 73521

Dear Dr. Thomas:
I would like to point out one glaring mistake in the Winter, 1988 edition of WESTVIEW. Maxine Wilhelm's article "Searching for the True 100th Meridian" is in error concerning the division of Greer County. She states on page 34: "The day Oklahoma became a state, November 16th, 1907, Greer County was divided into smaller counties. They were Jackson, Greer, Harmon, and Beckham."

As a matter of fact, Harmon County was not formed until 1909. It was created by special election held May 22, 1909. The original document of this election is housed in the Historical Archives of the Museum of the Western Prairie.

Hopefully, this important fact will be pointed out to the readers who may have been misled.

Best Wishes,
Leo Kelley
Assistant Curator

And Mrs. Wilhelm said:

Dear Dr. Thomas:

Yes, print this letter in the next issue. This is one of the things that make research writing so interesting. The more you dig for information, the more you find. I was not aware of this fact; we will add it to our research for the 100th Meridian Museum.

Thank You,
Maxine Wilhelm
How enjoyable it is to reminisce about the past! What memories I have of the early years of my life. I was born in 1906 on a farm in Oklahoma Territory three miles from the pioneer town Custer City. The next year, Oklahoma became a state.

When the Frisco Railroad came to Western Oklahoma in 1902, Custer sprang up almost overnight. Independence, a flourishing little community, was only a few miles away. Realizing that without a railroad Independence was doomed, businessmen began moving to Custer.

Henry Harmon moved his drug store, John Pyeatt his grocery and dry goods, and Frank Harding his lumber and coal company. Others soon followed. Everett Veatch brought his newspaper, THE INDEPENDENCE COURIER, and renamed it THE CUSTER COURIER. Before long, there were several more stores. Along came two banks and several churches. Then a saloon opened. There was a great deal of opposition from the citizens of Custer and the surrounding community, but the merchants were for it. They thought the saloon would attract new customers.

Although it was some time before there was a hospital in Western Oklahoma, four doctors opened offices—Dr. O.H. Parker, Dr. W.W. Parker, Dr. K.D. Gossom, and Dr. C.H. Dean. The doctors delivered babies at home. When I was born, the fee was five dollars. When my brother was born a few years later, it had been raised to ten dollars. Mama used to say jokingly, "Edward is worth more than Inez; he cost twice as much."

One of the first things I remember is my trips to town with Papa. He'd come into the kitchen and say, "I have to make a quick trip into town."

"I wanna go, I wanna go!" I'd say, jumping up and down.

"Do take her," Mama would reply; "It'll be easier for me to get the work done."

Papa would already have old Deck hitched up to the buggy, so away we'd go. When we reached Custer, he would get out and tie old Deck to one of the hitching posts along a side street. Then he'd lift me out of the buggy and around the corner we'd go to Main Street.

"Do I get an ice cream cone, Papa?"

"Of course. Don't you always?" Into Harmon's Drug Store we'd go and walk up to the counter.

"An ice cream cone for this little lady," Papa would say.

Then he'd hand me a nickel to give to Mr. Harmon. Papa would buy a cigar. Mama never let him smoke at home. We'd walk down the street with me licking my cone and Papa smoking his cigar.

There was always something going on in that little pioneer town. Nearly every summer, a carnival arrived. How I loved to ride on the merry-go-round and the ferris wheel! The sideshows were fun too. Booths were filled with toys and housewares lined the streets. The carnival usually stayed about a week. We'd go in every night and sometimes in the afternoon if Papa didn't have to work in the field.

Every two or three years a tent revival would come to town. The minister was always an eloquent 'fire and brimstone' speaker. Many sinners repented. People were very generous with their offerings, and the revival left with a substantial amount of money. No one ever seemed to know exactly where they came from or where they went.

Then there was the tent chautauqua. It stayed seven days. There would be afternoon and evening programs of lectures, concerts, and plays. The main attraction one summer was a speech by William Jennings Bryan.

Every Saturday, families flocked to town from the surrounding farms. Mama and Papa took eggs, cream, and sometimes chickens to sell at one of the produce houses. Mama also churned butter and sold it at Jeff Wilson's store. When she took it in, he'd say, "Mrs. Schneider, I have a lot of people waiting for your good butter."

In hot, dry weather the streets were very dusty, so a water-wagon sprinkler drawn by a team of horses patrolled Main Street to keep it more comfortable.

All the farmers registered for the Saturday drawing. Names were drawn from a hat, and the winners received cash prizes ranging from one to ten dollars.

Another enticement to go to town on Saturday was free tickets to Rex Theater run by Chester Kelley. It was the day of the silent movie. The audience sat enthralled by the exploits of the cowboy favorites William Hart and Tom Mix. Then there were the narrow escapes of Pearl White in THE PERILS OF PAULINE. These films were accompanied by music from a tall player piano with twinkling lights. The movie would conclude our Saturday afternoon. We'd get in our buggy and home we'd go.

These are only a few of my happy Western Oklahoma Celebrations memories. They were made special because they were interspersed with many hours of work and deprivation on the Oklahoma prairie.

INEZ SCHNEIDER WHITNEY of Arlington, Virginia is one of WESTVIEW's earliest and most prolific contributors.
It is a rare warm day as we stand in my home town eating a picnic lunch in the city park and enjoying dreams of rain and a good season for bumper crops in the summer.

A paper cup rolls half around on the picnic table and around again in the gusty wind, and our two city visitors are standing near my father and mother under the sycamore tree — everybody eating fried chicken — everybody in cowboy clothes when a siren blows signifying the parade has started down the main street.

We quickly finish our noon meal, for we don't want to miss anything. The band sounds and the floats roll and the horsemen and wagons move into view.

There are flags and banners, old classic cars and beauty queens, passing along like in a child's dream. Later we'll see the hot air balloons; a huge chili cookoff and a fiddler's contest; then there is a rodeo with bucking horses and bulls and rodeo clowns; contests for oldest inhabitant, ugliest man, and crowning of the Western queen; street dancing, juggling, and merry-makers until the small hours of the night.

The spring wind dashes across my face as I store away brief telegenic episodes of a spring festival in our town of Cheyenne.

AARON A. BAKER of Burns Flat, a frequent contributor to WESTVIEW, was reared in Central and Western Oklahoma and is an alumnus of OU. Although he has enjoyed careers in public education, journalism, and state civil service, his love affair with the written word has never faded. His latest chapbooks are SOMETHING WILL COME TO YOU and MAKE ROOM FOR THE INTRUDER.
New Horizon

By Dr. Shyamkant Kulkarni

Once upon a time,
Once upon a time,
That is not too far away——
Seems it was just yesterday.

I broke walls of my home
To find a new home.
When I was too tired to roam,
I did find a new home.

When somebody asks me now and then
"When are you going to your home of homes?
Which do you like more——
This home or that home?"

I want to write of my home——
New home, new friends, new happenstances, new circumstances.
But then somebody asks aloud,
"Tell us of that home which is on the west side
In the land that Highway 35 divides."

Texas and Kansas, Missouri and Arkansas,
I-40 and I-35
East Main and Nash
Streets and Boulevards,
Bricks and mortars,
New walls and fences.

New places and new chains——
Inside I have growing pains.
Ahead of me is a new horizon,
Inside another horizon.

DR. SHYAMKANT KULKARNI was born in Sawad, India, in 1937. He is a Medical School graduate from Pune, India, who immigrated to Watonga in 1967 after twenty years of successful practice in India——in search of new life and new experiences. He is a prolific writer who makes his WESTVIEW debut in this issue.
A Morning Walk
By Imogene Barger

When I went out to take my morning walk today, I found everything shrouded in heavy fog, very unusual for a July day in Western Oklahoma. The cars and trucks, unseen on the nearby highway, were the only sounds that could be heard. The birds were silent—there were no bobwhites calling to one another—no songs could be heard from the cardinals in the orchard; even the bluejays couldn't find anything to scold, and the sparrows were not chattering up a storm. It seemed as if a hush was spread over the whole world.

