Employee’s Bright Idea Pays Off With PEP Award

By Kevan Goff-Parker
Inside OKDHS Editor

Muskogee County OKDHS’ Randall Woods admits that $2,500 and statewide recognition is a “pretty good hourly rate of pay” for two to three hours of work.

“I’m looking for another million-dollar idea already!” Woods said, laughing.

Woods, a social services specialist IV, Family Support Services Division, was recently recognized by Gov. Brad Henry with a “Productivity Enhancement Program Award.” Through PEP, the state presents cash and non-cash incentive awards to state employees for ideas, programs and projects that result in increased productivity, cost savings, revenue generation, or improved safety, efficiency, morale or improved services.

Woods began his career 27 years ago with OKDHS when he was 23.

Randall Woods, social services specialist IV, Muskogee County OKDHS (second from left), accepts a check for $2,500, a Productivity Enhancement Program (PEP) award and a hearty congratulations from Gov. Brad Henry (third from left) for his money-saving idea to replace the “NADA Official Used Car Guide” in county offices with free Internet car appraisal Web sites when appraising the worth of a client’s car. His idea may eventually save the state $12,000 a year. His daughter, Annalea, is far left and his wife, Janice, is holding their grandson, Aidan Rogers, on far right.

Spotlight On OKDHS’ ‘Admins’

Editor’s Note: Our “Spotlight on OKDHS’ ‘Admins’” feature is Inside OKDHS’ third installment focusing on Oklahoma human services’ history. By highlighting some of the memories recently shared by seven administrative assistants and others who have served the state and OKDHS for more than 30 years, we hope to illuminate future generations of employees as to the rich history and culture held by our Agency.

By Kevan Goff-Parker
Inside OKDHS Editor

OKDHS is blessed to have many long-time employees, including many administrative assistants, secretaries and administrative technicians who have spent 30 years or more keeping things humming at county offices across the state.

Inside OKDHS recently reached out to dozens of such individuals to see what they like best about their jobs and what memories come to mind when they reflect on their many years of service. Here are their answers …

Name: “Claudzetta Warren.”
Length of service: “Thirty-two years for the state of Oklahoma (five years Department of Education, 27 years OKDHS).”
Current job: “Secretary V, Field Operations, Area VI Executive”
The Chaplain’s Corner
Child Support Enforcement Month: Remember The Children

By Don Venable,
Social Services Specialist IV
Pontotoc County
OKDHS Chaplain

“I’m pregnant.” This phrase has various effects on those who hear it. The person who speaks this phrase has already begun an emotional roller coaster ride. For the couple, the moment may be filled with tears, expressions of fear or a warm embrace. Who knows? The response is created by the preconceived notions each person has of this event.

We would like to think that every couple that comes to this life-changing event would do so with joyous anticipation. Sadly, the event may be met with anger. The pregnancy may mean that there is just another responsibility added to a household that is already overburdened. Goals and plans may have to be changed.

This event might come to an unwed couple or to a couple of teenagers. Now, what are they to do with their lives?

If the couple has planned for the pregnancy, no joy can compare to their expectation. But a couple’s fear for their own future may have a terrible result. A child’s welfare may get lost in the ensuing chaos.

Then there is the word, divorce. Divorce brings another family change that affects the welfare of the household’s children. Again, anger and fear are involved. Children are often the forgotten victims of the family breakup.

There is plenty of work to be done to create loving families, but until then we must remember that the children of these fragmented relationships need financial support.

August is Child Support Enforcement month. The children of a family breakup need our attention. Money doesn’t answer everything in a child’s life, but parental responsibility requires us to provide for those whom we bring into this world. Remember the children.

Heidi Mitchell Now Leading OKDHS’ Budget Unit

By George Johnson Jr.

Heidi Mitchell has been named director of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services’ Finance Budget Unit. Mitchell replaces Adam Barber who left OKDHS in May to become chief financial officer for the Oklahoma Department of Commerce.

In naming Mitchell to the position, OKDHS Chief Financial Officer Phil Motley said, “I am pleased that Mitchell is willing to take on this important responsibility in our organization. She is extremely qualified to assume all duties of the Budget Unit.

“Our organization is currently at the crossroads where getting the OKDHS fiscal 2005 work plan in place is crucial as we close out fiscal ’04 business. And we are already on the heels of forecasting the preliminary numbers for fiscal year 2006. The experience she brings to the position tells me she is up to the leadership challenge ahead, and we are pleased to have her.”

In her new position Mitchell will oversee operations for the OKDHS $1.4 billion annual budget.

“This is a very positive career move, and I am grateful that Phil Motley and the OKDHS leadership have offered me this tremendous opportunity,” Mitchell said. “This is one of the busiest times of the year in a state government budget office, and I know the team that’s in place and together, I have faith that we can handle the budget challenges that come our way.”

