

Happy Thanksgiving!

The Newkirk Herald Journal

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NHJ Briefs

Bake sale

Newkirk Stepp Up and Masonic Lodge #88 will host a bake sale 8 a.m. (Wednesday, Nov. 22) in the courthouse basement.

Testing meeting

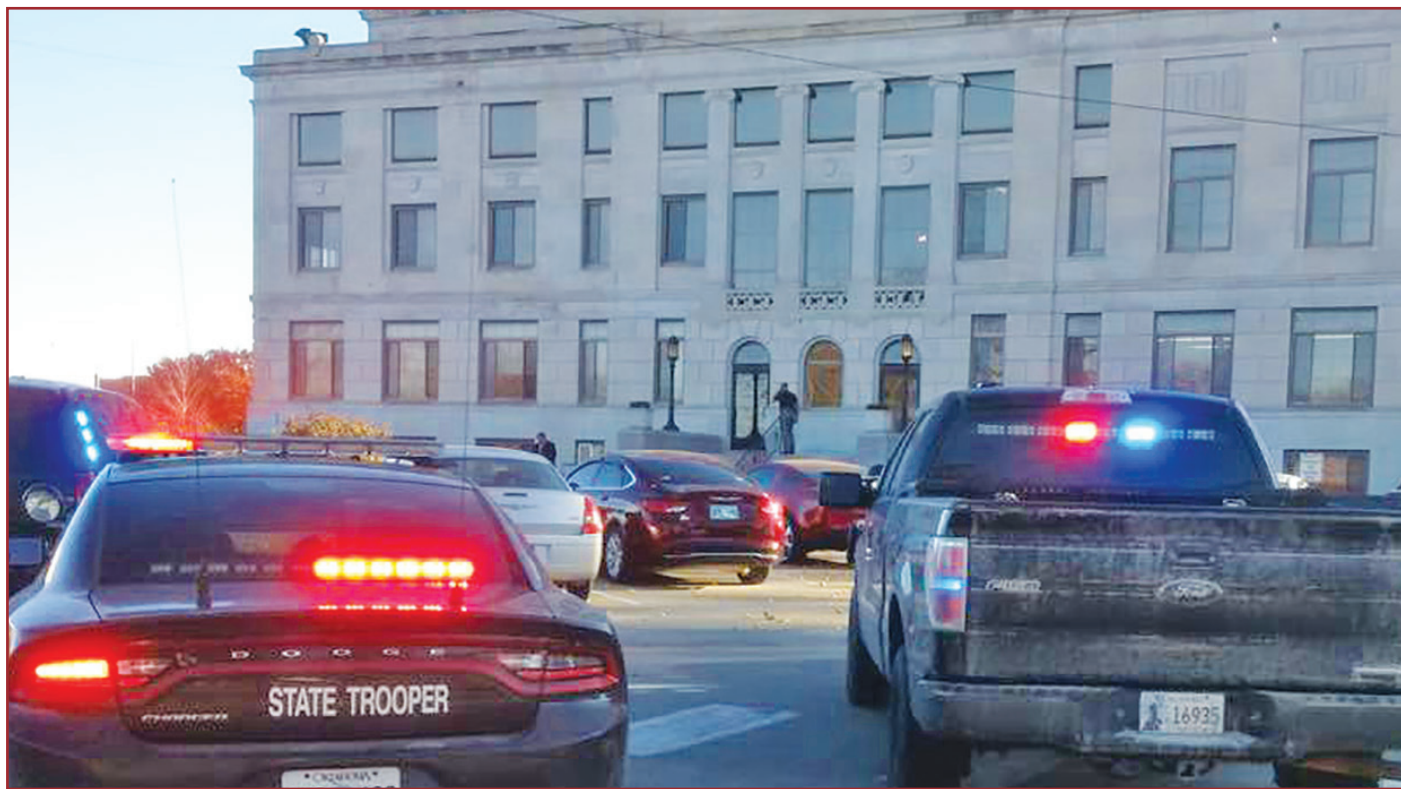
A second public meeting to discuss the proposed chemical testing at Chilocco is tentatively planned for 6 p.m. Wednesday at the Newkirk Senior Citizens Center

Register for Christmas parade

The Chamber of Commerce will sponsor the 2017 Christmas Parade at 6 p.m. Dec. 6.