The trees along the creek bank were just hazy outlines, and it all gave me a sense of being very much alone in a fantasy world—I almost felt like a child again. I could smell the pungent odor of the wild gourd vine in the nearby fence row, and for a moment I was tempted to see how far I could still throw the little gourd balls. I picked a soft lavender blossom from the “shame-me” weed and absorbed its light sweet smell and watched its leaves fold at my touch. I picked a few wild plums and could almost taste their pleasingly tart flavor when made into jams and jelly and spread on hot buttered bread fresh from the oven.

Then on I walked, down by the yucca plants like the ones that had furnished their blooms to make hundreds of dancing ballerina dolls in the years gone by. A rabbit with its powder puff tail sheltered under them and a nearby covey of quail were startled by my presence and took flight with a whir-r-r of their wings. I went on past the huge lightning-scarred, ivy-draped cottonwood tree that stands like a sentinel with its limbs spread to shelter squirrels playing hide and seek.

Finally I reached the creek where I saw a mama coon and her three babies on their way home from their nocturnal ramblings—probably in someone’s sweet-corn patch. They looked at me with masked, indignant eyes and moved on, leaving their babylke footprints in the damp sand. I saw the red horse minnows as they flipped and flopped through the water, and I could almost feel the cool water on my bare toes the way it felt as I ran and splashed as a child.

The willow trees were on the creek bank like the ones I climbed in those long-ago days and with the help of a friend rode to the ground after which one of us would jump off and the one left would get to take a wild whipping ride as the tree swung back and forth.

I started homeward, and by the time I reached the house the sun was burning off the fog. The mundane things of everyday farm life and the mantle of responsibility took over my dream world of yesteryear, but the dreams somehow left me a more contented and perhaps a better person.

IMOGENE BARGER, in addition to her other interests, has finished a study guide to Oklahoma history for her older grandchildren and an illustrated story book for the younger ones.

Illustration by Trey Wright
Arapaho Reverie

By James M. Fire

East brought chilling winds with assent mysterious circle and shrouds of sacred dance became winter's wish.

Arapaho yearns for heart-touch but like smoke from fires of summer's camp dissipates lost in time, in another place.

Spirit leaps as exploding cinder morning dew falls upon tongue hold warm earth in hand touch sweetness of sacred winds.

Heart soars above the timbers above eternal sea of rolling plains where buffalo's thunder echoes songs of Man-above.

Indian spirit refreshed from waters of winding, sandy-streams carves earth, tenderly, caressingly ever drinking of its seasons.

Flight of eagle, dance of fire-fly moved by whispering four winds explosion of snowflake covers genesis to tomorrow.

PERSPECTIVES

introspective heart touch

Illustration by Jerry Toppah

JAMES M. FIRE of Bethany is a member of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma and is an Arapaho chief. He has served as a pastor in Colony, Thomas, and Clinton.
ANNIVERSARY

By Ethel McInturff

Golden anniversary, a dream come true
Of the sturdy pioneer.
We give a salute to them and to you,
This semi-centennial year.

The tall grass fell before the plow;
The nester made a home:
A field of corn, a pig, a cow——
Where once the buffalo roamed.

Crude methods of the earlier years,
To progress took a bow.
The trails they blazed with blood and tears
Are gleaming highways now.

Bridges span the rivers wide,
Where once they struggled through.
Dams have helped to stem the tide
Where ruin and destruction grew.

This was their goal, their aim fulfilled
To find a better way.
The land they once with oxen tilled
Is farmed by power machines today.

Because somebody dared to dream
Of a better way of life
And fight for it, when it would seem
Availed them only toil and strife.

Our state's the best—-our statesmen too,
Our people leaders everywhere
In peace or war, our boys came through.
We have champions to spare.

Not many pioneers there will be
Joining in our celebration.
We thank and praise their memory;
We are number one in the nation.

ETHEL MCINTURFF of Clinton was 86 years old at the
time she submitted this poem two years ago. She has been
writing poetry since the 1950's.
Events

Recursive celebration

Oklahoma Land Run——
April 22, 1889
By Wayne L. Vincent

The prelude to statehood:
it was the low booming thunder
of a thousand pounding hooves;
if was the moaning-groaning whining
of all those wagon wheels a-turning
 tossing clods of earth into the sky
like red-clay rockets
darting through the choking clouds
of man-made dust devils,
playing hopscotch in the midst of all of us.
It was the pain
as a clenched tight rein
chewed into bare flesh.
It was a race to claim a dream.
It was the pounding of a thousand hearts
beating in anguished anticipation
It was a tidal wave of humanity——horses hurrying,
hastening helter-skelter,
hurdling pell-mell through the buffalo grass
while the whole prairie shook.
It was the dying whimper of a crushed prairie dog
and violets——their petals pressed into the prairie.
It was the foam-flecked fog of sweating horses
mingling with the human mist of unfulfilled dreams.
It was the cries of joy
as settlers drove stakes into new-claimed ground,
seeds of destiny sown in the home of the red man.

WAYNE L. VINCENT, a sixty-year resident of
Oklahoma, is a member of the Oklahoma City
Writers, Inc and the Poetry Society of Oklahoma.
He is a frequent winner in prose/poetry contests,
and his publication credits include several
articles as well as many poems. Wayne enjoys
humor, and in 1988 he won the First Place in a
national light-verse competition with his poem
"A Freshman's Plea." He is a Korean War
veteran and is retired from Tinker Air Force Base.
On June 20, 1988, Weatherford, held a Thomas P. Stafford Day. Judge and Mrs. John Allen Phillips II of Durant sponsored a writing contest for Editor Thomas' English Composition Class. The First-, Second-, and Third-Place papers are published here. Judging was done by the Phillipses.

First-Place winner, Stafford Day Writing Contest

HOMETOWN BOY FLIES HIGH

By Brent Wilks

In a much-deserved ceremony, Lt. Gen. Thomas P. Stafford was honored by his hometown, Weatherford. The ceremony took place on June 20, 1988, near the Weatherford City Hall. There to honor Stafford were many dignitaries including Weatherford's mayor, Gary Rader, and the two Russian Cosmonauts, Soviet Air Force Major General Aleksey A. Leonov, and Soviet flight engineer Valery N. Kubasov, with whom Stafford made history in the summer of 1975.

Although the joint space flight involving the meeting between astronauts and cosmonauts made a historic leap in foreign relations, Stafford has made many other contributions to the space program and has also managed to advance his personal career by co-authoring two instructional books and then being assigned to the Gemini project. Three years after this second Gemini flight, he became the mission commander for the Apollo 10 lunar flight which took place in June 1969. The final Apollo space flight was a rendezvous between a U.S. and a Russian ship to test a mechanism that joined two ships of different design. This was the space flight in which Stafford met the two Russian cosmonauts.

Soviet Air Force Major General Aleksey A. Leonov and Soviet flight engineer Valery N. Kubasov were personally invited by Stafford himself, who went to Russia to do so. Other members of the Apollo-Soyuz flight to attend were Stafford's crew—docking module pilot Donald K. Slayton and command module pilot Vance D. Brand. In addition to these distinguished guests, the creator of the statue, Leonard McMurry, was there. The statue of Stafford stands thirteen feet tall and shows the subject in the space suit used for the Apollo-Soyuz flight. The bronze statue shows

Here is a lasting tribute to Astronaut and Weatherford native, Lt. General Thomas P. Stafford.
Stafford with his head tilted skyward as if looking forward to his next space flight or to the future of a more brilliant space program, for activities in which he has been honored. Although most honors have been government-issued, another honor that Weatherford has given him was the renaming of Washita Street to Tom Stafford Street on another "Tom Stafford Day" on September 7, 1975. In addition to Tom Stafford Street, Weatherford also displays a Weatherford flag, which Stafford carried on his last space flight.

Stafford's last space flight was not the astronaut's last contribution to the United States. He was promoted to Major General on August 9, 1975, at which time he was appointed commander of the Air Force Flight Test Center. On May 1, 1978, he became Duputy Chief of Staff, Research Development and Acquisition, Headquarters USAF, after being promoted to Lieutenant General on March 15. Lieutenant General Thomas P. Stafford retired from the Air Force on November 1, 1979, but has continued to give expert advise to NASA and some private firms.