Before joining the OKDHS Finance team in 2002, Mitchell worked for a year at Fleming Foods in Oklahoma City. Before moving to Oklahoma in 2001, Mitchell was senior accountant for the Alabama division of Sysco Foods.
I asked the media representative to have their reporting source call the Adult Protective Services hotline immediately and the reporting source did. I took the information given to me to APS State Office and collectively the two sources went into action to initiate a referral. The phone reports seemed mild-mannered in comparison to the television videotapes viewed several hours later.

The way we individually and collectively work to serve the needs of vulnerable citizens should have us on our toes all the time, but every now and then our actions become routine. That’s something we must all guard against – letting our actions become routine.

Putting our Best Foot Forward requires a higher level of diligence that is character-driven. There are people in our neighborhoods that are on a starvation diet for a few kind words, a smile, a little love and any amount of affection. You see, they are not getting any, and a little bit goes a long way.

The people who bring these challenges to us daily are living the trials and tribulations of these events, whether it’s a need for services, relief from the pressures of a crisis or abuse and neglect – self imposed or not.

While I thought about all the blessings that my family and I share daily, I had a person I called a friend and neighbor living up the street that was allegedly hurting and in pain. From the street, everything looked okay. Now I’m thinking that being a better friend and neighbor may require a little more from me than looking at the front yard of life.

Maybe, in keeping my Best Foot Forward, I may just have to not be so busy from time-to-time. Stopping, visiting, asking a few questions, sharing a few moments and offering a few more smiles and kind words may be in order. I’m sure at some point and time I will need to be the recipient of these kindnesses. How ‘bout you?
Congratulations Director!

OKDHS recently celebrated the anniversary of OKDHS Director Howard H. Hendrick’s sixth year of service with the Agency on July 1 in the lobby of the Sequoyah Building. The poster featured here was blown up and presented to the director during a brief presentation. Afterwards, the director, employees and visitors enjoyed ice cream and a red, white and blue cake. Hendrick is the third longest serving director in OKDHS’ 68-year history. — KGP

From Your OKDHS Co-Workers
Employees Urged To Take A Closer Look Before You Print

By Stephanie Bond, Publications Editor
Office Support Services Division

If you believe the InfoNet, e-mail and imaging have led OKDHS to being a paperless agency, think again. Printing out an e-mail, making a quick copy or printing a report may seem insignificant, but, on average, each OKDHS employee prints out 77 pieces of paper a day or 16,667 pieces of paper each year. This equates to 28 semi-truckloads of office paper or nearly 125 million sheets.

“It may seem like that short report you are copying doesn’t amount to much, but there are nearly 7,500 of us, and it adds up to 25,000 cases of paper per year,” said Tommy White, Office Support Services Division Departmental Services Unit programs manager.

OSSD-DSU has initiated a campaign to increase employees’ awareness about paper usage. White said the campaign’s goal is to encourage employees to use both sides of the paper when making copies and think twice before sending a report to the printer or hitting the copy button.

“Ultimately our goal is to reduce consumption,” said Paula Hearn, OSSD director. “This saves OKDHS, the state of Oklahoma, and us, the taxpayers, money. The Department spends more than $500,000 on paper annually.”

Reducing paper consumption also saves trees. According to Fenton Rood, director of Waste Systems Planning, Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, 17 trees make one ton of paper or about 40 boxes of paper. Using these numbers, OKDHS uses more than 10,000 trees per year.

“Duplexing (two-sided copying) offers the most opportunity for direct waste-reduction on both the state’s financial resources, as well as the environment,” Rood said.

The Ricoh multi-function copiers and desktop and network printers gobble up the most paper.

“Multiple copies of reports prepared for meetings are big culprits,” Hearn said. “Armloads of these get sent to security destruction as soon as the meeting is over. Also, copies of PowerPoint presentations are often handed out at meetings and discarded as soon as the meeting ends. Most of these have been printed one-sided.”

Office paper, according to Rood, comprises nearly 40 percent of all trash.

Of those 28 semi-truckloads of paper used by OKDHS, 18 semi-

Do Your Part To Reduce Paper Usage

- Set the copier and printer to duplex (two-sided copying) whenever possible. Contact Debby Guthrie, OSSD, for instructions about how.
- Save e-mails on your computer rather than printing them out.
- Use e-mail instead of memos and faxes.
- Use PowerPoint presentations rather than printing hard copies.
- Print fewer copies.
- Print single-spaced.
- Make “scratch” pads out of single-sided paper.
- Resist the urge to make just a few extra copies for meetings.
- Contact OSSD-DSU if you are receiving too many copies or an unneeded report.
- Use the blank sides of unneeded single-sided copies for printing drafts.
- Use routing slips rather than making individual copies.
- Have several people edit the same copy of a document using different colored inks, or edit computer documents onscreen using different fonts.
- Send and receive faxes from your computer instead of using printouts.
- Use fax stick-on labels instead of cover sheets.
- Program your fax to eliminate confirmation sheets.
- Review distribution lists frequently.
- Eliminate outdated or unnecessary destinations.
- Reduce font size and margins.

