

**TACC Mission Statement**  
*To promote business, enhance economic and community development, and serve as a catalyst for improving the overall quality of life in the community and region.*



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VOLUME 2, NO. 4 • May 2019

Five Star Friday has kicked off in full swing! We were so excited to highlight a few of our wonderful chamber members including Go Ye Village, Rollie Pollie, and JD Young. The Communications Committee founded Five Star Friday to highlight local businesses who provide outstanding customer service and products. The idea is to spotlight a local business by giving them a positive review on social media outlets such as Facebook, Yelp, Google, etc. Make sure to participate next Friday and give your favorite local business a 5-Star shout out!



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Funding for this event was made possible by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention through a cooperative agreement with the Oklahoma State Department of Health. Early Recognition Initiative. The views expressed in written materials or publications and the speakers and participants do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Department of Health and Human Services, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

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# CHAMBER CLASSIC



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**CHEROKEE SPRINGS**  
**GOLF COURSE**  
**Four-Person Scramble**  
**\$400 Team**

Registration and Sponsorships  
 Information at:  
[www.tahlequahchamber.com](http://www.tahlequahchamber.com)



## Message from the President

### THE CHAMBER OFFICE IS UNDERGOING A PHYSICAL TRANSFORMATION

We have been busy at the Chamber office and not with just programs and business. Due to recent contributions from business members, we have begun a minor remodel to create a more professional look and assist in work station flow.

The Tahlequah Main Street Association rents space from the Chamber. In the past, their office was located at the back of the building in an open room. This did not provide them with privacy, nor was it an efficient space. So, we have done a room trade.

The Main Street office is now located in my old office and I am in the Main Street Association office. Main Street now has an entrance from the lobby which will provide them easier access for their members and to con-

duct business. My new space has a wall and a door that allows privacy for me to conduct business. Jamie Hale and I love our new office spaces!

In addition, we are adding doors to the 3rd floor and basement stairwell to conserve on utilities. The board room is always 10 degrees cooler or hotter than the rest of the office. We believe the addition of the doors will make a difference on our utility bill – saving dollars to spend on programming for our members.

And one of the most exciting change is the construction of the door frame and a door to our conference room, plus new board chairs that are not tattered. Now we can conduct business as professionals! This room will be named the Banc-



CINDY L. MORRIS, PRESIDENT  
TAHLEQUAH AREA  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

First Conference Room due to their generous remodel contribution.

Many thanks to our remodel contributors – BancFirst, McDonalds, and an anonymous donor (you know who you are!) and to our partners- Tahlequah Main Street Association and Tour Tahlequah - who are sharing in the remodel expense. We sincerely appreciate your support in helping the Chamber and Main Street Association move forward.

The remodel won't be complete for a couple of weeks. We still need to cleanup and paint. Anyone that loves to paint, give us a call. We will schedule a painting party! Once we are finished, please stop by and check out the new changes. We would love for you to see the positive change!



## LET'S GET SOCIAL!

JUNE 27, 2019

BEGINNER SESSION  
9:00-11:30 A.M.

ADVANCED SESSION  
1:00-3:30 P.M.

ICTC  
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WITH MICHELLE PRINE

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CHAMBER MEMBERS: \$15  
NON-MEMBERS: \$25



## CHAMBER TO HOST A NEW GOLF CLASSIC ON JUNE 7



The Chamber will be hosting the new Chamber Golf Classic on Friday, June 7 at the Cherokee Springs Golf Course. This event is a chamber fundraiser and a celebration and promotion of business at the event.

We invite you to sponsor, come play, or join us and promote your business as an Exhibitor Hole Sponsor or Tee Sponsor or vol-

unteer to help us with production of the event. To find out more, go to [TahlequahChamber.com/events](http://TahlequahChamber.com/events) or give contact Gabby Wheeler at the Chamber, 918-456-3742.

Just a quick note so you don't miss out on a fun member outing - sponsorship commitment deadline is May 24 and team registration is required by May 31.



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# Annual Chamber Banquet gets a new name

We are making changes to the Chamber Annual Banquet this year. Here are a few things that are happening:

- ~ New Event Name – Evening of Excellence
- ~ Celebration of business and the success of our past year
- ~ Presentation to prestigious winners of Awards of Excellence
- ~ Reception social, followed by dinner, Awards of Excellence presentations and further celebration into the evening!
- ~ Graduation recognition of the Leadership Tahlequah Class XXII

The following is information regarding sponsorship opportunities, tickets and purchase deadlines. We sincerely hope you will join us for this special evening.