Entry forms are available at the chamber office, by calling (580) 362-2155 or by email at newkirk-chamber@att.net.

Bomb threat clears courthouse



By Cody Griesel
NHJ Editor

The Kay County courthouse was evacuated Monday morning after someone phoned in a bomb threat at the building.

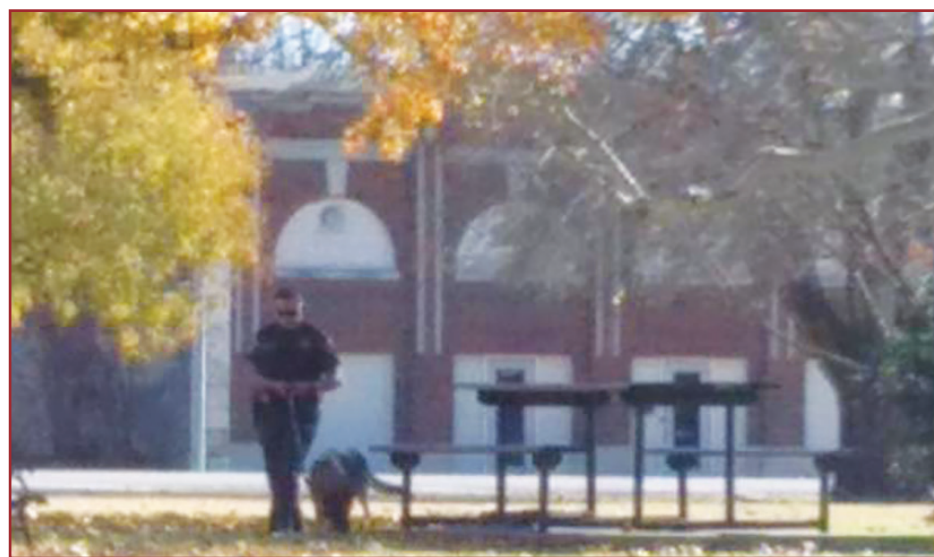
Dean Allen Utslerer, 34, of Ponca City, was identified as the suspect shortly after noon and was taken into custody, according to the Kay County Sheriff's Office.

Officials said they were able to determine Utslerer was a suspect from information gathered from the call. Utslerer gave authorities a full confession after he was taken into custody and was booked into the Kay County jail, according to a sheriff Steve Kelley.

He is being held at the county jail on complaints of terroristic threats.

The court house, along with the Mark Branch Field House and a few other businesses near the court house, were evacuated or asked to be evacuated by sheriff's deputies around 9 a.m.

(See Threat, Page 2)



Meetings, court delayed

ABOVE: Law enforcement vehicles surround the Kay County courthouse Monday morning following a bomb threat. The county commission meeting was interrupted, along with court proceeds due to the scare.

Sniffing things out

LEFT: A bomb-detection dogssearches the courthouse grounds along with staff from an Oklahoma City bomb squad. (Photos provided by Sharon Rowen, Ponca City News)

Citizens asked to help plan new walking trail

Group to walk route Tuesday night

Press Release

A group of Newkirk citizens gathered on Nov. 15 to discuss the possibility of applying for an Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) grant that would provide funding through the Oklahoma Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS).

This unique safety program was created in an effort to substantially improve the ability of primary and middle school students to walk and bicycle to school safely. The program makes funding available for a wide variety of programs and projects, from building safer street crossings to establishing programs that encourage children and their parents to safely walk and bicycle to school.

The group also discussed the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The Oklahoma Department of Transportation is seeking projects outside of the Oklahoma City and Tulsa urbanized areas that could be funded with available (TAP) funds. Local governments with population of 0-5,000 are in their own category.