Offices statewide have received these “Take A Closer Look Before You Print” posters developed by OSSD-DSU managers and Tammy Ratliff, Publications. Offices are asked to place the poster by their copiers to remind staff to print on both sides when making copies.
OKDHS Director Howard H. Hendrick addresses a greater than expected crowd during the Agency's Flag Day Celebration. He and other American favorites were in attendance, except for apple pie, as OKDHS employees and other state agency workers participated in a celebration in honor of Flag Day on June 14 on the State Capitol Plaza outside of the Sequoyah Building. Anne Roberts, executive director of the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy, sang the National Anthem. Hendrick later reminded staff of the importance of honoring the flag and the people in the military who are protecting our country's freedoms on a daily basis. Attendees were treated to hot dogs, sausages with all the fixings and sodas. The event was sponsored by Credit Union One and Enterprise Rent-A-Car.

– DD

(R-L) OKDHS’ Imelda Rivera and members of her family including her nephew Emilio, her son Estevan, her daughter Trinity and niece Cierra enjoyed a sunny OKDHS Flag Day Celebration held June 14 outside of the Sequoyah Building in Oklahoma City. Emilio (photo, left) chows down on a hot dog during the day’s festivities. – KGP
Smitherman Wins May 2004 Food Stamp Quiz

By Kevan Goff-Parker
Inside OKDHS Editor

Each month, Family Support Services workers, supervisors and OKDHS county directors are encouraged to participate in the Food Stamps Best Practices Quiz. Such participation recently paid off for Pittsburg County OKDHS’ Marilyn Smitherman. She’s the winner of the May 2004 quiz and was awarded a $50 savings bond, colorful balloons and was featured in a SATTRN broadcast on June 16.

Kathie Wright, programs manager, Food Stamps/LIHEAP, Family Support Services Division, said she believes the Food Stamp Best Practices Quiz is a great initiative because it offers an opportunity for field staff to have fun while focusing on Food Stamp program policy and processes.

“As always, we are ‘under the gun’ in the Food Stamp program to perform well as a state within the federal requirements for payment accuracy and timeliness,” Wright said. “This is a continuing challenge for everyone who helps administer the Food Stamp program.”

A new quiz each month is placed on the Food Stamp Web site located at http://s99web01/fssd_foodstamps/. There, a link will send you to the Learning Management System site that also features other training opportunities. Each monthly quiz features five questions that if answered 100 percent correctly the first time, the participant will be automatically entered into a drawing.

One fortunate winner each month will be drawn from the pool of 100 percent successful quiz takers and will win a $50 savings bond. Simply open the quiz and select from the answers. Correct answers allow participants to go on to the next question. An incorrect answer brings up the policy item in question for review and then returns participants to the quiz to answer the question correctly.

“This quiz is designed to be a fun interactive way to focus on a particular Food Stamp Program element of eligibility each month,” Wright said. “It really does take only about five minutes to answer five multiple choice questions and you may just win the big prize of a $50 savings bond! We are excited about this initiative and encourage field staff to take advantage of this opportunity to improve knowledge in the Food Stamp program.”

Wright said everyone is invited to take the quiz and test their knowledge, but the prizewinner pool is limited to just Family Support Services workers and supervisors. If you have questions about the quiz or drawing, please send your questions to http://s99web01/fssd_foodstamps/. They’ll be happy to assist you.
There was plenty of razzing going on when an Inside OKDHS photographer showed up recently in McClain County OKDHS. Employees teased each other and the photographer, who noticed certain employees shared colorful nicknames as they joked back and forth. From top and clockwise (L-R) are McClain County OKDHS’ Patrice Ashley, Child Welfare specialist III and Valerie Spiegel, Child Welfare specialist II; Barbara Gunter, administrative tech III; Freda Pease, administrative tech IV; Carla Fisher, social services specialist II, Family Support Services Division; Rona “The Instigator” Stout, Child Welfare specialist II; Jill Arnold, social services specialist II, FSSD; Kerri “Problem Child” Riley, Child Welfare specialist II and (in center, L-R) Elaine “Trouble Maker” Mackey, Child Welfare specialist III and Jim Williams, social services specialist II, FSSD. – GEJ
Spotlight On OKDHS’ ‘Admins’ continued from page 1

Job duties: “Secretary to the Area VI director and supervisor of Area Office Support Staff.”

Most interesting part of my job: “The most interesting or satisfying part of my job is the contact with staff at all levels of the Agency and being able to help them in some way get their immediate needs met, whether by answering a question, providing a phone number, address or directing them to where they may get the answers they need. I also enjoy the diversity of my assignments – from typing to payroll to the area budget to the area’s Employee Recognition Committee and from supervision to removing paper jams from the copier – the variety makes for not too many dull moments.”