Stafford is presently a private technical consultant for the aerospace industrial business, Gibralter Exploration, Ltd., of Oklahoma City and ranks as Vice President. Thomas P. Stafford started as a small-town boy who followed his dreams into space and paved the way to success.

**BRENT WILKS is a sophomore at SOSU with an undecided major. He lives in Clinton and commutes to classes. Brent graduated from Clinton High School in 1988. His hobbies include hunting, restoring old vehicles, and reading.**

---

Second-Place winner, Stafford Day Writing Contest

**A SPECIAL DAY**

*By Doug Wisel*

Monday, June 20, 1988, was a special day in Weatherford. The town was in a state of excitement because its home-town hero was coming home. Store windows were decorated. Red, white, and blue flags were flying, and the town was swollen with pride. The sun was shining brightly, which added to the festive mood. Weatherford was excited because Lieutenant General Thomas P. Stafford and the two Russian cosmonauts who participated in the Apollo-Soyez flight with him were in town for a homecoming festival and the dedication of a thirteen-foot-high bronze statue of Tom Stafford. A large crowd gathered in the City Hall parking lot where the dedication ceremony would be held. I could feel the excitement build as a trumpeter played "The Star-Spangled Banner." Mayor Gary Rader proclaimed June 20 "Thomas P. Stafford Day" as the crowd waited anxiously for the unveiling of the statue. A loud cheer arose as the crowd waited anxiously for the unveiling of the statue and when the white covering was finally removed from the statue. As the ceremony ended, I saw a variety of reactions. Several people were reunited with old friends, some took pictures, and others just looked at the statue. The Thomas P. Stafford Day was a special time because it created a wide assortment of thoughts and feelings.

The first impression that I felt during the ceremony was a feeling of patriotism and pride. The ceremony made me proud of the accomplishments that America and her space program have made. It was also evident that the people around me were proud of General Stafford and what he has done for the Weatherford community. I was reminded that the United States is the greatest nation in the world and that we are truly privileged to live in this great country.

The ceremonies also created feelings of admiration for General Stafford. I could see the admiration in the sparkling eyes of the children who sat near me. I felt admiration for his four space flights and his many other accomplishments. I also felt admiration for the hard work and dedication he had put forth to accomplish what he has done.
admire the fact that he was willing to risk his life for the advancement of our space program and our nation. He is truly a modern hero.

Perhaps the most overwhelming feeling at the ceremony was hope for the future. America’s space program hasn’t had much hope since the space shuttle Challenger disaster. However, honoring the accomplishments of General Stafford and the space program restored my hope for the future of the space program. I am sure that the space program will recover from the Challenger disaster and achieve many more great accomplishments.

The Thomas P. Stafford Day dedication ceremony was truly a special occasion for me. It caused me to be more thankful for the country I live in and the advantages I have. I am proud of the accomplishments of Lieutenant General Thomas P. Stafford and the recognition that he has brought to Weatherford and Oklahoma. He has represented our city and our state well.

DOUG WISEL was a Summer-session student at SOSU in 1988. He is now a sophomore Business major at Oklahoma Baptist University. He enjoys reading, playing sports, and participating in the Baptist Student Union. After graduation, he plans to attend seminary and become a pastor.

U.S. and Soviet astronauts reunited and surrounded by honor guard.

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Westview. Summer 1989
The monument also commemorates the meeting of Americans and Soviets in space through the Apollo-Soyuz mission, completed on July 24, 1975 and under the command of Lt. General Stafford.

Every generation will have its heroes. Every city, area, or community has its pride and joy in a famous person. These heroes live out their towns' dreams and bring recognition to otherwise unnoticed communities. Thomas P. Stafford is such a hero for Weatherford. His achievements have brought popularity and fame to this small town. Weatherford rejoices in Tom Stafford and the things he has attempted. He gained his status by accomplishing superior goals.

Stafford's first attainment, although not a major feat, was to break the stereotypic mold of Oklahomans. Many people in our nation perceive our state's citizens as uneducated farmers. Our education system has long been frowned upon. General Stafford shattered this image by displaying a vivacious personality as well as by being highly educated. His skills of leadership and decision-making contributed to his success.

Will Rogers has been the only other Oklahoman to gain such popularity. Men such as these should give our citizens hope, and a feeling of pride should be taken because of Mr. Stafford's accomplishments — pride not only in his personal success but for the national attention he has brought to his town and state.

Besides his mold cracking, General Stafford has proved to be a triumphant diplomat. His communication and alliance with the Soviets have produced history-making news. He was an important instrument in getting the mission together and arranged with the Soviet Union. Stafford was very masterful with the hook-up that took place in space. General Stafford, when giving his acceptance speech on June 20, 1988, for the memorial statue, said that he had just visited his Soviet friends.
home towns where they were being recognized as heroes just as he was. Not only has General Stafford made outer space connections but also personal friendly ties that have carried on through his lifetime. It may well be that the mission that he was involved in could have been the initiation of improved Soviet-American relationships. General Stafford has set a good example for our nation by relating to and accepting his Soviet friends for who they are and what they believe in.

Tom Stafford has brought Oklahoma recognition and also has displayed his diplomatic skills. He has also experienced a rare human event in traveling into space. Only a handful of men have ever had the opportunity to encounter such an incident. All of these men must be extremely gifted in knowledge, leadership, adventure, and — most of all — courage. General Thomas P. Stafford has all these qualities and can be respected as a man with a purpose and a vision to accomplish difficult and far-reaching goals. He has made history as an American astronaut and as a faithful servant to the United States of America. One small step for Thomas P. Stafford has been a giant step for this state, this nation, and possibly this world.

General Stafford has attained outstanding feats in his lifetime. He has been an inspiration to this state as well as this nation. He should be placed on the list of heroes that this nation has gathered. History has been made by men like Tom Stafford, who has dared to be different. General Stafford has projected an image of the young American Boy's dream to grow up and be an astronaut. His success has made the common people's dreams a reality. Courage and sight of a long-distance goal are only two things that separate heroes from the norm.

KEVIN COY is a sophomore pre-Pharmacy student at SOSU. By his own admission, he is a quiet, shy person and a loyal friend. He has specific goals for his life and feels that he can accomplish them if he applies himself.
Wild Plums
By Aaron A. Baker

Mom in cowboy boots
picks sand plums
growing wild
in a roadside thicket
on South Canadian River
While Coke and bread trucks
blast over the road
making early morning deliveries
in nearby village of Camargo
Sweating under
a relentless July sun
Wearing old plantation straw hat
Reaching into the spiked branches
For the choicest red fruit
deep inside
the green bushes
Keeping a lookout for rattlesnakes
In the tall grass
And remarking
what a find we've made
Grabbing wild plums by the handful
Emptying one container after another
Fruit harvest on the desert
of Western Oklahoma
Jelly-time this winter
When the north wind howls
like a mad coyote
Right here in Western Oklahoma is one of the top ten tourist attractions in the nation, the American Indian Exposition. Not only is it in the top ten tourist attractions; it is the only Indian exposition held in the United States.

The fair was started in 1935 under the laws of the state of Oklahoma by the Plains Indians. The exposition is a non-profit organization, totally Indian owned and operated, headquartered in Anadarko. It is currently made up of seventeen tribes including Apache, Kiowa, and Wichita. The main purpose is to perpetuate Indian arts and crafts and to preserve their cultural heritage. The fair is organized by the Board of Directors consisting of a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and one representative from each tribe. Also, each tribe elects a princess.

Many events take place during the fair, showing the American Indian’s unique skills, dance ceremonies, and customs. A large parade down Main Street of Anadarko kicks off the annual exposition. Indians dress in their traditional tribal regalia for the parade. Many area marching bands participate along with Indian dancers. According to Robyn Hawkins, a half-Kiowa who has attended the fair for several years, “The most entertaining part of the parade is seeing the Indian of the Year.” The honorees, all part Indian, have included Tonto, the Lone Ranger’s right-hand man, Crystal Gayle, and Willie Nelson. The parade is only the beginning of the week-long fair as many other events are scheduled.