The Transportation Alternative Program provides federal funds through a competitive selection process for transportation-related activities and cannot be used for routine highway and bridge maintenance activities. A Transportation Alternative is any activity related to surface transportation that fits one or more of 10 categories. One of the categories includes pedestrian and bicycle facilities including sidewalks, walkways or curb ramps.

Jenny Creech, Healthy Living Program coordinator with OSU Prevention Programs and Hannah Cross, made presen-

(See Trail, Page 3)

Petition against Chilocco testing grows swiftly

Meeting planned again at Newkirk Senior Center

By Cody Griesel
NHJ Editor

A petition protesting against planned chemical testing at the former Chilocco Indian School campus neared the 9,000 signature mark Monday afternoon.

The petition, Stop Chemical testing at Chilocco, was created in response to the recent announcement made by the Department of Homeland Security that the organization planned to test components of simulated biological and chemical warfare at that location.

Several public meetings have also been held in Newkirk and Arkansas City — including a second meeting scheduled Wednesday night at the Newkirk Senior Citizens Center — to discuss the proposed testing. The Newkirk City commission also has discussion of issue on its agenda for the Nov. 27 meeting. The



Public forum

Public meetings were held in Newkirk and Arkansas City last week allowing members of the public to discuss the proposed chemical testing at Chilocco. No one representing the Department of Homeland Security or UML attended either meeting. ABOVE: About 100 people attended the meeting held in Ark City. (Photo provided by John Shelman, Cowley County Courier/Traveler)

commission will likely decide to issue a formal response to DHS during the 30-day public comment period, which ends Dec. 8.

The testing has been a hot topic across the state and southern Kansas and has at-

tracted the attention of numerous media outlets in that area. Protesters also gathered at the entrance to Chilocco during an impromptu event last weekend. Several involved in that events have said they will demonstrate again, and

that they have people who are "not afraid to take direct action and be arrested if needed?"

Only one major voice has spoken in favor of the federal government's testing at

(See Meeting, Page 2)



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ODOT releases holiday travel advisory for state roads

The following construction projects will impact travel on major highways and interstates Wednesday through Sunday. For turnpike information contact the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority at (405) 425-3600 or visit pikepass.com. For daily traffic advisories next week, visit www.odot.org and follow @OKDOT on Twitter and Facebook.

STATEWIDE

I-40 narrowed to one lane near Elk City, Beckham Co.

I-40 is narrowed to one lane in each direction between SH-34 South (mm 32) and E. 7th St. (mm 40) near Elk City for resurfacing and bridge rehabilitation.

I-40 lanes shifted near Shawnee, Pottawatomie Co.

East and westbound I-40 lanes are shifted just west of US-177/US-270 (mm 181) near Shawnee for bridge reconstruction.

US-69 narrowed to one lane in Checotah, McIntosh Co.

US-69 is narrowed to one lane in each direction at US-266 in Checotah for bridge rehabilitation.

US-69 narrowed to one lane in McAlester, Pittsburg Co.

US-69 is narrowed to one lane in each direction at Wade Watts Ave. in McAlester for interchange construction. Drivers should also be alert to new on- and off-ramp and frontage road configurations in the area.

US-69 narrowed to one lane at Indian Nation Turnpike near McAlester, Pittsburg Co.

US-69 will be intermittently narrowed to one lane in each direction between the Indian Nation Turnpike and the US-69B junction in McAlester for a pavement project.

SH-8 narrowed to one lane near Burlington, Alfalfa Co.

SH-8 is narrowed to one lane with a temporary signal directing traffic one mile north of SH-11 near Burlington

for bridge reconstruction.

SH-152 narrowed to one lane near Elk City, Beckham/Washita Co.

SH-152 is narrowed to one lane with a temporary signal and flaggers directing traffic four miles east of SH-6 near Elk City for bridge rehabilitation.

SH-48 narrowed to one lane near Durant, Bryan Co.

SH-48 is narrowed to one lane with a temporary signal directing traffic about three miles north of SH-22, north of Durant for bridge rehabilitation.

SH-109 closed near Hugo, Choctaw Co.

SH-109 is closed one mile east of US-271, south of Hugo for bridge replacement. Drivers must use an alternate route.