My favorite memory of working at OKDHS: “After working for another agency where secretaries used correcting electric typewriters and copy machines and work units were separated by walls and doors, I transferred to OKDHS. My first day on the job, after the county director visited with me (for) a while, she took me to the third floor of the Tulsa office where all employees, except supervisors, were lined up in a huge open area. I was taken to a desk with an old manual typewriter and remember wondering, ‘What have I gotten myself into?’ I went home and cried that night. One favorite remembrance was when new memory typewriters were purchased for all secretaries. We watched a demonstration in a conference room and were each given a new machine. The picture of some of us carrying our new typewriters in our arms, some rolling them in their chairs and some using carts to get them to our desks while feeling like we are now equipped to tackle anything still comes to mind whenever new high-tech equipment is distributed. We certainly have come a long way!”

Name: “Beverly Hutton.”
Length of service: “Thirty years.”
Current job: “Administrative Assistant I, Creek County OKDHS.”

Job duties: “Supervise four administrative technician IIs, process all Human Resource transactions, order all supplies and equipment for office, maintain personnel folders, administrative assistant to County Director, EBT specialist, process Time/Leave, call in all problems with building and see that maintenance has been performed and process incoming and outgoing mail.”

Most interesting part of my job: “Observing all the different personalities that come and go.”

My favorite memory of working at OKDHS: “When I was hired to work for OKDHS (known then as Department of Institutions Social & Rehabilitative Services), our office was located in an old building in downtown Sapulpa. Our office was housed on the fourth floor. The elevator got stuck between floors daily, and someone was always having to be rescued. Our typewriters were old Adler manuals and we had dictating machines that used magnetic tapes – no computers at all. Everything was done manually. In the wintertime, we had to go to the lumberyard, buy a sheet of sheetrock and nail over the windows. The windows would shut, but when the north wind blew, the windows would rise up. The sheetrock provided a shield from the wind. When spring came, we removed the sheetrock. There was hardly a day in the winter that we didn’t have to sit and work in our coats and gloves, and few of us even got pretty good at typing with our gloves on. We had roaches the size of small mice, and we even had mice, and then, of course, we had bats to go along with the mice. The women had to walk a flight of stairs to use the restroom or take a chance and ride the elevator. That may not sound like what would be a favorite memory, but it is to me. I cannot believe we worked without complaining, but we really did. We were happy employees.”

Name: “Janice Wardrop.”
Length of Service: “Thirty-two years.”
Job duties: “I am currently the administrative assistant for the county director and provide supervision and training for the administrative unit for three counties. I complete personnel transactions for a four-county area (including Major County), budget transactions, payroll input, serve as volunteer coordinator, insurance coordinator, Data Services Division mentor, SATTRN facilitator, provide trouble-shooting for the FACS and KIDS system, assist customers in completing forms and provide a variety of services to Agency customers and contractors.”

Most interesting part of my job: “I started my career with OKDHS in Comanche County in 1969 and moved on to the State Office in 1971. I left the agency in 1976 and returned to the Woods County office in 1978. I feel like I have been involved in almost every aspect of the clerical operations of OKDHS. Probably the most interesting part of my job is that I never have a ‘routine’ day and that each day comes with lots of joy, some sadness, sometimes madness and all kinds of humor. I must say that I don’t think I have ever been bored while working for this Agency.”

My favorite memory of working at OKDHS: “It seems that I have gone through OKDHS moving from the age of manual equipment to now not being able to function without a computer. However, my fondest memories would be of co-workers that I have met throughout the years. One incident that is still vivid in my memory is when the staff had a practice fire drill, and we went out a window onto the rooftop. Now being state employees, we did not actually judge how high the window really was. When we got out we could just

INSIDE OKDHS — August 2004

ADMINS continued on page 10
Editor’s Note: Our “Spotlight on OKDHS’ Admins’” feature is Inside OKDHS’ third installment focusing on Oklahoma human services’ history. By highlighting some of the memories recently shared by seven administrative assistants and others who have served the state and OKDHS for more than 30 years, we hope to illuminate future generations of employees as to the rich history and culture held by our Agency.

By Kevan Goff-Parker
Inside OKDHS Editor

OKDHS is blessed to have many long-time employees, including many administrative assistants, secretaries and administrative technicians who have spent 30 years or more keeping things humming at county offices across the state.

Inside OKDHS recently reached out to dozens of such individuals to see what they like best about their jobs and what memories come to mind when they reflect on their many years of service. Here are their answers...

Name: “Claudzetta Warren.”

Length of service: “Thirty-two years for the state of Oklahoma (five years Department of Education, 27 years OKDHS).”

Current job: “Secretary V, Field Operations, Area VI Executive”

Job duties: “Secretary to the Area VI director and supervisor of Area Office Support Staff.”

