

# Happy New Year!

# The Newkirk Herald Journal

Volume 125, No. 20 • 50¢ • 8 Pages • USPS 384-180 • www.newkirkherald.com • Hometown of Raymond Rimons Serving The Newkirk Community Since 1893 • Thursday, Dec. 28, 2017

## NHJ Briefs

### Citizen of the year sought

The Newkirk Chamber of Commerce is taking nominations for the 2018 Citizen of the Year. Ballot boxes and cards are available at Equity Bank, the chamber office and Main Street bakery. Nominations are due by Jan. 10. The winner will be announced during the chamber banquet Jan. 16.

### County court house closed

The Kay County Court House will be closed Jan. 1 in observance of New Year's Day.

### NHJ subscription information

Many of the Newkirk Herald Journal readers are aware that some of our departmental duties are shared with the Arkansas City office. One of those is the circulation department. The portion of the operation that ensures you receive your paper each week, the printing of the mailing labels, is performed at the Courier-Traveler office. The notice that your subscription is expiring is done in the Newkirk office and then shared with the Courier-Traveler.

With the increase in postal rates and more responsibilities given to the person in charge of the notices, we no longer send second notices. The one notice sent gives the expiration date of your subscription. When the renewal is not received within 60 days of the due date the subscription will be discontinued.

For more information, call (580) 362-2140, or email [circulation@newkirkherald.com](mailto:circulation@newkirkherald.com).

## New Man On the Beat



### Owen hits the street

James Owen is the newest officer hired by the Newkirk Police Department. He began duty last week. (Cody Griesel photo)

## Newkirk hires new police officer

By Cody Griesel  
NHJ Editor

The Newkirk Police Department's newest hire may be a familiar face to many. James Owen, who began work with the NPD last week, is a veteran of the Newkirk Fire Department and had previously served as a

Newkirk police officer, along with his work as a Kay County drug court officer.

"I'm really excited to be working as a Newkirk officer again," Owen said. "I've always wanted to work in law enforcement and it is a big part of my life as well as my

(See Owen, Page 3)

## Feds drop testing

By Cody Griesel  
and  
David Allen Seaton  
Winfield Publishing  
Company

The Department of Homeland Security announced last week they would suspend the planned chemical testing at Chilocco and begin a search for another location of the project.

"It's a big relief," city manager Jane Thomas said. "A lot of citizens were concerned about it."

The DHS announced its plans to conduct the testing via a legal notice sent to the NHJ in November. The announcement sparked a number of public protests and meetings in both Newkirk and Arkansas City. A 30-day public comment period drew numerous public comments opposed to the testing and fears of possible environmental damages caused by tests.

The Department of Homeland Security said it received many public comments objecting to the proposed tests, which were slated to start early in 2018.

"Based on the comments received from tribes, states, and local governments, as

well as the concerns expressed from residents in the proposed test area, DHS is suspending plans to perform the proposed tests," the department said in an email last week. "While the work remains very important for the security of our nation, further evaluation will be conducted to identify the best location for future testing."

The testing would have researched how biological agents might penetrate residential buildings in case of an attack, and would be done with a lab company based in Ponca City that has leased land at the former Native American campus between Newkirk and Arkansas City.

But loud opposition to the testing erupted after the public found out through newspaper articles. Critics held meetings and protests, and circulated an online petition that one opponent said received more than 10,000 names.

The council of five tribes that owns Chilocco last week came out against the testing, saying that they were not properly informed and the plans violate the lease. One tribe even said it had been misled about the plans.

(See Test Page 3)

## A look back at 2017

By Cody Griesel  
NHJ Editor

The past year has been one of change for Newkirk. Let's take a look back at some of the top news stories from 2017.

Probably the biggest news — and an item that brought Newkirk national attention — was the announcement of chemical testing at the former Chilocco Indian School campus by the Department of Homeland Security. The news went from a simple legal notice submitted to the NHJ to a hot topic across the spectrum of media venues. The most recent development was the decision by DHS to pull the plug on the planned tests and seek another location. The public expressed their concerns and those in power listened to them.

Another big news item for Newkirk was the purchase of Eastman National Bank by Equity Bank and the subsequent name change. Eastman National had been a part of the community for nearly as long as the community had been in existence. Many folks are still adjusting to the name change — the institution is still commonly referred to as "Eastman National" — but, most of the familiar faces are still behind the counter ready to serve patrons. On the upside, the new owners did fix the clock outside the bank that had been non-functional for years.

The past year was also one of new faces in new places — especially for the Newkirk public school system. Kevin Engle took the spot as the high school principal, and 2017 was coach Sam

(See 2017, Page 3)



### Winning design

Austin Huster won this year's design contest for the Tiger Pride yearbook. (Hannah Ewy photo)

## Huster wins yearbook design contest

By Shelby Bliss  
Newkirk High School

Newkirk High School junior Austin Huster was the winner of the \$100 cash prize for the best design of the 2018 Tiger Pride yearbook cover contest. The contest, which was open to students in grades fifth through 12th, asked students to design the 2018 yearbook cover using the theme, "Small School, Big Dreams."