SPONSORSHIP & TICKET INFORMATION	
<i>Sponsor Levels</i>	<i>Registration</i>
<i>(Commitment Deadline: May 20, 2019) (Price Increases After June 5, 2019)</i>	
Presenting: \$5000	
Corporate Reserved Table: \$400 (seating for 4)	
Gold: \$2500	
Silver: \$1500	
Bronze: \$ 650	
Individual Registration: \$50 per person	
For more info or register, call the Chamber at 456-3742 or go to <a href="http://TahlequahChamber.com/Events">TahlequahChamber.com/Events</a>	

You are cordially

Invited

EVENING OF

Excellence

Chota Conference Center

14 JUNE

Cherokee Casino

Reception • 6 p.m.

Dinner • 7 p.m.

Awards of Excellence & More • 7:45 p.m.

Hosted By:



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# WHAT’S BEEN HAPPENING!!!

Special thanks to all who attended Chamber hosted events this past month and to the sponsoring companies.

## A.M. LIVE

Thank you to Deana Franke and Daniel Franke at Oasis Health Food Store for hosting A.M. Live in April!



Have you attended one yet? You should! It is a great event where you can reconnect with customers, friends and business acquaintances, meet new businesses to the area, and new member investors in the Chamber. A.M. Live is held on the 2nd Friday of each month at a Chamber member location. See the A.M. Live ad to find out the upcoming and future locations. You are cordially invited to join us to build your business by connecting with others – Coffee + Conversation = Connections!

## MIA Series



Are you Missing in Action? Join us for our MIA (Managing for Innovation and Action) Series throughout the year. Chris Welch and Kin Thompson provided an information session on Hospitality & Customer Service. Other sessions will be held throughout the year. Stay tuned for future dates.

## LEGISLATIVE FOCUS

Thank you to Cherokee Nation for sponsoring and hosting the third Legislative Focus Breakfast in April.



And special thanks to Northeastern State University for sponsoring & hosting the last Legislative Focus Breakfast in May. The Legislative Focus series will return next year during the Legislative session. Mark your calendars for 2020 on the first Friday during February – May. This is a great opportunity to meet your State Legislators, ask questions and have one-on-one time to discuss priorities that affect you and your business.



Over 75 community members arrived on a Saturday morning to make Tahlequah a cleaner place. The Skate Park, Norris Park and the alleyway behind Braums and El Zarape were among the largest projects taken on by volunteers. Tidy Up Tahlequah is bi-annual clean up initiative of the MyTahlequah Foundation.



Thank you to committee members and volunteers who made a huge impact on our community-wide cleanup event, Tidy Up Tahlequah, that took place on May 4th! Special thanks for the financial support from our Presenting Sponsors – Grand River Dam Authority & Tahlequah Public Works Authority.



The Chamber recently celebrated the groundbreaking for the new Tru by Hilton Hotel with Pete and Tina Patel, owners of Promise Hotels, a hotel development company. The new hotel will be located adjacent to the new Cherokee Casino.



# LEADERSHIP TAHLEQUAH CLASS XXII



Leadership Class XXII toured Cherokee Nation with Champion Stephanie Isaacs during their session in April. The program included meeting with Principal Chief Bill John Baker, Deputy Chief S. Joe Crittenden, and W.W. Hastings Hospital CEO Brian Hale.

Leadership Tahlequah Class XXII coordinated three fundraising efforts during their class year including t-shirt sales, bowling tournament, and the famous Duck Race during Red Fern Festival. The class collaborated to raise dollars through projects for Sweetwater Foundation. The Sweetwater Foundation provides family aid for those affected by childhood cancer. Congrats, Leadership Tahlequah XXII for an outstanding job on all your projects!



  
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## Arvest Bank Kicks Off Ninth Year of Fighting Hunger

Spring Campaign Means More Food and Funds in Summer Months

ARVEST



Arvest Bank's Million Meals initiative challenges bank associates, customers and community members to participate in fundraising efforts and nonperishable food drives to fight hunger in the more than 135 communities the bank serves. The initiative is needed, as Oklahoma ranks 6th among the most food-insecure states in the nation, according to the United States Department of Agriculture.

Arvest kicked off the two-month, bank-wide effort today to provide at least one million meals to local, hungry families, and it will continue through June 1. The initiative will conclude later that month, when donations are presented to 70-plus locally selected organizations that feed the hungry in their communities.

Arvest in Tulsa has partnered with the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma for the duration of the initiative. All donations received will go to the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma to provide meals to local, hungry families.

Green Country residents can participate in Million Meals by dropping off nonperishable food items or making monetary donations at any of the Arvest branches, or calling (866) 952-9523 or using the Arvest Go mobile app.