Most interesting part of my job: “The most interesting or satisfying part of my job is the contact with staff at all levels of the Agency and being able to help them in some way get their immediate needs met, whether by answering a question, providing a phone number, address or directing them to where they may get the answers they need. I also enjoy the diversity of my assignments – from typing to payroll to the area budget to the area’s Employee Recognition Committee and from supervision to removing paper jams from the copier – the variety makes for not too many dull moments.”

My favorite memory of working at OKDHS: “After working for another agency where secretaries used correcting electric typewriters and copy machines and work units were separated by walls and doors, I transferred to OKDHS. My first day on the job, after the county director visited with me (for) a while, she took me to the third floor of the Tulsa office where all employees, except supervisors, were lined up in a huge open area. I was taken to a desk with an old manual typewriter and remember wondering ‘What have I gotten myself into?’ I went home and cried that night. One favorite remembrance was when new memory typewriters were purchased for all secretaries. We...”

ADMINS continued on page 12

Spotlight On OKDHS’ ‘Admins’ continued from page 9 —
ents and children. Each year, Tulsa County has a Christmas party for the foster children and foster parents. This is enjoyable to attend. Tulsa County also has an appreciation tea for foster parents in the spring of each year. I enjoy the time at Christmas when we pass out Christmas presents to the foster children.”

My favorite memory of working at OKDHS: “The memories over 30 years are many. I’ve met many interesting people and worked with some wonderful supervisors. The technology is impressive compared to where OKDHS was 30 years ago. I remember and was part of entering Child Welfare Services cases into the ‘new’ computer system in 1975 while assigned in Creek County. The other day I really felt old when I asked the supply person if she could get some carbon paper and she asked what that was! I remember the old Dictaphones when we had vinyl belts instead of cassette tapes. I even remember in Creek County when we got push-button telephones to replace the rotary-dial ones. OKDHS has definitely improved in some areas. I doubt many clerical employees remember the old mimeograph machines or actually using typewriters that weren’t even electric!”

Name: “Vainieda Vaughn.”
Length of service: “Seven years and six months for Mental Health at Fort Supply Hospital in Fort Supply, Okla., 26 years and three months with Custer County OKDHS in Clinton, Okla.
Current job: “Administrative Technician III for Child Welfare unit in Custer County OKDHS.”
Job duties: “I approve foster home payments (monthly), clothing authorizations for foster children, contingency funds and filing and maintaining file folders. I copy cases for adoption workers and to be sent to other counties, run down for vendors as to why charged purchases have not been paid and back-up answering the phone. I write memos on all return quarterly vouchers when children are moved and the foster parent has not been able to purchase clothing, type letters for some social workers who need help and have helped Child Welfare workers by transporting foster children.”

Most interesting part of my job: “Being able to help others when they cannot help themselves.”

My favorite memory of working at OKDHS: “One year, each unit dressed up for Halloween and the Child Welfare unit borrowed the orange jump suits from the Custer County Jail. Then, each one of us added our own personal touch (i.e. patch over eye, black tooth, bandaged hand). For years during Christmas we have been doing dirty Santa, which is really a lot of fun. Just working with a lot of great and wonderful people. Here, in Custer County each unit seems to work together really well. We all are always helping someone that is in need (offering support where it is needed). I really enjoy the stories Child Welfare workers tell that happen to them sometimes when transporting children. I remember one where a male worker who is about 5 feet 5 inches (tall), transporting a youth who was built like a football player and over 6 feet tall. The law officers did not want to really remove the shackles they had on him, but they had to if Child Welfare was to transport him. They stopped for a something to drink at a quick shop and the youth ran from him. He went in and started running after him, wondering what he was going to do when he caught him? He finally decided to stop and let the law officers take care of him.”

Another favorite memory of working at OKDHS: “There is nothing like trying or attempting to burn your office down when one gets bored … This happened quite a few years ago when we were still able to burn candles here at work. I had lit one of the small candles and had it close to the phone on my desk. The mail came, I was stamping it in, placed a legal size paper (travel claim) on the phone and walked away from my desk. I heard something, turned around and there were flames coming up over the partition. One of my co-workers (Marvin Smith) was jumping from foot-to-foot saying someone needed to get a fire extinguisher. Another co-worker (Sondra) had to run around two partitions to get to my desk and poured my Diet Coke on the flames to put it out. Best Diet Coke I had had in a long time. The replacement didn’t taste near as good! Needless to say the only damage was to the phone, which had melted, but was still workable. This had been about the third fire that had been started in the office. One was District Supervisor Zoe Ivestor that had dumped some cigarette ashes in a trashcan and started a little fire. After my fire, when we had new employees start, they would want to bring candles to burn, but would be advised that we could no longer burn them here, thanks to me. Oh well, there always has to be someone who spoils all the fun!”