Dog and horse races are held every afternoon at the grandstand. Robyn stated, “It’s a great deal of fun to participate in this event. No, I don’t mean to actually participate with the dogs and horses but to lay a few dollars down and come out with a ton of money.” On the other hand, dog and horse races are not for everyone, but there’s always something else to do for entertainment.

The Baldwin Exhibit Building houses hand-crafted artwork and jewelry by popular Indian artists from all over the state of Oklahoma. Robyn stated that the artwork and jewelry are all reasonably priced. People
tend to buy a little something to take back home as a souvenir of the Indian fair.

The main attraction for the younger generation is the Midway. Many carnival rides are in operation for the more daring who don't mind a little tickle in the tummy. For those who are not too big on the rides, there are quite a few games of chance to test their skills and win a prize.

The grown-ups can enjoy the togetherness of the American Indian's past life. There are approximately 570 camps set up for the week, with accommodations ranging from tepees to motor homes. Here they are able to show their children and tourists their heritage and cultures of the olden days. They visit with their people and friends whom they may not see but once a year.

The grand finale is an event which represents the Native American quite well. This event is called the dance pageant. The pageant is held nightly, and it features men, women, and children from many different tribes in Oklahoma competing against one another for large amounts of money. The competition is judged on traditional tribal costumes and best display of various dances. Gourd, war, and straight dancing are some of the dances performed, and the costumes consist of velvet, shawl, and buckskin dress.

The true meaning of the American Indian Exposition seen through the viewpoints of Robyn Hawkins and Janelle Sanchez, Robyn's mother, is "an annual Indian get-together keeping our culture alive and making sure there are many of us each year. And honestly to us there aren't many American Indians today." The Exposition shows the non-Indian people that Indians are human too. Indians aren't savages as they are portrayed to be in the old Western movies. It's possible that non-Indians find a certain respect for Indians by attending Indian events such as the Exposition.

These are just a few of the events held each year during the fair. The events must be a great deal of fun as approximately 30,000 people from all over the world attend. Many people of all races plan their vacations to coincide with the American Indian Exposition.

CRYSTAL GORE of Mountain View was a student in one of SOSU Professor Con Hood's English Composition classes at the time this article was accepted for publication.

All of the photos were provided by the ANADARKO DAILY NEWS
Indian princesses wait for their entrance to the arena to participate in the original pageant *Sunrise to Sunset.*

The Apache Fire Dancers perform the *Dance of the Mountain God* at the 57th annual American Indian Exposition.
Out around Erick, the natives recognize Roger Miller, the famous songwriter and performer, as one of Western Oklahoma's most colorful characters. Back in 1965, his "King of the Road" sold over 2.5 million records. He won an unprecedented eleven Grammy awards and earned four gold records for albums grossing a million dollars or more.

Twenty years later, his versatile talent took him to the top, to Broadway, and made him a Tony Award winner in recognition of his outstanding original music and lyrics for "Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," his first score for theater. It was named the best Broadway musical of 1985.

Roger Dean Miller was born on January 2, 1936 in Fort Worth. His father died less than a year later, and his mother, in those Depression days, could not provide for her three sons. She sent them to each of the father's three brothers — in Arkansas, California, and Oklahoma. Roger was reared by E.D. and Amelia Miller near Erick, in Beckham County. He attended a one-room school and joined the Future Farmers of America though he had no intentions of farming. From age six, Roger's ambition was to be like Sheb Wooley, a country singer who lived up the road a ways and was married to Roger's cousin. Wooley was famous for his "Purple People Eater" and other novelty songs and acted in RAWHIDE and Western films. Sheb taught young Roger some strings chords, and the boy picked 400 pounds of cotton to buy a second-hand guitar.

"I didn't see much use to waste my time with algebra, so as soon as I perfected my autograph in the eighth grade, I quit school to become a singer." He left home and bummed around... a kid who stole milk from front porches to survive. Drifting from town to town, he worked as a carhop, helper in a filling station, a dishwasher, herded and dehorned cattle, drove a tractor on a wheat ranch, rode Brahma bulls in rodeos. He was briefly a firefighter in Amarillo. "There were only two fires while I was there," he said. "The first was a chicken coop. I slept through the other one and they fired me." Evenings, he hung around honkytonks, sang for anyone who would listen, and begged to sit in with bands.

At seventeen, Miller joined the U.S. Army and drove a jeep in Korea until his musical ability got him into Special Services and a country music band where he met a certain sergeant, Jethro, of the comedy team of Homer and Jethro. His new friend convinced him to head for Nashville at the end of his military service. "Otherwise, I would go back to Oklahoma and work in a gas station," he said.

In Nashville, no one took him seriously as a performer. He worked as a bellhop at the posh Andrew Jackson Hotel, a fiddle player with Minnie Pearl, a guitar player with George Jones, a drummer with Faron Young. He kept writing songs. "Invitation to the Blues" was recorded by Ray Price and by Patti Page, "Half a Mind" by Ernest Tubb, and "Billy Bayou" by Jim Reeves. He hung around Tootsie's Orchid Lounge with free spirits like Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson. People in the music business affectionately called him the Wild Child, but his break didn't come.

"I almost let failure go to my head," Miller declared. He decided to go to California and "maybe study acting." To finance the trip, he recorded an album for Smash, a subsidiary of Mercury on which was his tune "Dang Me," a song of self-disgust. It became a hit single within a week of release, selling more than a million copies. "There for a while, I thought I was Elvis," Roger said of his sudden notice among the guests.

He was on his way... appearances on the TONIGHT SHOW, Las Vegas bookings, which are the most lucrative in show business, an NBC television series, THE ROGER MILLER SHOW. His output
Erick's country-boy baritone was phenomenal. He wrote songs on airplanes, in cars, in hotel rooms, at recording studios, using whatever paper was available — envelopes, napkins, gum wrappers. Many good songs vanished from Miller's memory because he lost track of his "spearmint manuscripts." But his "treasure box," a leather chest about three feet long and two feet deep, is filled with scraps of compositions that were not lost. Overnight, Roger Miller was making $10,000 a performance "back in the poor days." He made his debut in Carnegie Hall in 1966, but the Big Apple reviews were for the most part unfavorable.

No matter. His irresistible personality attracted attention and people. William Price Fox of TV GUIDE said: "His coterie is like Sugar Ray's ... a strange mix of beards, frauds, disc jockeys, and silent staring Texans and Okies just passing through."

"Everybody's my closest friend," Roger told VARIETY. "Man, I ain't got room to breathe."

His television show was scheduled opposite I LOVE LUCY and lasted only sixteen weeks. "They were trying to make a country Andy Williams out of me, writing my lines, putting words in my mouth that didn't fit... I couldn't think, couldn't sing, couldn't write."

He returned to the nightclub circuit, kept writing and slept little. Accustomed as they were to late hours, show people were astonished by Roger's ability to forego sleep. William Whitworth reported in THE NEW YORKER Miller's penchant for marathon partying, entertaining, and welcoming all who cared to show up. Whitworth attended one of these events which lasted not for hours but for days.

Roger came out of a bathroom of his suite in the Sahara at Las Vegas tugging at the waist of his slacks. "These ——— things are gaining weight," he grumbled.

He wore gray pants, a white shirt open at the throat, and an electric blue jacket. They took in a show by Dobie Gray in the Congo Room where Roger congratulated the performer: "Wow, man, that was real average."

He slumped in his chair, overcome with 24 or more hours wide awake. "I'm having a 92 percent good time out of a possible 96," he said, sighing heavily. It was 4:30 A.M.

"We may have to get out of here," Roger added. "I'm having too good of a time."

Back in his suite, twenty or so of his entourage and droppers-by were ready to call it a night, but Miller suggested, "We could go watch the free parking at the Flamingo." He fought sleep and drank Coca-Colas. The liquid portion of his diet is almost exclusively Coke, and he often consumed a case a day. When things slowed down from weariness, he suggested, "I think it's time we broke into a series of folk dances. As long as there's a vine, I'll swing."