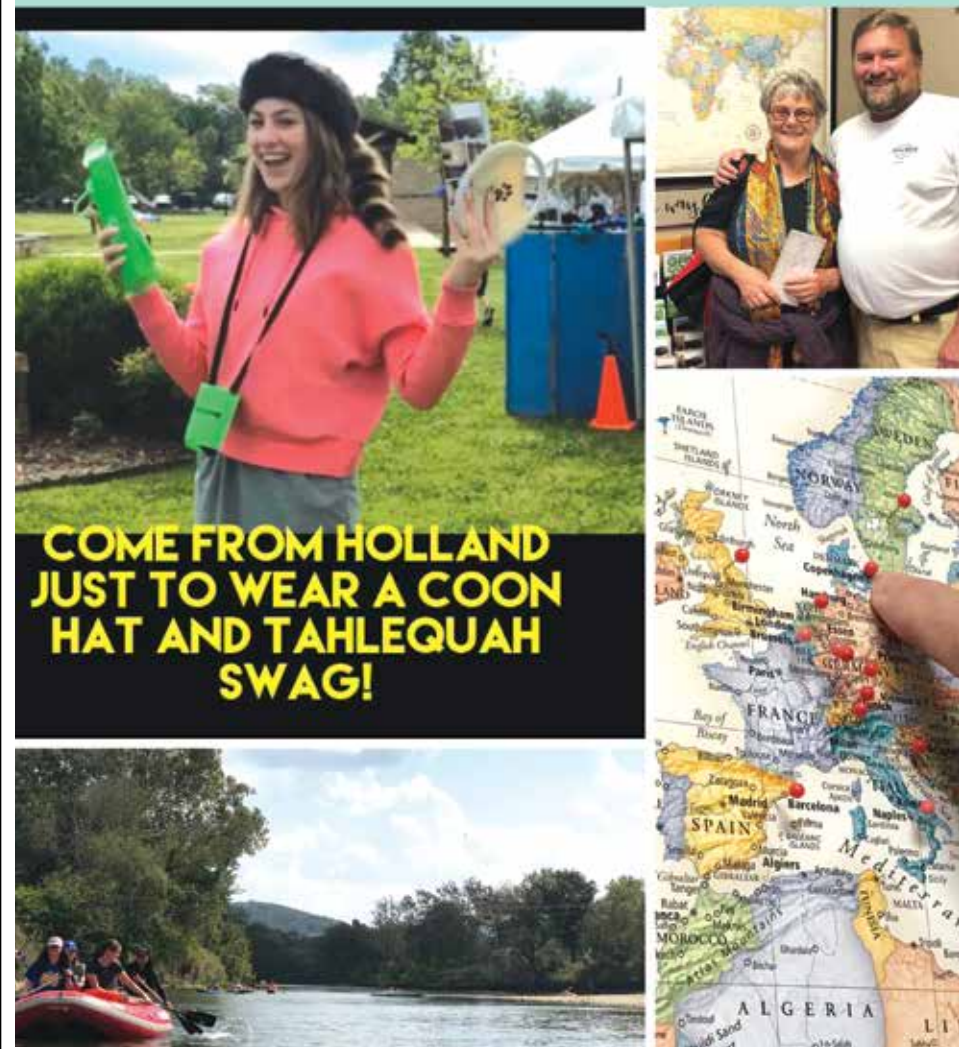
Arvest is conducting its annual initiative in the spring again this year due to the fact food banks report an increased need for food

items in the summer, when many children do not have the benefit of eating meals at the schools they attend. According to the Food Research and Action Center, for example, the average daily student participation in the Summer Nutrition Program in Oklahoma is just 4.7 percent of the average daily student participation in the National School Lunch Program.

Donations to food banks also tend to be lower in the spring and summer than at other times of the year. All donations stay local and go to fund the CARE Food Pantry in Tahlequah. For more information about Million Meals, visit [arvest.com](http://arvest.com).

DURING THE MONTH OF APRIL, THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT WAS VISITED BY A FAMILY FROM NORWAY AND ALSO GERMANY! LUCIE, FROM THE NETHERLANDS, HELPED AT THE BOOTH AT RED FERN AND MODELED ALL THE SWAG! PRIM, FROM THAILAND, GOT TO FLOAT THE RIVER!

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TAHLEQUAH AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Board of Directors Spotlight



RYAN TINSLEY  
REMAX SELECT



KELLY CALLAWAY  
FIRST STATE BANK

2018-19 Tahlequah Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is the governing, policy-making body of the Chamber. Its members represent the business and professional leadership of the Tahlequah area. The Board of Directors assumes financial and legal responsibility for all Chamber activities and duties. In addition, they set the vision, mission and strategic direction of the chamber.

