OHS Kids! Student Art Contest winners announced in November

The winners of the OHS Kids! Student Art Contest, which began on September 1, were selected during the first week of November. This year’s theme was “Oklahoma Symbols.” The contest was open to grades 1–3 and 4–6. First-, second-, and third-place prizes were awarded in each category. In addition, the teachers of the first-place winners will also receive a prize. A total of 748 students, attending schools in every part of Oklahoma, submitted entries.

The winners in grades 1–3 are: in First Place, Echo Foster, of Walters, age 7; in Second Place, Emma Childers, of Tahlequah, age 8, and in Third Place, Adhya Kumar, of Edmond, age 8. Taking the prizes in grades 4–6 are: in First Place, Michael Croy, of Piedmont, age 11; in Second Place, Kylee Vaughan, of Stilwell, age 11; and in Third Place, Tess Childers, of Tahlequah, age 11.

The first-place winner in each category received a one-year Oklahoma Historical Society Family Membership, an Oklahoma History Center T-Shirt, and an Oklahoma Symbols Coloring Book.

Second-place champs got a Family Pass to the Oklahoma History Center, an Oklahoma Symbols Magnet, and an Oklahoma Symbols Coloring Book.

Third-place winners have received a Family Pass to the Oklahoma History Center and an Oklahoma Symbols Coloring Book.

The teachers of the first-place winners get an Oklahoma Symbols prize pack including an Oklahoma Bulletin Board set, an Oklahoma Symbols Projects Book, and also The Big Oklahoma Reproducible Activity Book.

Route 66 Museum enters Clinton Christmas parade

Open house set for December 1

The Route 66 Museum in Clinton kicks off the Holiday Season during Clinton’s Festival of Lights event, scheduled for December 1, 2009. The museum offers free admission and refreshments, and this year the museum will be entering a float in the parade and exhibiting a Christmas tree display and the Route 66 Association’s Photography Contest images.

This year’s float, designed by the museum volunteers, will be pulled by a “classic truck,” a 1966 Dodge. The museum will also enter a 1937 bumper car. The Festival of Lights parade will begin at 7:30 p.m. on Main Street (or Frisco Avenue) in Clinton, Oklahoma.

For the Christmas tree display, various Clinton schools and civic groups will decorate trees in the galleries. Each participating group researches its designated era and then decorates a tree accordingly. Previous years’ creations included a popcorn-garlanded tree of the 1920s, an Elvis tree of the 1950s, and a psychedelic tree of the 1960s. The exhibit will be on view from December 1 to December 31.

In addition to the Christmas tree display, the museum will be exhibiting the entries of the Oklahoma Route 66 Association Photography Contest; all images depict Route 66 sites and events in Oklahoma. While all the entries will be displayed, the exhibit will highlight the eight categorical winners and the overall grand prize winner chosen by local photographers at Blunk’s Studios. This contest is organized by the Oklahoma Route 66 Association, Blunk’s Studios, and Oklahoma Route 66 Museum.

In addition to the open house, the Christmas tree exhibit will require an admission ticket; however, the photography exhibit will be available for viewing in the museum’s Wow! Room, which is free to the public. Fall hours of operation are Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Admission for visitors touring the galleries is $3 for adults, $2.50 for seniors and groups of 10 or more, and $1 for students 6 to 18. Children under age 5 are admitted free.

On the evening of the open house the museum will be open until 9 p.m., with free admission to tour it and refreshments for all who take advantage of this one-night-only event.
By Bob L. Blackburn
Executive Director

In the day-to-day shuttle between daily tasks and looking over the next horizon, it is easy to lose sight of the fundamentals, whether it is one person or an entire organization.

At the Oklahoma Historical Society, where we are juggling the twin tasks of moving ahead under full sail and trimming our sails and looking over the next horizon, it is easy to lose sight of the fundamentals, whether it is one person or an entire organization.

To me, that means collecting, preserving, and sharing the history of Oklahoma and its people. It does not matter who is doing the collecting, preserving, and sharing, as long it is being done and being done well.

With that inclusive approach in mind, we are proposing a new program that will empower our partner organizations around the state to do a better job of collecting, preserving, and sharing. That proposal is a grants-in-aid program for the 140 or more historical museums that are scattered from Boise City to Tahlequah.