About sunrise, Whitworth relates, Miller said, "I know. Let's all go to L.A. Let's go to my house. Let's go see if I have any mail. Hey, Jerry," he told his road manager, "Call the Lear." He had two pilots available for any hour.

When someone asked, "You look tired, Rodge. When did you last go to bed?" He answered, "I don't know, but it was before that." In certain moods and while talk goes on around him, the champ says, "I don't know how to react to that. Ya'll go ahead and talk about it."

At other times, Roger, the lonely seeker, the tender of heart (believe it!) will say, "Aw, let's don't talk about that. Why don't we just hum for a while?"

Roger Miller and his entourage flew in his Lear jet back and forth between Los Angeles and Las Vegas for three days, and Miller didn't miss a single performance. When asked how long Roger could stay awake, his drummer at the time said, "Well, I'm not sure. I've only been with Roger a year and a half. I don't know how long he was awake before that." Miller later revealed that his energy came from amphetamines during that period of his life, an addiction he subsequently overcame and crusaded against.

His Woodland Hills mansion in the Los Angeles area overflowed with people. Roger showed his guests walls covered with gold records, awards, plaques, the Popeye Spinach Award for building a Little League Park in Muleshoe, Texas, an invitation to the White House,
citations from BILLBOARD magazine, a medal from the governor of Oklahoma, the first draft of "King of the Road" scrawled on a West Coast airlines credit card application, a souvenir of Roger Miller Day in Tulsa.

Outside was his fleet of luxury automobiles: several Mercedes-Benz models, Jaguars, Lincoln Town Cars, Cadillacs, and four motorcycles. Asked if the novelty of being rich had faded any for him, Roger said, "I like my cars. My uncle never had a car. . .just an old pickup and it was his. Yeah, I wanted a red Model A real bad. One thing, though, I don't look at the right side of a menu anymore. But I like peanut butter and jelly sandwiches better."

Eventually, months or years later, Roger Miller said one day: "Whoa! This life won't work. I'm tired of falling down. I gotta conduct my business. You either mature or you die." He went before an Oklahoma state legislature to support a ban on over-the-counter sale of amphetamines because "it could keep somebody from getting into the same snake pit I got into." With two failed marriages and five children—Dean, Shannon, Alan, Rhonda, and Shari—he had at last come to his senses.

He reached back to his roots once more, mined his Oklahoma boyhood for a stunning comeback, this time as composer of BIG RIVER, which walked away with seven Tony awards, including Best Musical and Best Score. Reviews were glowing with praise. NEW LEADER said that Roger Miller's music and Director McAnuff's skill found the right tone to make the production perfect. "I felt like I was a real writer at last," he told David Hutchings. "It's like I had the paints and brushes, but until now I didn't have the canvas."

One of Roger's songs in the musical was "Arkansas" for his natural mother, who lives in that state. He invited her to New York to hear it.

On Valentine's Day, 1978, he married singer Mary Arnold after Kenny Rogers introduced them. "Mary's my third wife," Roger said. "But I've really been married only this one time. I'm a different person than I was."

They settled in New Mexico, where they live on twenty acres six miles north of Santa Fe with his son Dean, several horses, cats, and dogs. "I don't like to live on the road; I've done that," Roger told Jack Hurst of the CHICAGO TRIBUNE. "Some people get to going so hard in the fast lane they can't pull off even if they get a flat."

"There's no pretension with Roger," Mary says. "I travel with him his twenty weeks of club dates; then we come home to Santa Fe and Rodge says, 'Let's go get a cheeseburger with green chiles.' He's like that."

Roger Miller, the Okie, is five feet ten inches tall, weighs about 170, has a long jaw and small, deep-set eyes. But then everybody knows his face. They just may not know the man as well. In Nashville, he is rated with Jimmie Rodgers and Hank Williams, the two most revered figures in country songwriting. The appealing elements in his lyrics include love of wordplay (last word in lonesome is me; squares make the world go 'round). In his country-boy baritone, he sings of love and neon and honkytonks and you've-been-cheatin'-on-me-darlin', but with a difference. He is a joy to hear. . .he cannot tolerate the whiny earnestness of the hard stuff. He can sense at once if the audience is with him, that he is wanted and loved.

Roger is scrupulously honest. "I can't read a note of music," he admitted. "I don't know a bar from a stripe. I just learned the positions on the guitar. After I record a song, the publisher has someone to write it out. I don't wanna learn much about music. Afraid it might affect my free fall."

In the country music field, he is successful to a degree that might fairly well be described as spectacular. In Broadway theater, he just stands by in wonder. "I'm still enjoying the thrill of BIG RIVER," he says. "I'll always be able to stand around and say I wrote a musical for Broadway and it's playing in Oklahoma City, Wichita Falls, and Cleveland tonight. That's a great reward."

LIFE magazine called Roger Dean Miller a "cracker barrel philosopher and humorist" who "can rarely put two sentences together without a pun or a joke." As for Roger, he regrets not a moment of his Oklahoma days at home. "It was hard at the time," he reflects, "but I wouldn't be anything of what I am if it wasn't for that. Some people feel the rain and some just get wet."

Today, he relaxes a great deal along the Rio Grande ("It's where I learned to sit back and be quiet") and reflects on his Texas-Oklahoma background of hitchhiking, country towns, dusty roads, and hopeless jobs: "I'm a man of means by no means. . .King of the Road." REFERENCES:

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ENCYCLOPEDIA OF FOLK, COUNTRY, AND WESTERN MUSIC.
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ERNESTINE GRAVLEY of Shawnee, a prize-winning poet and prose writer, has been a loyal WESTVIEW supporter and writer all the days of our lives.

24 WESTVIEW, SUMMER 1989
The girl at the window
watched me the juggler
toss green cucumbers into the air
as I stood in the courtyard
in front of the old courthouse
at the county fair She was amused
but didn’t smile just sat there
with her elbows resting on the window
sill so I changed to tossing red
ripe tomatoes then yellow squash
higher and higher into the air even
throwing them under one leg and then
the other She almost smiled
when I began squatting and did a Russian
dance that should have moved the watermelons
and then stood on my head feeling my
blue britches slipping out of my cowboy
boots and someone stuck a red flower
in my mouth But she only had a funny
look on her face so I stood right-end up
with the flower still in my teeth showing
off by unbuttoning the front of my new
white silk shirt and started juggling
again purple-top turnips and orange-
colored carrots any old vegetable
that was handy then I saw the girl
was joined in the window by a gray-haired
woman who was hugging and smiling and
pointing over my head to where they
were judging lambs and heifers
at the annual county fair and I remained
just a what you may call a metaphor.

Illustration by Trey Wright
MIKE MOORE: EAKLY'S MR. BASEBALL
---By Mona Jean Suter

Oakland A who remembers Eakly

Eakly, America, population approximately 500, a farming community in Caddo County, Oklahoma, boasts of its cotton, its peanuts, and its athletes, in particular its athlete Mike Moore. Around Eakly, 29-year-old Michael Wayne Moore, thought of as Mr. Baseball, recently signed a three-year-no-trade contract with the Oakland Athletics after pitching six years for the Seattle Mariners. He is every aspiring young athlete's dream come true and a hero to many who have watched him grow up. Many said that a kid from a small town could not become a big-league pitcher. Mike Moore proved them wrong.

Moore, who grew up on an eighty-acre peanut and cotton farm, actually began his trek to stardom as an eight-year-old Eakly Pee Wee pitcher. Because of the speed of his fastball, his only pitch then, only a few people could be persuaded to be the catcher for Mike. Instead of changing pitchers, Eakly's Pee Wee coaches, Melvin Scott and Lester Clear, who still live in the community, remember having to change catchers. Mike's first catchers on the Pee Wee team were John Buie and Yancy Snow. Snow, who still lives and works in the Eakly area, remembers well how good a cold pop felt after the game, not just to this throat but also to his stinging hand. He also recalls other bruises ala Mike Moore. Once his eye caught a Moore pitch that ricocheted off the batter's plate when the catcher's mask was not in its proper place. Melvin Scott remembers too but says of Mike, "He had
the best control of any little kid I ever saw.”