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(Century 21-Wright Real Estate)  
Jessie Hughes, Treasurer  
(Jessie Hughes Accounting)  
Todd Mutzig, Past Chair (Meigs Jewelry)  
Sue Catron, Secretary (Individual)

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Jim Berry, Northeastern Health System  
Marcus Brunner, NEO Health  
Dower Combs, Premier Consulting Partners  
Freddie Ferrell, Insurance Professionals of Oklahoma  
Grant Lloyd, Lloyd Legal PLLC  
Genny Maiden, Terrapin Peak Bed, Breakfast & Beyond  
Denisse Ramos, The Kickin' Taco  
Russell Sain, Individual  
Rian Cragar, Main Street Association  
Michael Stopp, Individual  
Jill Taylor, Cherokee Nation

Board of Directors – Chair Appointments (non-voting)

Kelly Callaway, First State Bank  
Joshua Poindexter, Cherokee Nation  
Ryan Tinsley, Property Solutions Real Estate Company

Board of Directors – Associates (non-voting)

Mary Bower, Northeastern State University  
Stephen Highers, City of Tahlequah  
Anna Knight, Cherokee Nation  
Cindy Morris, Chamber President

STAFF

Cindy Morris, President  
Gena McPhail, Tourism Director  
Kelley Robertson, Finance Manager  
Alicia McDowell, Member Engagement Coordinator  
Clare Reynolds, Marketing Specialist  
Caitlin Felts, Marketing Specialist  
Matt Dorr, Business Development Coordinator/VISTA

Tour Tahlequah receives award

On Tuesday, May 7th, 2019, Tour Tahlequah was awarded the opportunity to attend the Oklahoma Tourism Industry Association (OTIA) Redbud Awards Gala. The Redbud Awards Gala is open to all Oklahoma Tourism entities and recognizes top events, attractions, campaigns and overall creativity. There were 32 awards presented Todd Lamb and Jennifer Reynolds. Tour Tahlequah was elated to take home the Merit Award for Best Social Media Campaign entitled Tasty Tuesday. Tasty Tuesday highlighted the many local restaurants in the Tahlequah area via a live video stream of their establishment and interviewing the staff about their history.

Get your ‘QUAH decal today

MAY 2019

TAHLEQUAH CHAMBER CONNECTION

PAGE 9

Tourism Update

Wow!! April came and went in a hurry!! Summer is almost here! The season of visitors and events have been keeping the Tourism Department quite busy. With the new Casino and other new businesses popping up, the department is preparing for the influx of new visitors!

Tourism was thrilled to report a 16.5% increase, over 2018 in the hotel/motel tax collection. The department is excited to see this continued increase.

**New Tourism Activities**

The “Revvng Up For The River” campaign has begun! This campaign is designed to bring awareness to the Illinois River and the outfitters. The campaign spotlights activities, restaurants and camping amenities that are offered per business. This is a social media campaign that is shared through a video series.

“Loving Lake Life” is the next campaign that will start May 13th. This campaign will feature all the unique things to do, see, and also spotlight dining on the lake. This is a social media campaign that will be shared through a video series.

The Tahlequah Area Tourism Department was proud to announce that they were the recipient of the Merit Award for Best Social Media Campaign.

The award was received on Tuesday May 7th. The Red-Bud Awards Ceremony



GENA MCPHAIL,  
TOURISM DIRECTOR

tion and enhance their ability to competitively enter next year.

Tahlequah Tourism Director, Gena McPhail, has been nominated to sit on the Board of Directors for the OTIA, Oklahoma Travel Industry Association. This is a great opportunity to add awareness to the tourism industry of the Tahlequah area.

The Tahlequah Tourism Committee participated in The Red Fern Festival. Information about Tahlequah was given, as well as, promotional items were sold and handed out.

We have received the 2019 promotional items. The department has purchased items for retail, that can be sold at events and also to people who stop by the office. There will be items for all ages, as well as for the family dog. These official Truly Tahlequah items include; collapsible water bottles, koozies with lanyards, whistle/light keychains, and dog toys. Stop by the office to pick one up!

The Tourism Department has been contacting groups, conferences, associations, auto groups, motorcycle groups and church youth groups. Our goal is to bring awareness to the beauty and adventure that Tahlequah has to offer.

We have been assisting with itineraries and lodging for large family (100+ members) reunions, scheduled for

this fall.