In short, we are asking the Oklahoma Legislature to create a fund that will provide annual grants of $25,000 or less to historical museums operated by volunteers around the state. The grants must be matched in cash on a basis of 75 percent to 25 percent, with the 25 percent coming from the grant fund. For example, if the Sand Springs Historical Museum has in hand $75,000 for operations, they can apply for $25,000. If their cash on hand is $7,500, they can ask for $2,500.

In addition to cash, recipients must have regularly scheduled hours of operation, a constitution and by-laws, a board of directors, and a business plan. Some institutions might be run by volunteers; others might have professional staff. All would be eligible if they meet the basic criteria.

Underlying this effort is a belief that local historical organizations are better positioned to collect the history of our families, businesses, schools, communities, and tribes. Through the grants program, the Oklahoma Historical Society could assist with the preservation and sharing of those collections.

At the OHS we do not care who collects or owns the photographs, documents, and artifacts that tell the story of our collective history. We do care that all are collected and treated with the proper professional practices.

During the next three months Whit Edwards and Kathy Dickson will be collecting information about local historical museums that might be eligible for this program. If you know of a group that needs help and fits the basic criteria outlined above, give Whit a call at 405/522-5235 or e-mail him at <wedwards@okhistory.org>. When we start the legislative session, we want to represent each of your communities and improve your ability to collect, preserve, and share history.

Yes, it is easy to lose sight of the fundamentals. Working together, we can make sure our generation does our part in saving Oklahoma history.

Director’s Column

Development News
By Paul F. Lambert

Listed in this issue are new members of the Oklahoma Historical Society who joined in October. It is a long list. In fact, we have had gratifying results in recruiting new members over the past several years, in spite of the downturn in the economy. On behalf of the officers, directors, and staff of the OHS, I want to welcome all of our new members. We appreciate your support. All members should feel free to contact me at 405/522-5217 or <plambert@okhistory.org> if you have any questions regarding membership or development matters.

To my chagrin, our membership development efforts have led to some members receiving a letter of invitation to join. Although we were told by our mailing service that the number of such duplications would be held to a minimum, we are not pleased with the result. We plan to alter our approach in the future to avoid relying on computer screening as this has not worked as effectively as we expected. Meanwhile, I want to apologize to members who have received such letters.

Finally, we are pleased by the reception that our e-newsletter, OHS EXTRa!, has received. As of the first week of November we were sending OHS EXTRa! to almost 2,500 e-mail addresses. If you have recently started receiving the e-newsletter, please note the link that will let you access our archive of previous issues. OHS EXTRa! is mailed every Tuesday except during the weeks of major holidays. If you want to be added to the list of recipients, please e-mail me your e-mail address at <plambert@okhistory.org>, and we will add you to the list!
Meetings

The Oklahoma Genealogical Society will hold its regular monthly meeting on Monday, December 7, 2009, at 6 p.m. in the Chesapeake Events Center inside the Oklahoma History Center, 2401 North Laird Ave., in Oklahoma City. Guest speaker Gregory A. Boyd will present “Finding the Family Farm on Maps” and explain how to use the Arphax Land Plat Map Series. The Oklahoma History Center Research Library will be staffed and remain open until 7:45 p.m. that evening. (Special to ML)

Events

The historic 1879 Murray Lindsay Mansion and the adjacent 1908 Pikes Peak two-room schoolhouse, both located in Lindsay, will be the venue for a Christmas event on December 7, from 1 to 4 p.m. Visitors will enjoy the holiday decorations and planned activities as well as a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus. Refreshments will include finger foods, punch, and hot cider. Admission is free, but photos with Santa will cost $5. For info call 405/756-6502 or 405/756-3849. (Special to ML)

The 2009 Oklahoma City Train Show will be held at the Travel and Transportation Building, Oklahoma State Fairgrounds, on Saturday, December 5, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Sunday, December 6, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is $8; children age twelve and under get in free. Phone 405/842-4846 for additional info. (Special to ML)

The Blaine County Fairgrounds in Watonga will be the venue for Santa’s Village & Holiday Craft Show on December 5. From 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. the entire family can enjoy a large Christmas display for children and browse through more than sixty booths of holiday crafts and gift items. Admission is free. Contact Anita Woodruff at 580/623-4681 or go to <woodruff@watonga.com>. (Special to ML)