Sports became a part of Mike Moore’s life long before Pee Wee ball, though. His mom’s family, the John Rolands, were avid ball players. The Rolands had nine children, and those children even when grown had frequent family get-togethers. Usually their main form of entertainment was a baseball game among themselves in which both big and little people participated. Even at three and four years of age, Mike, along with his brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, cousins and parents, “mixed it up.” When Mike was just four, one of his uncles, J. D. Roland, whom many considered a natural first baseman, commented to Vernie Moore, Mike’s dad, that he believed Mike had unusual potential.

Vernie Glen, Mike’s brother who is thirteen years older than Mike and who now lives in Alaska, was probably the first to introduce Mike to baseball. Vernie Glen and James, another brother of Mike’s who is five years older and a truck driver, both played a great deal of catch with Mike, pitched him zillions of balls so he could learn to bat, and knocked him uncountable flies and skinners so he could learn to field. James, himself a good pitcher during his high-school days, encouraged Mike, though Mike was not difficult to encourage. In fact, Mike was constantly “messing” with a baseball and watching baseball. He consistently hounded others to “play baseball with me.” He often watched his brother Vernie Glen play against Johnny Bench, a Bingerite who became a big-league catcher for the Cincinnati Reds right out of high school and who recently has been named to the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Eakly and Binger, Bench’s high-school team, are arch rivals even today as they were during Mike’s school days. Mike also watched baseball on television, and one day when listening to and watching Pee Wee Reese and Dizzy Dean on Sunday afternoon baseball on television. Moore, who was two or three at the time, announced that playing baseball was what he intended doing for a living. True to his goal, baseball became his life even though he became a rather proficient basketball player too, being named to the First State All-Tournament Team his senior year. Of course, his six-foot, four-inch height as a senior didn’t hurt here either.

Hoot, a nickname that his mother, Oleta, gave him for no reason that he can come up with, continued his way through public school and the Midgets, Preps, minors, and American Legion summer ball, making a name for himself and his fast ball as he went, earning such honors as State All Star.

He gives many people credit for his success, including his sister Frances, who patiently (usually) hauled him to practices, and his parents, who faithfully followed him to all those games. His parents still make regular trips from Weatherford, where they have retired, to see his pro games. He also gives much credit to his junior-high coach, Jim Buie, currently the superintendent of schools in Eakly, and to his high-school coach, Mike Southall, now superintendent at Washita Heights. Moore says of Buie, who by the way is his cousin, that Buie was instrumental in getting him started in the right direction; he credits Southall with giving him a broader perspective about baseball.

Another mainstay on Mike Moore’s roster for success is his best buddy, Daryl Scales, his main public-school and summer-league catcher and longtime friend. Mike says that he and Scales were “naturals together and seemed to think alike and therefore worked well together.” After games in high school or summer ball, these two could be found at the ball park or in their yards practicing, trying to discover what hadn’t worked at the previous game and what had gone wrong. On one occasion, Moore’s mother, Oleta, was watching Mike bat while Scales tossed him the ball. She suggested that Mike was standing too close to the plate. After adjusting, Mike found that she was exactly right. He was always willing to follow advice. Scales says that he likes to think that he pushed Mike to work harder, but he says that Mike always worked hard at playing baseball. Moore and Daryl Scales are true friends. Moore took Scales, as well as Joyce, his wife-to-be, and his mom with him when he went to Seattle to sign his contract with the Mariners. Their friendship remains constant: when Mike returns to Oklahoma, he always sees Scales. In fact, they usually try to get in some coyote hunting, a sport they both enjoy, in the Eakly area.

Moore also awards Larry Cochell, Oral Roberts University baseball coach, and Jim Brewer, who was the pitching coach at ORU, much credit for his success. Though Mike was drafted by the St. Louis Cardinals directly out of high school and was also pursued heavily by Oklahoma State University, Oklahoma University, and the University of Arkansas, he chose to attend ORU. His decision was based on several factors: the ORU facilities and a five-year scholarship offered him, his mother’s strong desire for his college education and the maturity and growth she felt college could provide him, and word sent to him from Johnny Bench, his childhood hero, to attend college before going pro.

Moore agrees that ORU did mature him. While he was there, Jim Brewer made changes in Mike’s pitching delivery. Up until this time, he had thrown much like a catcher. Brewer felt, and Mike came to agree, that a change in delivery would help keep him from injury and could extend his career. “Brewer,” according to Moore, “had fun with and truly enjoyed baseball,” an attitude that was an inspiration to his players. Moore says that Larry Cochell was instrumental in getting much exposure for his ORU players. He says, “Cochell knew the politics and the right people to contact in order to aid players toward professional careers.”

While at ORU, Moore also played College Summer Pro ball in Liberal, Kansas, an experience he says that built his confidence. There he was named the Most Valuable Player both his freshman and sophomore years in the National Baseball Congress. During college, Mike, named an All American, played on the USA team to Cuba. Team members were chosen for this honor because of their statistics and abilities.

During his three years at ORU, Mike met and later married Joyce Hart, a Costa Mesa California girl who also attended ORU. Married in 1983, Mike and Joyce are the proud parents of twin two-year-old daughters Jessica Dawn and Amanda Rae. Moore and his family live in Ahwatukee, Arizona, a Phoenix Westview Summer 1989
suburb near where he trains. His youngest sister, Margaret, also lives there and is one of his most avid fans as are her three sons.

Devoted fans from Eakly make regular trips to Arizona to watch him train and to Texas and to Kansas City to watch him play when his team comes to play the Rangers and the Royals. These fans often wish he played in the National League rather than the American League because in the Nationals he would get to show off his batting abilities too. As a high-school player, even when he was the pitcher, he often batted cleanup; and in his senior year, his batting average was 500 plus. Once, and only once while at ORU and not pitching, he was the designated hitter and with four times at bat, knocked a homerun and a double. Such fans as the Butch and Doyle Snow families, the Ralph Morgan family, the Melvin Scotts, the Lester Clears, and the Scales family regularly watch Moore in person every chance they get. They say of Mike, "He's still the same ole Mike. He's friendly. He's not uppity." He always seems genuinely glad to see Eaklyites and to have his own very personal cheering section.

Presently, Mike and Joyce are on the state board of directors for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, an association in which he has been active for several years. He gives to others in numerous ways. He has made gifts of baseballs, spikes, hats, and catcher equipment to American Legion teams. He has presented spikes to Triple A'ers who have to provide their own equipment. Moore doesn't forget his roots either; he is interested in Eakly and has provided donations to the Eakly ball field and to the Eakly Pioneer Day celebration. He also does not forget his fans who are no longer able to travel long distances to watch him play. He regularly visits such people when he returns to Eakly. True, he is a small-town boy who has made it big, but big to Mike also means remembering from where he came.

MONA JEAN SUTER was reared in Eakly and later taught English there for over a decade; consequently, she is well acquainted with her subject and his family. For the past twenty-plus years, she has taught in the SOSU Language Arts Department.
Celebration of Slice of Life

Statue of Pioneer Woman

By Aaron A. Baker

Illustration by Canuky Alwert

Woman in bronze in step with small son whose hand she holds with love and strength — as they walk with steady eyes to muffled Indian drums across the rolling hills . . . and a silver hawk glides earthward — banking against white clouds.

The little boy with scuffed boots kicks over bleached coyote skull in the uncharted grass . . . and feels his mother's tightening grip.

The pioneer woman in bonnet with a loaded kerchief on her other arm, carries among other things, seeds — including her beloved portulaca . . . And the boy has little keepsakes in his pockets including a recently found broken arrowhead . . . Both dreaming of a new home and soft furrows.
The Last Dance

By Inez Schneider Whitney

One of my fondest childhood memories is thinking about the fun I had going to the country dances with Mama and Papa. Oklahoma hadn’t been a state very long, and these dances were the main recreation in the Custer City community. Some farmers wouldn’t go because they thought dancing was wicked, but they were in the minority.