Name: “Ann Howard.”
Length of service: “Thirty-four years.”
Current job: “Administrative Technician IV for LeFlore County OKDHS.”
Job duties: “Payroll, timekeeper, supervise four clerical staff and work reception desk at noon.”
Most interesting part of my job: “When Oklahoma experienced the ice storm, the volume of people we served was amazing. Seeing people who said they got to the office at 5 a.m. We were here most nights until 9 p.m. just getting some type of organization set up – to see so many people was amazing.”
My favorite memory of working at OKDHS: “Hearing some of the humorous stories of some very interesting people over the 34 years I’ve been here.”
Executive Leadership Institute Workshop Focuses On Helping Substance Abuse Agencies

(L-R) Carol Wilkinson Troy, president and CEO of the Center for Nonprofits; Zane Fleming, a local businessman in recovery; Kyle McGraw, director, Substance Abuse Programs, OKDHS; John Lucas II, former head basketball coach and athlete, and OKDHS Director Howard H. Hendrick all contributed to the success of the OKDHS Executive Leadership Institute. McGraw said the institute’s goal was to improve treatment outcomes by focusing on training specifically designed for treatment center executives and board members. “If we are wanting outstanding treatment centers in Oklahoma that are producing quality results, we must start at the top with our executives and directors of our treatment facilities,” McGraw said. “Improving their skills will produce better results.” – KGP

(L-R) Luncheon keynote speaker John Lucas II, a former San Antonio Spurs head coach and past player for the Houston Rockets, gives a hug to renowned speaker Rev. Leo Booth, an internationally acclaimed author, lecturer and trainer on all aspects of spirituality and recovery. During the two-day OKDHS Executive Leadership Institute held May 26-27 at the Reed Center in Midwest City, both speakers shared their own personal journeys with addiction and spirituality while challenging the executive directors and board members of various Oklahoma substance abuse agencies to use spiritual power and creativity when helping clients. OKDHS’ Substance Abuse Services teamed up with the Center for Nonprofits and the University of Oklahoma Center for Public Management to host the conference. – KGP

(L-R) Sallie Van Krevelen, director of Van’s House in Enid, a substance abuse treatment center and half-way house for adolescents and adults; Belia Baker, an Oklahoma City advocate for recovery and volunteer at the conference, McGraw and Brenda Stevens, conference services manager, Reed Center. The OKDHS Executive Leadership Institute offered sessions in strategic planning, leadership, grant writing, financial management and board roles and responsibilities. – KGP
Accessible Web Pages Benefit Everyone

By Rodney Davidson,
Application Specialist IV
Data Services Division

Inaccessible technology can hinder a disabled person’s ability to receive and use information easily and quickly. Accessibility laws were enacted to eliminate barriers in information technology and to make new opportunities available for people with disabilities.

In 1998, Congress amended the Rehabilitation Act to require federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities. Below are a few of the 16 accessibility check-points, known as the Section 508 Standards:

All images on a Web page must have a text equivalent “alt” description in the HTML. For example, if a Web-site user hovers their mouse over an image on a Web page, the alt text will be displayed to the user. A visually impaired person who cannot see an image will still be able to hear the alt text read aloud by a screen reader. The alt text should be meaningful, such as “OKDHS Oklahoma Excellence,” rather than just “image.”

Web pages must be designed so that information conveyed with color is also available without color. Imagine a visually impaired or colorblind user being confronted with the following: “Click the green button to continue, the yellow button if you need help or the red button if you want to quit.”

Multimedia presentations must have equivalent alternatives for persons with disabilities synchronized with the presentation. A person with a hearing impairment may not be able to hear the state song as it is played from a Web page, but could read the text equivalent if it were made available on the Web page.

Web pages must be designed to avoid causing the screen to flicker with a frequency greater than two Hertz and lower than 55 Hertz. An animated image that flickers at those frequencies can cause a person with epilepsy to have a seizure.

Web pages that use scripting languages such as JavaScript or Dynamic HTML also provide the information in a way that can be read by assistive technology such as screen readers and by those who cannot use a mouse.

As you can see, with a little effort and knowledge, Web pages can be made accessible to persons with disabilities. OKDHS employees who work on Web pages are encouraged to incorporate these changes into their Web sites. For more information about accessibility, please go to http://s99web01/accessibility/.

Congratulations And Best Wishes To Our Retirees!

June 2004

Carter County
Patsy E. Keck, 16 years

Choctaw County
Sherre L. Wolfe, 29 years

Grady County
Anita Marie Wampler, 23 years

Greer County
Lynda Jean Ramsey, 11 years

LeFlore County
William David Davies, 28 years
Marilyn Jean Johnston, 25 years

Mayes County
Lana Jean Reed, 25 years

Okfuskee County
Theodell C. Magness, 25 years

Oklahoma County 55-H
Cathy Jane Bartlett, 28 years

Pawnee County
Patricia A. Hull, 21 years

Tulsa 72-C (Field Operations)
Larry F. Sorrels, 18 yrs

Woods County
Sandra J. Harmon, 29 years

Children and Family Services Division
Betty Lou Mason, 14 years
Joseph James Murray, 6 years

Developmental Disability Services Division (Area III)
Patricia Ann Burkett, 7 years

Division of Child Care
Elizabeth Ann Summers, 26 years

Division of Child Care (Area III)
Linda Helen Suchak, 32 years

Office of the Inspector General
James Ray Golden, 22 years

SORC/Garvin County
Pauline Lillian Armstrong, 18 years
Dana Faye Ayers, 14 years
Lela Jennette Hurley, 9 years
Donald W. Morgan, 40 years
August 2004 OKDHS Calendar Of Events
Editor’s Note: Details about these events may be found on the OKDHS InfoNet Calendar of Events. Dates are subject to change.