The Tourism Department is reviewing ideas for a variety of bike tours, “poker runs”, and motorcycle tours for this coming fall.

During the month of April, the Tourism Department was visited by a family from Norway and also Germany!

**Distribution of the 2019-2021 Truly Tahlequah Visitors Guide**

The Department of Tourism has been visiting river outfitters to distribute visitor guides. These introductions allow the businesses to ask questions and bring awareness to the specifics of their individual business and their specific needs of the Tourism Department. These introductory visits will continue throughout the Tahlequah area and local, in town, businesses.

The Tourism Department is taking applications for a full and part time position

The Tourism Department is sad to announce that Caitlin and Clare will be leaving the Department after their college graduation. These young women have been priceless in carrying out Tourism promotions and marketing campaigns. We wish them both the very best in their future endeavors.

The Tourism Department is reviewing applications for filling both a full and part time position.

A SPECIAL GOODBYE TO ALICIA MCDOWELL



ALICIA MCDOWELL

Not only is there change on the horizon for the Chamber's Tourism Department, we are also sad to say goodbye to Alicia McDowell in mid-June. Alicia has made a business decision to place full-time attention on her business, Moon-dance Photography.

“Alicia has been juggling family life, Chamber life and part-time (which really seemed full-time for her) with her photography business for a while,” said Cindy Morris, President. Although we hate to see her go as she is a vital part of our work family, I encourage her decision to start her new journey as a full-time business owner. Alicia and her husband, Tristan, do outstanding photography with a tremendous passion to capture memories.

Alicia has been a part of the Chamber team since December 2016. As the Member Engagement Coordinator, she has done a wide variety of jobs for the Chamber from membership, event planning to marketing, plus much more.

Alicia will stay on board until June 17 to assist in the transition and assist in producing the upcoming Golf Classic and Evening of Excellence. We hope you will stop by during the next month to say best wishes to Alicia. Alicia, you will be missed!





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## A SPECIAL GOODBYE TO TWO COLLEGE GRADUATING STAFF MEMBERS CAITLIN FELTS & CLARE REYNOLDS



CAITLIN FELTS

Changes are on the horizon for Tour Tahlequah. As we transition into the summer season, our Marketing Specialists, Caitlin Felts and Clare Reynolds, will be leaving to further pursue their professional careers. Serving as the face of Tour Tahlequah for the past year, they both have dedicated their creative efforts and bright personalities to represent the tourism department to its highest potential.

In the past year alone, they have created multiple social media campaigns, developed a hospitality seminar in collaboration with Bravado Wireless, and much more to market the quality of the Tahlequah area. In recent weeks, their hard work to promote our beloved town has been recognized on a state-wide level. They will be accepting a Redbud award for Best Social Media Campaign and Branding on May 7 at the 2019 Redbud Gala in Oklahoma City. We could not be more proud of them and are excited to see their professionalism grow from here.

Though we are sad to see them go, we are optimistic about the future of Tour Tahlequah as we seek new employees to live up to the same professional standard as our previous Marketing Specialists.

We are currently taking applications for both full-time positions. If you are interested in applying, visit our application online on [Indeed.com](http://Indeed.com) or email the Tourism Director, Gena McPhail, at [gena@tahlequahchamber.com](mailto:gena@tahlequahchamber.com).



CLARE REYNOLDS

## Chamber Meetings & Events Calendar for May 2019

May 2019		
20	Groundbreaking	10 am
21	Board of Directors Meeting	8:00 am
21	Tourism Marketing Committee	3:30 am
22	Membership Development Committee	12 am
23	Chamber Golf Classic Task Force	9:30 am
28	Legislative Committee	2:00 am
19500 E. Ross St., OSU College of Osteopathic		
Chamber Office		
Chamber Office		
Chamber Office		
Cherokee Springs Golf Course		
Chamber Office		
June 2019		
6	Ambassador Luncheon	12 pm
7	Chamber Golf Classic Tournament	9 am Tee
11	Small Business Development Committee	12:00 pm
11	Leadership Steering Committee	2:00 pm
12	Women in Business Breakfast	7:45 am
13	Tourism Council Meeting	8:00 am
13	Membership Development Committee	12:00 pm
14	A.M. Live	8:00 am
14	Evening of Excellence	6:00 pm
18	Tourism Marketing Committee	3:30 pm
19	Economic Development Committee	11:30 am
20	Leadership Tahlequah Session	All Day
21	Executive Committee	8:00 am
25	Board of Directors	8:00 am
25	Legislative Committee	3:00 pm
Chamber Office		
Cherokee Springs Golf Course		
Chamber Office		
Chamber Office		
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