The dances were held in homes and were friendly neighborhood gatherings. Entire families attended. First there was a potluck supper with every housewife bringing the thing she cooked best. When the delicious meal was over, the children were deposited on quilts spread on the bedroom floors. Most were soon in slumberland, but I was one who feigned sleep; then after the music started, I tiptoed to the door to peek out at the festivities.

The musicians were all local farmers. Although Papa had never had a music lesson, he had an ear for music and was quite accomplished on the accordion, violin, and bass violin. At the dances, he played the bass violin, which he called the bass fiddle. Todd Storm played first fiddle, and his wife, Peggy, chorded on the organ. Jack and George Allen, brothers, played second fiddle. Jack also did the calling for the square dances. I can still hear him yelling “Do-si-do and around you go.” The musicians donated their services; it was an honor to be asked.

Although Papa played instruments the whole evening, Mama never lacked for partners. When I peeked out, she was always dancing. Most of the time, her partner was Sam White, a nearby neighbor. He was tall and thin and always wore a jacket and high-topped laced boots. A fringe of hair, hanging almost to his shoulders, encircled his bald head. One time, Mama said to Papa, “Can’t I say no when Sam White asks me to dance? You know how much trapping he does, and he smells just like a skunk.”

“‘Oh no,’” Papa answered. “That would hurt his feelings.”

All at once, we didn’t go to the dances anymore. I kept asking Mama, “Why can’t we go? It’s so much fun. Edna and Lorene still go.”

Her reply was always the same. “Your papa and I have a lot of work to do. We’re just too tired.”

One time after I was grown and back home for a visit, I said, “Mama, it was a shame you and Papa had to work so hard that we had to stop going to dances. They were really wonderful entertainment for whole families.”

“That wasn’t the real reason,” Mama replied, and then she told me the story.

Mama’s Story

The Hilds were nearby neighbors. It was their turn to have the dance. We ate supper early. Then Bill Daley, the hired hand, hitched up the horses to the wagon. Mama and Papa sat on the front seat, and I sat between them. Rudolph Schneider, my grandfather, had come to live with us after Grandma died. He and Bill Daley climbed onto the seat behind us, and away we went.

When we reached the Hilds’, quite a crowd had already gathered.

“Folks,” Mr. Hild said when it was time to eat, “my wife and I have a good batch of beer we made this summer. We’re going to give everyone a little sample.” An abundance of wild grapes grew down near the Washita River, and they made excellent wine. Mama never would allow Papa to make any.

“I won’t have it around,” she said. “It can cause nothing but trouble. There’s always someone who likes it too well.”

The meal was finished, and it was time to start the dance. “Folks,” Mr. Hild announced, “I have a table set up in the backyard and a lantern hanging on a tree for light. I thought the men who usually play Pitch would enjoy being out in the cool air.”

Several of the older men, widowers like my grandfather, and a few others who didn’t want to dance, usually played Pitch instead of dancing; so out they went.

After playing a few games, my grandfather said, “Why don’t we play Drink or Smell? The Hilds have lots of wine right here in their cellar, and they’d be glad for us to have a little.”

A shout of approval went up and they started to play.
After each game, the winner would go down and bring up a jar of wine. After opening it, he would pass it around for each one to have a smell. When it got back to him, he would gulp down the whole thing. As the evening wore on, the Pitch players became quite hilarious, especially the winners. Mrs. Hild's canned fruit was on the same shelves with the wine. If a jar of fruit was brought up by mistake, it was just tossed into the yard. Soon there were fruit and broken glass everywhere.

Grandpa was an excellent player and was really tipsy when the time came to leave. Everyone came out and when Mrs. Hild saw the fruit and broken glass strewn all over the yard, she was furious. She screamed, "Hours and hours of my work for nothing! What are we going to eat this winter?"

"I was never so embarrassed in my life," Mama said. "I told Papa that if he didn't go right then, I would take you and start walking home."

"Pa, come on. We're going home," Papa said.

"No, no, Eddie. How can I leave? I'm the winner, and I can win some more."

Papa told the hired hand to watch Grandpa and said, "I'll be right back to get you."

"What happened then?" I asked.

"I told your papa no more dances for me. They were getting too rough. It was no place to take a child. If he wanted to go and play his bass fiddle, it was all right with me, but I was staying home with you. He wouldn't go without us, so we never went again. That was the last dance." 

**INEZ SCHNEIDER WHITNEY of ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA, grew to womanhood in the Custer City area. She has excellent credentials as a WESTVIEW writer as a result of the beautiful memories she has of the eighty-three years she has lived on Planet Earth.**

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The Last Words

By James M. Fire

Billy was an alcoholic and a Cheyenne Sundance ceremonial traditionalist in the most determined manner. He and rest of the local alcoholic tribesmen lived under the "tree"; the "tree" was a stunted elm near the railroad tracts on the outer city-limits, and it offered both refuge from the hot western Oklahoma sun and seclusion from the dominant society which had become too difficult to deal with. During the summer months, Billy and his friends lived under the tree; but when the cold season arrived, they moved into an empty railroad boxcar near the tree.

Billy had been ambitious as a young man and had attended a state university, but dropped out after two semesters. He had wanted to study Indian art or to become a social worker to his proud Cheyenne people, but found that Indian men fared better if they were not proud. Since he could become none of the things he wanted to be, he turned to the most immediate way to cope with his failure ----- getting drunk and reminiscing about the times his people had lived proudly on the Southwest plains.

Billy was a stocky, barrel-chested Indian with thick black hair that was parted in the middle and hung loosely to his shoulders. His eyes were squinted and nearly the color of his hair. He was constantly on the verge of being drunk; and when he walked, he stumbled, raising his right leg and foot as if climbing a stairway. He was always sad and melancholy; but when he was feeling good, he would dance around the tree beating a cardboard box with a stick, his substitute for the traditional drum, singing the songs of his people.

Toward all people, Billy was kind and courteous and had the uncanny skill to joke with others and laugh at himself, which is unusual to the personality of the young Cheyenne male. He would call me "apple-preacher," and at first I didn't understand until I was told that an "apple" is an Indian who is red on the outside but White (Anglo) on the inside.

When he first came to our Mission Church, he was drunk and stumbling, and the members of the congregation stopped whatever they were doing and turned to look at him. He was from a family of Cheyenne orators, and he would stand to speak words that were sad and wonderful; sometimes he would cry and talk freely of death and the art of suffering.

I remember during one of our Mission revivals that Billy had come to church; it was after one of his week-long binges that had landed him in the hospital. He was very sad, physically ill, and also, typically, very drunk. He sat on the back-row pew and began to weep. After the service, I hurried to the last pew and depleted all efforts in witnessing my faith to him. I could see raging in his chest, but his spirit and will were like granite He left the Mission with his war yet raging.

On one hot July evening, I was summoned to the tree by a panting Cheyenne youth who had run several blocks to my home. When I arrived at the tree, Billy's eyes were rolled half-closed, his body was jerking uncontrollably, and his speech was unintelligible. Delirium tremors were not unusual to Billy, and this time was no exception.

Billy was rushed to the hospital; when I was allowed to see him, the doctor was bending over Billy's bed and was bringing him around to consciousness. As soon as I saw that he was going to be all right, and I would convert him to my Christian faith this time. Once his eyes were open, he began to joke.

Then in earnest, I began to speak to him of Christ, the Son of God. I was determined and knew that nothing would get in the way of the Christian concepts I was speaking, although once he shook violently for a short moment.

I was sure that Billy would listen when I asked him why he was in his present condition. His eyes would get misty, and sometime he would weep.
aloud. Indian men never embrace, so I grasped Billy’s hand and pleaded that he take the God of the “Ve’ hoits.” “Ve’ hoits” is the Cheyenne word for the White person, the Anglo.

Silence filled the hospital room, and finally Billy turned to his side and turned his back on me. He related that I was no longer his Cheyenne brother and that he would not talk face to face to me and not to speak to the Ve’ hoits God. Quietly and determined, he stated that he would live as a Cheyenne and die as a Cheyenne and that no “apple preacher” would ever say the last words over his grave if he should die.