Several students sent in different designs, but Huster's design, which depicted the façade of the high school with different characters dreaming about their bright futures, was chosen as the concept cover design.

Huster cited several inspirations, includ-

ing financial incentive, for entering the contest.

"The money at first, but then I thought it would be a great way to promote school spirit."

The yearbook staff will be working with Jostens yearbook to finish the cover and Huster's design will be in production for everyone to purchase. The 2018 Tiger Pride yearbook is available for \$35 and includes 16 more pages, and for the first time since 1996, will include both the middle and high school campuses. For more information, or to order a copy of the 2018 Tiger Pride yearbook, go to [goo.gl/ozjxQb](http://goo.gl/ozjxQb), or click on the "2018 Yearbook Information" link on the Newkirk High School webpage.

## NHJ Weather

### LAST WEEK'S WEATHER

Temperature	Precipitation		
Day	High	Low	Avg. Total
Tuesday:	39	21	33
Wednesday:	48	27	35
Thursday:	50	39	42
Friday:	43	33	37
Saturday:	40	29	35
Sunday:	39	28	34
Monday:	30	21	26

Precipitation Total To Date.....2017: 46.24 2016: 36.57

Official Weather Report Courtesy of the  
Newkirk Mesonet Reporting Station

Send us your  
news!

Call 362-2140  
or email  
[news@newkirkherald.com](mailto:news@newkirkherald.com)



facebook

Like Us

[www.facebook.com/newkirkheraldjournal](http://www.facebook.com/newkirkheraldjournal)



Follow Us

[www.twitter.com/newkirkherald](http://www.twitter.com/newkirkherald)



## Commissioner Anthony urges quick action to return ratepayer money

### Press Release

Oklahoma public utility ratepayers could see a \$100 million benefit under the new Tax Cuts and Jobs Act just passed by the U.S. Congress. But unless regulators act, that benefit could go to the utility rather than customers. The new law goes into effect January 1.

The National Association of Regulatory Utility Com-

missioners (NARUC) latest monthly bulletin addresses this issue in a column reproduced below.

“Immediate Action Required to Protect Ratepayers”

By Oklahoma Corporation Commissioner Bob Anthony

It’s déjà vu for those of us from all 50 states who remember the Tax Reform Act of 1986 that lowered the federal corporate income tax

rate from 46 percent to 34 percent. This time however, regulators must act immediately to avoid retroactive ratemaking and deal with a January 1, 2018, effective date for the currently proposed federal corporate income tax legislation dropping rates from 35 percent to 21 percent.

Regulators know public utility rates include a component for federal income

taxes. If new legislation significantly decreases income tax expense paid by regulated utilities to the federal government, shouldn’t ratepayers therefore get lower rates? Can single-issue ratemaking be used? How should State utility commissions address the ratemaking implications of the new legislation? Potentially, all public utility ratepayers could benefit, including low-income

utility customers.

The Tax Reform Act of 1986 lowered federal corporate income tax rates, modified depreciation provisions and otherwise changed the ways corporate taxes were calculated, resulting in substantial income tax savings for utilities. Many state regulators took timely action to ensure the savings were immediately passed on to utility ratepayers.

In Oklahoma, the Commission staff entered into separate settlement agreements with many utilities to change the status of rates from permanent to temporary rates, and the Commission entered orders adopting those settlements. This allowed the Commission time to determine tax savings while ensuring those savings would not be retained by the utilities.

### 2017

From Page 1

Powers first season as the Tiger’s head football coach. Brady Barnes also had his contract ratified as the district’s superintendent.

Oh, and no roundup story of 2017 would be complete without mentioning the passage of the bond issue early in the year. Newkirk school officials hope to redo that effort with another bond question going to vote in the coming months.

Local politics were not immune to change during the past year. Many mourned the loss of noted community member and Kay County commissioner Vance Johnson. Johnson was known for his chuckwagon cooking and owned and operated the Stage Coach Bar-B-Q. His passing required a special election to fill his District 1 seat, won by Jack Godbersson.

Newkirk mayor Kirk Brown made

a return to politics — with some initial reluctance — to fill the empty mayor’s seat. Brown had served on the commission and commissioners Jack Bagg and Derek Cassidy, along with city manager Jane Thomas, welcomed his return.

Another longtime part of the Newkirk community, Karen Dye, announced her plans to retire from her position as director of Newkirk Main

Street at the end of the year. Dye said she has no plans on leaving public scene in Newkirk, and said she hopes to have more time to work on her various historical projects. She plans to continue her work for Albright’s Abstract and Title Company, along with her historical contributions to the NHJ.