August 2
Executive Team Meeting a.m.
FOD Area Director Meeting p.m.

August 3
Oklahoma Task Force on Minority Aging

August 5
Long-term Care Ombudsman Program Advisory Committee
Oklahoma State Council on Aging

August 6
OKDHS’ 68th Birthday
Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council

August 9-27
FSSD New Worker Academy

August 10
Advisory Committee on Services to Persons with Developmental Disabilities

August 10-13
Experienced Supervisor Academy G

August 12
Field Operations Division/County Administrators’ Association Executive Board Meeting

August 17
Court Appointed Advocates for Vulnerable Adults

August 19
NAPIS Task Force
Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness

August 24
Safetown

August 25
APS Field Liaison Meeting
FSSD Field Liaison Meeting

August 26
Area V County Director and Field Liaison Meetings

August 26-27
FSSD Supervisor Conference
He’s now 50. Although he knew about the PEP Award opportunities and had several ideas, he said he had never applied for one. That was until one day last year while he was working, an everyday thing in the office caught his eye.

“Traditionally, supervisors keep several issues of ‘NADA’s Used Car Guide’ in county offices,” Woods said. “We use them to determine how much a client’s resources are worth. For example, through the Food Stamps program, a family is able to exempt one car for every working adult.

“With the build up of the Internet, I noticed that many Web sites featured used car guide information for free. I saw a stack of them on my bookcase just building up, so I asked myself, ‘Why are we still using it?’ ”

He said he spent about two or three hours researching the used-car guide’s use within OKDHS. He soon discovered that OKDHS orders 250 guides annually and that they cost $45 a book. To Woods, the used-car guides seemed like a waste of precious resources for the state.

“When you do a PEP award, you have to build a case for your idea and state what the value is,” he said. “This was an easy concept to grasp and they liked it. There was a consensus that we didn’t need the used-car guides. This process change could save OKDHS $12,000 a year.”

Woods submitted his idea for a PEP Award in March 2003. OKDHS HRMD Programs Manager Joe Kirk verified the savings on Aug. 6, 2003, and sent it to OKDHS Director Howard H. Hendrick. In March 2004, Woods took his daughter, wife and grandson to the State Capitol to accept his PEP Award and an oversized check.

He said he encourages other OKDHS employees to consider applying for the PEP Award.

“It was great!” Woods said. “Sure, there’s some paper work and effort, but most of it was done over the Internet – three hours work for $2,500! I’ve already had co-workers approach me with ideas. The idea that does it will get the payoff.”
Waiting Child Exhibit Returns

OKDHS is once again joining with its long-time partner, KTUL-TV, Tulsa, the Waterworks Photography Association and Wendy’s Restaurants to bring back the Waiting Child Photography Exhibit.

Fifty of Oklahoma’s premier photographers have donated their time and talent to create beautiful portraits of some of the hundreds of children in our state waiting for a loving adoptive home.

The exhibit will debut on Sept. 22 at the Reynolds Center on the University of Tulsa Campus. After that the exhibit will travel the state until its final showing in September 2005. After the final showing, the photos will be given to each child featured for them to keep.

Check out the next issue of Inside OKDHS to see if the Waiting Child Photo Exhibit is coming to a town near you. — DP

OKDHS Pitches In On Food Drive

OKDHS donated hundreds of pounds of food for its part in the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma’s Feeding Hope Community Food Drive. The food drive, which was active from May 3 to June 3, aimed to raise food for the state’s hungry and awareness during a time of year when donations are at their lowest.

According to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, one in five children in Oklahoma risk going to bed hungry and 88 percent of the pantries, kitchens and shelters that are served by the food bank would cease to exist if it weren’t for the help of the food bank and its donors.

The Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma serves nearly 500 charitable feeding programs in 53 central and western Oklahoma counties. During the past two years, the food bank has distributed 42.2 million pounds of food to help the charitable community feed people in need. — DP

OKDHS

Statewide Art Contest Opens

Entries are being sought for a statewide art contest for children being raised by grandparents or other relatives. The competition, sponsored by the Oklahoma Department of Human Services’ Aging Services Division and AARP Oklahoma, is part of the state’s annual celebration of Grandparents’ Week in Oklahoma.

