CARNEGIE, Okla. - On January 22, 2021, the Kiowa Tribe held a COVID-19 vaccination day. More than 2-hundred tribal members and non-tribal members came to get their vaccinations.

Tribe Chairman Matthew Komalty said it was important to have this day. “I know once the vaccine was available, we had to host an event to help make our tribe healthy as well as our community.”

Terry Hunter, Indian Health Service (IHS) Anadarko Director has been arranging with tribes to have folks vaccinated. He stated that a lot of folks are apprehensive about coming in droves to take the vaccine, but has come up with a social distancing plan that works. There’s never a crowd and everyone is apart. You check in once you drive into the venue and a nurse will come out and get you when it’s time to get the vaccine. Once inside, everyone is at least six feet apart and there’s no lines. Hunter said it seems to be working.

As of print date, the total amount of tribal members who have passed due to COVID-19 is approximately 130, including past Chairman’s Ronald Dawes Twohatchet and J.T. Goombi. “Our hearts go out to all of the families who are experiencing this awful virus. Just know my heart, thoughts, and prayers are with you all,” Komalty said.

The vaccination event was intentionally scheduled with elders as priority. Much of the public also showed up to be vaccinated. David Tsoodle was among those who came in, “I just want to be healthy and not spread the coronavirus around. It would make my life a lot easier.” Tsoodle said it has caused his family a hardship. “Staying indoors, loss of work, basically, the loss of doing things commun­icatively, like pow wows, socializing with them and any other events and your scared to have any contact between social people. And I think that’s what a big part of the Indian community is; social. Hopefully this brings us all together,” Tsoodle said.

The number indicates that most of the population lost due to the virus is paternal. The Kiowa Tribe is a paternal society, so it comes with great loss Komalty stated. “I really feel like we need to continue reaching out to our tribal members and community to help thwart this illness. So, I will work with IHS to host this again.” Follow our website www.kiowatribe.org or @thekiowatribe on Facebook for later dates to be announced.

COVID-19 Tribal Vaccination Day

CARNEGIE, Oklahoma January/February 2021 COVID-19 PANDEMIC EDITION Volume 4 Issue 9

Bacone College recognizes Phil "Joe Fish" Dupoint as a cultural treasure of the Kiowa People

CARNEGIE, OKLAHOMA — Bacone College conferred an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters on one of the Kiowa Tribes’ most esteemed elders, Dr. Phil “Joe Fish” Dupoint, on Saturday, December 5, 2020, in an outdoor ceremony held at the Kiowa Tribe headquarters in Carnegie, Oklahoma.

“Bacone College recognizes Phil “Joe Fish” Dupoint as a cultural treasure of the Kiowa people. His eminent knowledge, experience, and expertise of Kiowa history, culture, language, philosophy, and ceremonies deem him an important and valuable Indigenous Scholar, Teacher, and Leader,” said Bacone College President Dr. Ferlin Clark. “He has made a lifetime contribution to the cultural, spiritual, and ceremonial health and well-being of the Kiowa people for many generations.”

“We are proud to honor Mr. Fish for his dedicated service to improving the lives of people in our Native American communities,” Clark said. “We cannot stress enough the importance of making all tribes stronger through the sharing of cultural knowledge and beliefs.”

Saturday’s honoring ceremony took place outdoors in Carnegie in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in order to offer more
Dear Tribal Members,

Welcome to 2021! Last year was a very trying year for us all, to say the least. The pandemic devastated our homes and our families. At press time, more than 130 tribal members lost their lives due to COVID-19. That is a statistic that’s a harsh and sad fact. But a topic we, unfortunately, have to deal with.

In the last year, we have dealt with so many obstacles to try to avoid the loss of loved ones, jobs, income, dwellings, and belongings. We learned it wasn’t an easy fix, even with the $23 million CARES Act emergency assistance we were awarded.