SH-17A closed at I-35 near Wynnewood, Garvin Co.

The SH-17A bridge over I-35 near Wynnewood is closed for bridge rehabilitation. Traffic is detoured to SH-29 and US-77.

US-259 narrowed to one lane near Big Cedar, LeFlore Co.

US-259 is narrowed to one lane with a temporary signal directing traffic one mile south of Big Cedar for bridge reconstruction.

SH-33 lanes shifted in Guthrie, Logan Co.

Drivers should be alert to traffic shifts on SH-33 at Cottonwood Creek, just west of US-77 in Guthrie for bridge reconstruction.

SH-32 narrowed to one lane near Marietta, Love Co.

SH-32 is narrowed to one lane with a temporary signal directing traffic four miles west of I-35 near Marietta for highway and bridge reconstruction.

SH-32 closed near Kingston, Marshall Co.

SH-32 is closed one mile east of US-377 near Kingston for bridge replacement. Traffic is detoured to US-70 and US-377.

SH-10 closed near Miami, Ottawa Co.

SH-10 is closed five miles east of the Will Rogers Turnpike at the Spring River near Miami for bridge replacement. Traffic is detoured to SH-137 or SH-125 and US-60.

SH-2 narrowed to one lane near Antlers, Pushmataha Co.

SH-2 is narrowed to one lane with a temporary signal directing traffic about eight miles north of SH-3 near Antlers.

US-412 narrowed to one lane near Inola, Rogers Co.

US-412 is narrowed to one lane in each direction at the Verdigris River west of Inola for bridge rehabilitation.

OKLAHOMA CITY METRO

I-235 shifted at N. 36th St.

North and southbound I-235 is shifted between the I-44 interchange and N. 36th St. Motorists should use SH-74 (Lake Hefner Parkway), I-44, I-35, I-40 and Lincoln Blvd. when possible as alternate routes and allow additional time while driving in this area. Drivers also can expect the following closures:

- The N. 50th St. bridge over I-235 is closed
- The southbound I-235 on-ramp from N. 50th St. is closed

Lindsey St. lanes in Norman shifted

Drivers can expect lane shifts, narrowed lanes and flaggers on Lindsey St. between 24th Ave. S.W. and Berry Rd. for an ongoing City of Norman project. For more information, contact the City of Norman at 405-366-5396.

I-240 narrows near Santa Fe Ave.; Shields Blvd., S.E. 82nd St. ramps closed

Drivers can expect the following

lane and ramp closures as part of I-35/I-240 Crossroads interchange reconstruction:

- Eastbound I-240 is narrowed to two lanes between Santa Fe Ave. (mm 3A) and I-35 (mm 4A)
- The southbound I-35 off-ramp to S.E. 82nd St. is permanently closed. Drivers should use the I-35 off-ramp to S.E. 89th St.
- The eastbound I-240 on-ramp from Shields Blvd. is permanently closed. Drivers should use the on-ramp at Santa Fe Ave.
- The eastbound I-240 Service Rd. (S.E. 74th St.) is narrowed to one lane between Shields Blvd. and S.E. 82nd St.

N.W. 23rd St. narrowed at I-44

The N.W. 23rd St. bridge over I-44 is narrowed to one lane in each direction. Additionally, the following traffic restrictions will be in place:

- Eastbound I-44 off-ramp to N.W. 23rd St./N. Grand Blvd. traffic will not be able to make a left turn onto the N.W. 23rd St. bridge.
- Westbound I-44 off-ramp traffic to N.W. 23rd St./N.W. Grand Blvd. will only be able to turn right onto N.W. 23rd St. from the ramp.

S.W. 3rd St. closed at Shields/E.K. Gaylord

S.W. 3rd St. remains closed at the E.K. Gaylord Blvd. intersection for ongoing OKC Boulevard work.

TULSA METRO

US-412/US-64 narrowed, ramps closed at SH-151

As part of a bridge replacement project, delays can be expected and drivers should plan ahead for extra travel time in this corridor, which is just north of the Keystone Dam.