A few other highlights of 2017 included, the bomb threat called

in at the Kay County Courthouse (the suspect was arrested within a short time of the incident), the solar eclipse that attracted the attention of many in the community, plans for an amphitheater on the court house lawn, plans for a walking/bike trail through Newkirk and former NHJ editor Scott Cloud leaving for his new position at Northern Oklahoma College.

### Tests

From Page 1

Congressman Ron Estes, R-Wichita, said he spoke to the DHS secretary about the agency’s failure to properly communicate to the public.

“The safety of south-central Kansans has been my priority during this process, and I commend the Department of Homeland Security for listening to our concerns,” he said.

Leading critic Brittny Smith called the news awesome and a big win for opponents. She thinks the tribes’ opposition is what led DHS to stop its plans.

“Our voices were heard, and when the tribes agreed that the testing shouldn’t be performed at Chilocco, I think DHS listened, finally,” said Smith, a Kaw Nation member and Newkirk resident.

Smith there were several

trust issues about how the public was informed and about the plans.

“They’re telling us it’s safe, it’s fine, but when they’re contradicting themselves, it makes you not trust what their saying,” she said.

Arkansas City resident Jill Wineinger, another leading opponent, said she was very happy about the decision.

“I’m glad it was brought to the public’s attention and that the government listened to the people,” she said.

Kansas state Sen. Larry Alley, R-Winfield, credited public reaction to DHS’s plans to scrap the testing.

“I think it’s a good thing,” Alley said. “I think they (DHS) didn’t do all their homework

and they rushed into something.”

U.S. Senator Jerry Moran, R-Kansas, released the following statement last Thursday regarding the decision:

“I am pleased that the De-

partment of Homeland Security listened to the concerns of Kansans and made the decision to suspend its plans to conduct chemical and biological tests near the Kansas border. Prior to any sort of

chemical testing — hazardous or not — the federal government must make certain local residents understand its intended objective when it conducts any testing of this nature. While the chemicals DHS

planned to use in these tests do not pose any bodily harm, Kansans deserve a thorough explanation when an event of this magnitude is occurring so close to where they live and raise their families.”

### Owen

From Page 1

family having a lot of involvement in the field.”

Newkirk police chief Dennis Bradley said he was glad Owen applied for the open position, that now brings the department up to its current full-staffed level.

“I’m really happy he wanted to be an officer here,” Bradley said. “He’s a great guy and will make a great officer for the department.”

Owen’s first morning on the job was somewhat exciting. He issued a warning to a driver that ran a stop sign and was nearly in an accident, and issued a citation to a driver exceeding 50 mph in a 35 mph speed zone.

“Yeah, that guy got a real ticket,” Owen said.



Because There’s So Much to Celebrate...

# Please Don't Drink & Drive.

Your health is important. Your friends and family are precious. Your reputation is valuable. Your freedom is priceless. Life is irreplaceable. When you decide to drink and drive, you risk it all. Respect yourself and others by committing to a sober ride home this New Year’s Eve.

### The Choice Is Yours.

1. Be a designated driver.
2. Make plans with a designated driver.
3. Reserve a ride home with a car service.
4. Call a taxi service.
5. Make overnight plans.
6. Attend an alcohol-free celebration.

These community sponsors urge you to celebrate responsibly for a safe and happy New Year!

**LISA KUBIK,**  
CPA  
106 N. Main  
362-6275

**Eisenhauer**  
Insurance Agency  
106 S. Main  
Newkirk, OK  
580-362-2573



KAY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE  
P.O. BOX 607 Blackwell, Okla. 74631  
1-800-535-1079 www.kayelectric.coop  
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

**TWO RIVERS**  
COOP  
116 E. 6th Street  
580-362-2109

**SECURITY**  
ABSTRACT COMPANY  
124 S. Main - Newkirk  
580-362-2502

**Butler Trucking,**  
LLC  
629 S. Plum St.  
Newkirk, OK  
580-362-2900

**G&B Auto Service**  
228 N. Main Street

**FRONTIER PRESS PRINTS**  
Perfect gift for printing press enthusiasts!  
Beautiful, full color 19" x 26" prints.

An Interview	Job Printer
The Reporter	Politics
The Editor	Washington Hand Press
The Engraver	The Typesetter

Full set of 8 \$350; individual prints \$50.  
To view all prints and place your order, visit: [www.OkPress.com/Frontier-Press](http://www.OkPress.com/Frontier-Press)

**House to House**  
community Bible study

**Effective Prayer a discussion study**  
Week 1 Jan 2 - Assumptions Necessary To Prayer

A nondenominational Bible study. We meet every Tuesday at 6:00PM in the church of Christ fellowship hall 328 N. Main St. Newkirk, OK

**Please come and share your thoughts.**  
580.362.3691 or 361.205.3686