When the CDC dropped serious guidelines on how to avoid the deadly virus, the tribe immediately shut its doors leaving only essential employees and directors to continue services. Programs such as tax commission, AOA food services, and food distribution, became curbside service only.

The CARES Act assistance allowed the tribe to operate two COVID-19 Response Programs or call centers to take applications and offer assistance. Both call centers employed approximately 40 intake techs. The problem encountered was a mad rush to meet the end-of-the-year deadline set by the Treasury. That deadline was extended by Congress by one year, giving us time to sort through the tons of applications and paperwork accumulated by the COVID-19 assistance program. To date, more than 7,000 adults and approximately 8,000 minor members have received emergency assistance.

In December the ground was broken and blessed for a new senior activity center-positioned just west of the dance grounds. A facility to nurse or assist our tribal elders instead of sending them off or having them wait for much-needed care. The elders were also given $9-hundred of emergency relief ($5-hundred from the tribe, $4-hundred from COVID-19).

In the downtime of services and programs, employees were often quarantined or asked for mandatory testing to keep the workplace safe. During the pandemic, minimal events were held with strict social distancing guidelines. The Kiowa Tribe and the Osage Nation are two of the college’s chartering tribes.

During the pandemic, the tribe purchased a building in Lawton to establish what we call the COOP Center, the Continuity Of Operations center. This will afford us a second headquarters for Operations center. This will afford us a second headquarters and 20-thousand sq. ft. facility that falls under the CARES Act guidelines. A facility to nurse or assist our tribal elders instead of sending them off or having them wait for much-needed care.

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As we start a new year, I pray for unity, love, and patience. We have a lot to tackle in this new year and so many goals to reach. I ask that you continue following CDC guidelines, wear your mask and stay your distance from one another to be safe.

Take Care and God bless,
Chairman Matthew Komalty

Letter from Matthew Komalty, Chairman

Social distancing opportunities so Dr. Dupoint’s family and friends could safely attend.

The ceremony featured the posting of the colors by the Kiowa Black Leggings Warrior Society and Kiowa singers led by Daniel Cozad Sr. Lonnie Emhoolah offered the opening prayer, while Mr. Cozad offered the closing prayer.

Dr. Clark, Bacone College Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Beverly Jean Smith, Bacone College trustees: Neely Tsoodle and Chairman Matthew Komalty (representing the Kiowa Tribe), conferred the degree on Dr. Dupoint. Also in attendance were National Indian Education Association Executive Director Diana Cournoyer, Mrs. Gwen Clark, Bacone College School of Indian Art Director Gerald Cournoyer, Bacone College CFO Mary Jo Pratt, interim Bacone College Vice President of Student Affairs Jana Taylor, and Bacone Center for American Indians Director Aaron Adson, special organizer of the event.

Bacone College next honors the Osage Gaming Board Chairman Mark J. Simms with an honorary Doctorate of Humanities letter later this month.

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For a photo album, please visit www.facebook.com/baconecollege.

www.facebook/thekiowatribe

Masacrions crafted and gifted to Dr. Phil ‘Joe Fish’ Dupoint from Richard Atkinson. Made especially for his day at the Bacone commencement.
Kiowa Tribe holds groundbreaking ceremony for new Senior Center

The Kiowa Tribe held an intimate groundbreaking and cedar blessing ceremony on its sacred dance and activity grounds on Monday, December 21, 2020, for its new COVID-19/Senior Activity Center in Carnegie, Okla.

The single-story building will house a conference room, office space, kitchen, and a large open area for emergency lodging, food storage, and a gathering place in the event of a crisis. It will be built behind the tribal complex and just west of the dance and activity grounds.

The 20,000 square foot facility falls under the CARES Act guidelines. “This is a good thing, but it came about when bad things happen,” Kiowa Tribal Chairman Matthew Komalty referring to the COVID-19 pandemic. “It’s going to help our people when this pandemic gets worse. This building would house them; we would not have to send them off. They can be here and we can take care of them ourselves.”