- The left lanes of east and westbound US-412/US-64 are closed at the SH-151 junction.
- The westbound US-412/US-64 on-ramp from northbound SH-151 and the westbound US-412/US-64 off-ramp to southbound SH-151 are closed

• During the on-going ramp closures, drivers should consider an alternate route such as SH-51, SH-97 and US-412/US-64.

I-44 narrowed at I-244 western split

As part of a bridge rehabilitation project, significant delays can be expected, especially during peak travel times:

- All lanes of 38th W. Ave. are closed under I-44.
- The right lane of eastbound I-44 is closed at the I-44/I-244 western split.

I-44 shifted at 145th E. Ave.

As part of an ongoing bridge replacement and widening project, drivers should use caution as traffic adjusts to the new configuration on east and westbound I-44 near 145th E. Avenue.

SH-11 closed at Hominy Creek near Sperry

SH-11 is closed at Hominy Creek north of Sperry for bridge replacement. Traffic is detoured to SH-20, US-75 and SH-11.

US-169 narrowed at 31st St. South

Drivers can expect various lane closures on southbound US-169 between 31st St. South and 41st St. South for pavement work and should expect significant delays, especially during peak travel times.

I-244 narrowed between Harvard Ave. and Memorial Dr.; city streets narrowed, closed

As part of a bridge rehabilitation project, delays can be expected in the following areas:

- The left lane of westbound I-244 is closed at Memorial Dr.
- The right lane of eastbound I-244 is closed at Harvard Ave. and the left lane of eastbound I-244 is closed at Memorial Dr.
- North and southbound Memorial Dr., Yale Ave. and Harvard Ave. are each narrowed to one lane in each direction over I-244.

Meeting

From Page 1

Chilocco, stating that the testing is not going to be harmful and will be a good thing for emergency services in the event of an actual chemical or biological attack.

Cowley County City/County Health Department director Tom Langer said that the chemicals released during spring pasture burning are far more likely to harm humans and animals than the inert substances DHS plans to use.

"I'm far more concerned about harm to the environment done when we all set half the state on fire each spring," Langer said. "This is really nothing to be scared of

... if you don't understand the terminology and type of testing being done, it would be a scary thing."

Three weeks ago, DHS announced its plans to conduct outdoor testing at Chilocco that will include a low-level release of inert chemical and biological simulant materials during the early months of 2018 and later that summer. DHS also invited the public to comment on the environmental assessment during a 30-day open comment period that ends Dec. 8.

The study is aimed at determining how well biological

agents will penetrate into single- and multi-family structures. The study is expected to help predict how well those agents work under various conditions by measuring the amount of the inert chemicals that penetrate the buildings.

The 58-page impact statement study posted by DHS has raised as many questions for the public as it has answered — even raising concerns more in some cases.

The tests have sparked a grassroots movement in Newkirk and Ark City, with several individuals devoting large amounts of time and effort studying the information

provided by the study, organizing meetings and developing the online petition.

At the meeting held last week Newkirk resident Britny Smith present a lengthy presentation covering the environmental study released by the government and explained several aspects of the Chilocco campus and the chemicals planned for the test.

"I don't care how safe, inert or harmless they claim these chemicals are — we don't want this stuff where we live, raise our families, grow crops and farm livestock," Smith said. "Any substance is harmful in large enough quantities."

The 58-page draft of the environmental assessment is available at www.dhs.gov/national-environmental-policy-act. To submit a comment on the study, no later than

Dec. 8, email biotest@hgdhs.gov, or mail comments to S&T CBD Mail Stop 0201, 245 Murray Ln SW, Washington, DC 20528-0201.

Threat

From Page 1

A bomb detection unit from Oklahoma City was deployed to the court house and searched the building with the aid of bomb-detecting dogs. The court house was finally cleared and reopened to the public shortly after noon.

The Kay County commission meeting, which began at 9 a.m., and some court proceedings were disrupted because of the bomb threat.

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Food, Homes Decorated for the
Holidays, Horse drawn
Wagon Rides and Lots &
Lots of Shopping!*

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