Months passed before I heard that Billy was in the north country, on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation in Montana, visiting with his relatives. The memory of Billy would fade in and out of my thoughts, and there were moments that compassion was mixed with frustration.

I was completing my final appointment year in the Western Oklahoma Indian Parish when I received word from Billy’s mother that he had been killed by a blow to the head in a drunken fight while he was in Montana. She requested that I officiate Billy’s funeral.

As I stepped behind the pulpit to say the last words over Billy, the air was heavy and deep sense of sadness surrounded me. I remembered the lonely tree, the forced-laughter of the lost ones, the tears that words could not stop, and the Cheyenne songs that the lost ones could not remember to sing correctly. I had always felt strange in Billy’s world.

I saw that Billy’s eyes were closed and his hands were crossed over his chest with a beaded feather-fan in his right hand, and his face had been painted red by the Cheyenne and peyote priests. Wrapped around this shoulders was the blue and red blanket of his tribal clan, and Indian shawls of different colors were placed carefully over the bronze casket. These shawls were later to be given away to Billy’s relatives and friends. The smell of wine and tobacco was gone. The war was no longer raging in Billy’s chest.

My sadness became immense as I remembered the many conversations that I had had with Billy and the thought of my failure to convert him to my Christian faith. Suddenly, there was a loud commotion at the rear of the church, and all the people turned and looked as a young, intoxicated Cheyenne man stumbled through the door, fell against the pew, sat down, and began to weep and cry.

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Celebrating the Fourth of July at Crystal Beach Park in Woodward, Oklahoma, has been a tradition with many families in the Woodward area for over fifty years. And indeed K-101 Radio carries out the tradition with K-101 Fun Day.

The day begins at 6:00 a.m. with a live K-101 broadcast to "kick off" the celebration, which includes a day full of festivities. The event was originally conceived not only as a way to celebrate our nation's birthday but also as a way for K-101 to say "thank you" to the listeners who have supported them. K-101 has been on the air since 1984, and the idea of a Fun Day was brought to mind that first summer.

K-101 Fun Day is an all-day event filled with many activities such as watermelon feasts, paddle-boat races, horseshoe throwing, and swimming which are appealing to the young and old alike. And anyone who attends shouldn't worry about having an empty stomach. Hotdogs, hamburgers, and other tempting foods surround the park. Games and food aren't the only things that attract people from all over the area. The entertainment is one of the major highlights of the day. Many bands come from all over Oklahoma to entertain the thousands of people at the celebration. One of the best-known news and weather brother teams, Butch and Ben McCain of Oklahoma City, is there to entertain—much to the delight of the young ladies in the audience. Another feature is the performing of Oklahoma Kids, a group of talented young people from across the state.

K-101 Fun Day is similar to celebrations people had many years ago. Both the young and old travel from all parts of Oklahoma, Texas, and Kansas to listen to the live bands, meet their friends, or just watch the people enjoying themselves. Fourth of July is a holiday for being with family and friends, and K-101 helps make these memories last.

After the bands are through playing, the prizes are awarded to the fastest turtle, and families are finished eating their picnic lunches, a huge fireworks display sponsored by the Woodward Fire Department is shown at midnight, thus ending another—but certainly not the last—K-101 Fun Day.
K-101 Fun Day

By Amy Hildinger
MEMORIES

identifiable childhood celebration

FEAST

Buns hot out of the oven and yeast smells warm the kitchen,
Golden brown mounds crowd the breadpan, steaming.
Fragrances waft upward and out, call those in other parts of the house.
Mama’s bread fresh cow butter
Wild plum jelly on a cracked dinner plate Feast fit for the President right here in the Snowdens’ own two-room shack.

By Margie Snowden North

ON A SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Clutching our nickles in perspiring hands we walk the mile and a half following the railroad tracks into town. Sweaty, flushed, we open the wide screen door that lets us into Bennett’s Ice Cream Store. Breeze stirs from overhead fans aromas tantalize or assault our senses: Tapioca cones and California fruit flavors, Oiled floors, stale milk.

We ask for a double dip Chewy-hard vanilla Crunchy cones Lay our sweaty coins on the counter, face the long walk back home.

MARGIE SNOWDEN NORTH of Erick contributes regularly to WESTVIEW. In fact, one of her manuscripts has appeared in almost every issue during recent years.
MEMORIES
celebrating richness even in deprivation

The Color of Rich
By Kay James Hively

There's a richness in being poor...at least when the poverty is only money.

There was richness in being a sharecropper's daughter who treasured the hand-me-down blouse of an older sister and who delighted at the antics of a headless leghorn flopping around the backyard—that meant fried chicken for supper.

But the richest segment of those years was not gold—it was white, and it grew in long rows across the red clay fields. Cotton...cotton bursting out of a brown, crackly boll. Cotton piled loosely in the high side-boarded wagons rolling out of the fields on their way to the gin. Cotton on brittle stalks which marked the way for hunched-over pickers dragging their long canvas sacks up one row, around the end, and back down a neighboring row.

For a small child filled with the wonder of life and rich with curiosity, a cotton field was a laboratory of life. Life was riding someone's cotton sack, chasing grasshoppers, taking naps on the running board of the old car, sitting high on the tractor seat, and hitching a lift on the cotton wagon.

The sounds of the field still ring in my ears. The soft mumble of the cottonpickers as they worked side by side and carried on mundane conversations was a lazy humdrum. The challenging debates of brothers who vowed to "outpick" each other gave a youthfulness to the atmosphere. The cooing of the mourning dove greeted the family as they shifted about at sunrise to gather sacks, gloves, and kneepads and hike to the "patch" to be gleaned that day.

But life was white only in October and November. The rest of the year, our poor richness came in other colors. Pink, I remember pink, I printed my name in the pink dust that covered the south side of the white frame house. The strong hot south winds whipped the red clay up off the fields and painted our house each year after the plow had turned under the empty cotton stalks.

But life was also black and yellow when the western sky threatened to swoop down with a twisted fist to bash the barn to splinters. The earth turned yellow in fear of the blackness which sent us running to the cellar where we lashed tight the door to our underground concrete storm haven.

Today the richness I had in poverty is only a memory that I left behind in the Western Oklahoma cottonfields.

KAY JAMES HIVELY, as a very young child, lived on a cotton farm near Blair. She spent her formative years in Rush Springs, where she graduated from high school in 1962. She is now a fulltime free-lance writer living in Neosho, Missouri. "The Color of Rich" is her first contribution to WESTVIEW.
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We prefer 5 x 7 or 8 x 10 b & w glossies that we can keep, as well as clear, original manuscripts (no copies, please).

Please notice changes in submissions deadlines.

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FEATURES
Stylesheet For
WESTVIEW
Contributors

By The WESTVIEW Editorial Board

Being published in WESTVIEW isn’t really an elusive dream. All a writer must do is follow a few simple guidelines:

1. Always mail a submission flat in a manila envelope, remembering to include the SASE for a possible rejection.

2. Use a coversheet that contains name, address, telephone number, suggested issue (e.g., “Western Oklahoma Children”).

3. Remember to leave your name and address off the submission itself. We want each contributor to be anonymous during the Board’s assessing.

4. Remember the importance of a clean typewritten manuscript (double-spacing for prose and single-spacing for poetry). Use a good grade of 8½ x 11 white paper (no onionskin paper, please). Submit pen-and-ink graphics on white paper. Submit 5x7 b & w photos that may be kept on file in our offices and not returned.

5. Be sure to submit material that is related to Western Oklahoma. The geographical boundary is the area lying west of Interstate 35. However, we don’t require that our contributors be current residents of Western Oklahoma.

6. Feeling that your submission will be accepted, you also need to send along a short biographical blurb written in third person. EXAMPLE: RONA DEL RIO, from Weatherford, is a SOSU junior majoring in Computer. The present selection is her first published work.

7. Strive for a natural writing style.

8. Accentuate originality and creativity.

9. After making your submission, sit back and expect the best.

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