The cedar blessing was performed by tribal elder and leader Daniel Cozad. Cozad prayed over the grounds, asking for blessings and cleansing of the area. 

The facility hasn’t been formally titled; however, construction is set to start at the beginning of the year. Completion is expected to round up in approximately nine months.

On November 13, 2020, the Kiowa Tribe also opened a ready-made facility in Carnegie, Okla. The 20,000 square foot facility falls under the CARES Act guidelines.

Sweeney Approves Kiowa Tribe’s Land-into-Trust for Gaming Application for Site in Hobart, Oklahoma

WASHINGTON – Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Tara S. Katuk MacLean Nesbit recently approved the Kiowa Indian Tribe’s fee-to-trust application for approximately 11.33 acres in the city of Hobart, Oklahoma, for gaming and other purposes. The gaming facility will include a restaurant, office space, back-of-house operations, and a parking lot to accommodate patrons and employees. The proposed project is expected to directly employ 156 people.

This is a prime opportunity to embark on great purpose for our Kiowa people while providing a community endeavor that will assist with prosperous advantages, and support its long-term goals of economic self-sufficiency, self-governance, and self-determination.

“I am pleased to approve the Kiowa Indian Tribe’s fee-to-trust application for gaming, which means it can now move forward with creating new opportunities for economic and employment growth for itself and its neighbors,” said Assistant Secretary Sweeney. “The cooperation between tribal, city, county and state officials paved the way to a win-win situation not only for the Tribe but for the region as well with the promise of new jobs and revenues. I congratulate all those involved in bringing this part of the process to a successful conclusion.”

This is a prime opportunity to embark on great purpose for our Kiowa people while providing a community endeavor that will assist with prosperous advantages, and entertainment, to this economically distressed area,” said Kiowa Indian Tribe Chairman Matthew Komalty. “We express our sincere gratitude for this approval.”

The proposed project site is located within the Hobart city limits and bounded on the east by U.S. Highway 183 and less than one mile north of the intersection of U.S. Highway 183 and Highway 9 (E. 11th Street). While its location is in a rural area that is primarily farmland, with agricultural lands and developed properties near it, the proposed project will not disrupt neighboring land use nor prohibit access to neighboring parcels.

The Assistant Secretary determined the site is eligible for gaming pursuant to Section 2719 of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act and that it would have no significant impact on the quality of the human environment. The Assistant Secretary also issued a Finding of No Significant Impact following preparation of an Environmental Assessment, thereby fulfilling the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act.

With its application approved, the agreement the Kiowa Tribe has with the city of Hobart, wherein the city, through the Hobart Economic Development Authority, will convey title to the site to the United States at no cost, for the benefit of the Tribe, can now be implemented and allow the Tribe to move forward with its proposed project. The Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs advises the Secretary of the Interior on Indian Affairs policy issues, communicates policy to and oversees the programs of the BIA and the BIE, provides leadership in consultations with tribes, and serves as the DOI official for intra- and inter-departmental coordination and liaison within the Executive Branch on Indian matters. The Office of Indian Gaming acts as the primary advisor to the Secretary and Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs on Indian gaming and the requirements of Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), PL. 100-497, and other federal laws. Its duties and responsibilities include the administrative review and analysis of IGRA’s statutory and regulatory requirements and related statutes as well as policy development and technical assistance to tribal and state stakeholders. OIG implements the Secretary’s responsibilities under IGRA and, as such, has a significant impact on economic development resulting from Indian gaming.

Tax Commission Under New Direction

Action restores former lands to the Tribe with projected jobs and revenue benefitting it as well and local and regional economies.

Sourc e from: US Interior Department

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Kiowa Tribe opens new facility to offer Essential Support

Kiowa Food Box Giveaway

Lawton, Okla. – On Friday, November 13, 2020, the Kiowa Tribe welcomed a brand-new facility designed to provide essential services year-round for tribal members. Tribal leaders cut the ribbon of the new COOP center or Continuity Of Operations at 1605 SW Lee Boulevard, Lawton, Okla.