Each September, grandparents are honored for the important role they play in the lives of their grand-children. OKDHS takes this opportunity to honor the special contributions of those grandparents who are raising their grandchildren by sponsoring a statewide conference focusing on the needs of these families.

Through a special competition called “My Family Portrait … An Ever-Changing Picture,” children are being invited to use an artistic medium to depict what makes their family special, said Claire Dowers, programs field representative, Aging Services Division, OKDHS, who is coordinating the competition.

“Grandparents are asked to write a short narrative to accompany the art in an effort to give the grandparents the opportunity to share with others their experiences and needs arising out of this experience,” Dowers said.

AARP Oklahoma is providing savings bonds that will be awarded in several categories based on the children’s ages. Completed artwork and narratives must be submitted by Aug. 15, 2004. Entries should be sent to OKDHS Aging Services, Attention: Claire Dowers, 2401 N.W.23, Suite 40, Oklahoma City, 73107-2413.

Entries must include the name and phone number of the

Comanche County OKDHS Collects 2,021 Pounds Of Food

Hats off to Comanche County OKDHS for collecting 2,021 pounds of food during a recent food drive. The food was then given to the Lawton Food Bank. Here, (L-R) the Lawton Food Bank’s Henry Montgomery and Timothy Rankin and Jodi Anderson, Comanche County OKDHS food drive coordinator, fill up the food bank’s truck. — Jodi Anderson
News Briefs

CSED Collects Millions

Each year, some district OKDHS offices receive a key to the “1 Million Dollar Club.” This happens when an office collects more than $1 million in one month. This year six offices have accomplished the feat, including North Oklahoma City, South Oklahoma City, Midwest City, Tulsa East, Tulsa West and Lawton. All collected more than $1 million in March 2004. Lawton, Oklahoma City South and Midwest City repeated the $1 million collection in April.

Creek County Phone Number Changed

The telephone number for the Creek County OKDHS office has changed (Child Welfare is included in this change). Effective immediately, please call (918) 746-3300. The fax numbers have also changed. They are as follows: Child Welfare: (918) 746-3396, Main Fax: (918) 746-3397 — Beverly Y. Hutton

Aging Services Division Moves

OKDHS’ Aging Services Division’s state offices moved to their new location in Shepard Mall in late June. The new address for this office is: Aging Services Division, 2401 NW 23rd, Ste 40, Oklahoma City, OK 73107-2413. Their telephone numbers remain the same.

Arnold Named Child Welfare Supervisor

OKDHS Area V recently announced the selection of Jenny Arnold as the new Child Welfare Supervisor in Okmulgee County. Arnold graduated from Northeastern State University with a bachelor’s degree in social work. She received her master’s degree in social work at Oklahoma University. Arnold began her career with OKDHS in Children and Family Services working in the Child Welfare Unit in Okmulgee County. She transferred to McIntosh County Child Welfare, and that was where she was employed as a Permanency Planning worker before accepting her new position. Arnold has been a lifelong resident of McIntosh County where she lives with her husband, John. She has three adult children, Jonni Belinda Hall, 27; Michael Arnold, 21, and Jennifer Arnold, 20. — Judy Ann Wyatt, Area V director

Oklahoma County 55-B Celebrates New Location

(L-R) Shirley Bomar, administrative assistant II, Oklahoma County OKDHS 55-B; Debbie Sexton, Area III director; Vicki Williams, Oklahoma County OKDHS 55-B director and OKDHS Director Howard H. Hendrick joined more than 300 guests and staff for an open house on June 23 celebrating the completion of the new Oklahoma County OKDHS 55-B neighborhood Human Services Center located at 9901 S.E. 29th Street in Midwest City. — KGP
truckloads of paper are picked up annually from OKDHS offices and hauled out for security destruction and recycling. The state of Oklahoma contracts with Georgia Pacific to handle this. The company pays the Department of Central Services for all paper that comes from State offices.

“It’s not a lot of money, but it is certainly better than having to pay someone to recycle it for us,” said White. “With this system, only OKDHS hands touch OKDHS documents. When we make the semi-truck delivery, all of the boxes of paper are palletized, shrink-wrapped and dropped into a vat for processing.”

White offers tips for preparing boxes for pick up.

Fill every box to the top with sheets of paper. Place shredded paper in bags or separate boxes and mark as such. Do not include floppy discs, other magnetic media or plastic folders.

“Georgia Pacific has told us that if they continue to find magnetic media, plastic folders and such in with paper documents they will no longer take our paper,” White said.

Hearn and White encourage employees to think locally about reducing paper usage.

“It doesn’t really take more time to follow these simple suggestions,” Hearn said, “and a good conservation habit is being built.”

Budget — continued from page 2

The Memphis native started her undergraduate work at the University of Memphis. She earned a bachelor’s degree in accounting from the University of Alabama at Birmingham and is a Certified Public Accountant.

Mitchell and her husband, Keith, who’s an executive for a local insurance company, live in Edmond, and have one daughter, Madison, 8.