



Eskimo Joe's co-founder marks 50th anniversary in Stillwater

NEWS, 4A

THE OKLAHOMAN

MONDAY, JULY 14, 2025 | OKLAHOMAN.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

FINDING COMMON GROUND



Tribal Flag Plaza is pictured Oct. 31, 2023, north of the Capitol in Oklahoma City. DOUG HOKE/THE OKLAHOMAN

Meet four Native state officials who bridge gaps between governments

Kayden Anderson The Oklahoman | USA TODAY NETWORK

In a time when tribal and state affairs are tense in Oklahoma, some state officials try to bridge the gaps between the governments. ● Native Americans in Oklahoma government positions help maintain relationships between state and tribal officials through times of conflict and collaboration. ● Gov. Kevin Stitt, himself a member of the Cherokee Nation, has long clashed with tribes, especially over such issues as taxes, gaming and the landmark McGirt v. Oklahoma decision, which was handed down five years ago this month. The U.S. Supreme Court ruling has led to the recognition of tribal reservations across much of eastern Oklahoma, meaning the state cannot prosecute Native Americans accused of crimes that happen on this land.

See NATIVE OFFICIALS, Page 10A

Another forecasting tool is scrapped

Dinah Voyles Pulver
USA TODAY

The heart-wrenching July 4 flooding in Texas served as a stark reminder of the importance of accurate and timely weather forecasts. As extreme rainfall events grow more intense, such tragedies are expected to increase. Further improvement to forecasts is critical, but meteorologists worry that with the additional cuts planned by the Trump administration, the nation's weather and climate research programs won't be able to keep up. The latest blow was the announcement by the U.S. Navy that it would no longer transmit data from aging satellites past June 30, roughly 15 months earlier than expected. Later, the department extended the deadline to July 31. Without those satellite images, hurricane forecast accuracy could be com-

promised, say current and former scientists with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Polar researchers, who use the images to measure the extent of sea ice, hope to acquire the same data through a Japanese government satellite instead. In any other year, the satellite snafu might not have gathered much attention. But this summer, it exacerbates mounting concerns about the accuracy of weather prediction amid contract cancellations, staff reductions and other Trump administration efforts to reduce the federal bureaucracy. "You can't keep taking tools away from people and expect them to get the same result," said Andy Hazelton, a hurricane scientist at the University of Miami. Hazelton had been hired as a NOAA scientist last October and was dismissed in the Trump administration's widespread agency layoffs.

USA TODAY interviewed more than a dozen industry veterans, including a half-dozen former NOAA scientists, as well as independent researchers, who all fear that forecasts for hurricanes and other extreme weather events may become less accurate and that efforts to monitor the warming climate could be disrupted. The flash flood deaths in Texas on Independence Day weekend are not being blamed on poor forecasts, but weather scientists say the tragedy is emblematic of what can happen when forecasts become less accurate. They cite several concerning developments, including: ● Hundreds of probationary employees were laid off and incentive packages sent hundreds more to early retirement, creating staffing short-

See WEATHER DATA, Page 2A

Edmond Walmart plan back to council

Richard Mize
The Oklahoman
USA TODAY NETWORK

EDMOND — Sometimes, Walmart barges its way in, but if it manages to put a Neighborhood Market in at Covell and Coltrane roads, it will be after something more like a 10-year legal dogfight. The city council, again, will consider an appeal of the city Planning Commission's rejection of a site plan for a 43,686-square-foot grocery store at the intersection at the July 14 meeting. A crowd of opponents, again, is expected to fill the new council chambers at 22 E. Main St. The meeting starts at 5:30 p.m. Attorney David Box, representing the Edmond developer, The Tapp Cos., will be there, too, again asserting Tapp's case for approving the store, arguing like he's in court. He did so succinctly before the Planning Commission on June 17, to no avail. He'd done

See EDMOND, Page 7A

Pot farm brothel boss sentenced to 20 years

Nolan Clay
The Oklahoman
USA TODAY NETWORK

The boss of a brothel for Oklahoma's pot farms has been sentenced to 20 years in prison for sex trafficking. "I'm so sorry," Feng Jiang said through a translator at his sentencing July 11. "I have never hurt anybody. I never forced them to do anything." Oklahoma County District Judge Cindy Truong chose the punishment. Jiang, 46, pleaded no contest in June to two counts of human trafficking for commercial sex. He pleaded guilty to one count of possession of proceeds from unlawful activity. He had faced up to life in prison. Prosecutors sought a sentence of 10 years in prison and 10 years on

See TRAFFICKING, Page 2A



Marijuana plants at the HotStar Farm LLC in Jennings were seized July 11. PROVIDED BY OKLAHOMA BUREAU OF NARCOTICS AND DANGEROUS DRUGS CONTROL