The facility was purchased with CARES Act funding brought on by the pandemic. The COOP center’s sole purpose is to provide uninterrupted essential services amid a crisis. It will provide an alternate site outside of the main headquarters in Carnegie, Okla.

The COOP will assist tribal members (elders) with transportation to and from appointments, act as a dry goods and PPE storage, COVID-19 assistance intake station, and act as a command center in times of need. “This is a much-needed facility in this area of our Kiowa jurisdiction outside of Carnegie, It’s a larger city with more folks around,” said Chairman Matthew Komalty.

The Lawton area is also home to nearly 8-hundred tribal members. That’s a lot of tribal members in one area,” said Freda Satepeahut, COVID-19 Response Program Director.

Satepeahut said it is not known as this time how many workers it will employ. The transportation department plans to offer transit to the public in the near future at a minimal cost. The garage will also offer discount prices for small vehicle maintenance jobs.

Lawton City Mayor Stan Booker, and Chief Sky Tosee, along with Lawton Manager, Rhonda Ahhaitty, Vice Chairwoman, Mathew Komalty, Chairman, Lawton City Mayor Stan Booker, and BlueSky Tosee were on hand to celebrate.

“Moving forward, the Kiowa Tribe is planning and looking at ways to bring more services to the community,” Stated Chairman Matthew Komalty.

“We really love this grant because it allows the Kiowa Tribe to be a blessing so we can bless others. The food boxes were much appreciated by elders, tribal members as well as community members of Carnegie alike.

“Comments from recipients, volunteers, and tribal Chairman Eldor Gloria Noel expresses her thanks: “We really appreciate it! I have a household of seven, it won’t go to waste.”

“The Kiowa people and the community of Carnegie are alike. We would like to Thank all the employees for their help and for those that came out today. It makes my heart feel good,” said Chairman Mathew Komalty.

Kiowa Tribe Chairman Matthew Komalty addressed the crowd, along with Lawton Mayor Stan Booker. Other guests included Michael Clegborn, Lawton City Manager, Dan Mullins, former property owner, Matthew Owens, Comanche County District 2 Commissioner, Kiowa Black Leggings Warrior Society, Delaware Nation President Debrah Dotson, Lonnie Elmhoochal, cedar blessing, and Kendal Hamilton and BlueSky Tosee who performed the Lord’s Prayer in sign language.

Photo Courtesy: Kiowa Tribe Public Relations (L to R: Kendal Hamilton, Michael Clegborn, Lawton City Manager, Rhonda Ahhaitty, Vice Chairwoman, Mathew Komalty, Chairman, Lawton City Mayor Stan Booker, and BlueSky Tosee).

Statement from the new Higher Education Director, Warren C. Queton

Personal Statement from the new Higher Education Director, Warren C. Queton

My Kiowa name is “Phaw Ah” meaning “The moon is coming”. I am a registered citizen of the Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma and affiliated with Cherokee and Seminole Nations. I recently served as the University of Oklahoma’s 1st Tribal Liaison Officer hired in August 2016. In that position, I focused on respectful and mutually productive relationships between Tribal Nations, Native students, university, and community stakeholders through culturally appropriate research, outreach, and programming. I worked in developing, connecting, promoting, and facilitating protocols of reciprocity as they relate to Tribal Sovereignty and Indigenous Higher Education.

I am a combat veteran and proud member of the Ton-Kon-Gau (Kiowa Black Leggings Warrior Society). I currently serve in the Army Reserves in the Oklahoma Army National Guard and assigned as the Commandant of the Officer Candidate School at the Oklahoma Regional Training Institute. I completed three tours of overseas duty serving as a Battle Non-Commissioned Officer in the Oklahoma Army National Guard and assigned as the Commandant of the Officer Candidate School at the Oklahoma Regional Training Institute.

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