Lake Wister State Park is hosting “Lights On the Island” from December 5 through 25. Every evening from 6 to 9 p.m. families can drive through the Christmas light display. Admission is free; however, donations will be accepted. Call Karen Wages at 918/647-9178 for more information. (Special to ML)

A “Festival of Lights” Christmas parade will take place on Main Street in Guymon on Saturday, December 5. Beginning at dark the event will also include Santa’s Workshop, and children can have their picture taken with the jolly man in the red suit. For more information just call 580/338-3376. (Special to ML)

Enjoy ice skating on the Market Square in downtown Durant. The outdoor rink will be open every Saturday and Sunday from December 5 through January 4. Hours vary. On December 5 the rink will be available from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Thereafter, skaters can glide across the ice from 4 to 10 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Beginning December 18 through January 4 the hours will be 1 to 10 p.m. Contact Donna Dow at 580/924-1550 for info. (Special to ML)

The Christmas Train is coming! The Oklahoma Railway Museum, 3400 Northeast Grand Blvd., Oklahoma City, will be running the Christmas Train on Saturday, December 19, from 9 a.m., 10:30 a.m., noon, 1:30 p.m., and 3 p.m. Tickets are $12. To purchase tickets or get more info, telephone 405/424-0504 or go to the website at <oklahomarailwaymuseum.org>. (Special to ML)

Kingfisher County Fairgrounds in Kingfisher is the venue for a Winterfest Craft Show planned for Saturday, December 5, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. More than sixty booths will offer crafts as well as gift and home decor items. Telephone Eva Ryan at 405/375-4533 for details. (Special to ML)

A breakfast with Santa, a Christmas parade, a 1920s lantern tour are scheduled on December 12, in downtown Frederick. The free event will take place from 8 a.m. to noon. After breakfast visitors can watch the parade featuring floats and displays from community groups and organizations. The lantern tour involves a thirty-minute walk through a 1920s rural community. Phone Sharon Bennett at 580/335-2126 for additional information. (Special to ML)

Tulsa’s Chandler Park, located at 6500 West Twenty-first St., will be bright with holiday lights from November 27 through December 27. Open Friday through Sunday from 6 to 9 p.m. families can drive through the park or enjoy a carriage ride. For more info call 918/591-6053. (Special to ML)

Exhibits

The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, 1700 Northeast Sixty-Third St., Oklahoma City, has opened a new exhibit in the Arthur and Shifra Silberman Gallery of Native American Art. Bonita Wa Wa Calachaw Nuñez: Selected Works offers approximately thirty of Luiseño artist Wa Wa Chaw’s pencil drawings as well as examples of her journals and sketchbooks. She was born in 1888 on the Rincon Indian Reservation in southern California. Reared by a prominent physician and his sister in New York City, Wa Wa Chaw became a lecturer, an entertainer, and an activist for Indian and feminist causes. The exhibition will be on display through May 9, 2010. For additional information call 405/478-2250.

It is never too early to start planning New Year’s Eve activities. Some Oklahoma communities have already scheduled events. Pawnee’s Courthouse Square will be the venue for a party with bonfire, music, black-eyed peas, hot chocolate, and a midnight ball drop on December 31. Bill Gosnell at 918/762-2108 is the contact person. The Price Tower, located at 510 Dewey Ave. in Bartlesville, is hosting a New Year’s Eve event from 9 p.m. to 11 p.m. It will feature the lowering of a huge olive down the side of the Price Tower into a big martini glass at midnight. Enjoy live music, food, and drinks. Call Jennifer Cordero at 918/336-4949 for additional information. (Special to ML)
**OHS Holiday Season around the state**

**Pawnee Bill Mansion**
On December 5 the Pawnee Bill Ranch Historic Site in Pawnee will host a Children’s Christmas Story Time and Crafts Hour from 10 to 11 a.m. in the museum conference room. Children will hear stories, eat snacks, and work on crafts projects. Space is limited, and preregistration is required. On December 19 the Pawnee Bill Ranch will have a Holiday Open House and Historic Santas of the World Tour in the Pawnee Bill Mansion. At that time, the Friends of the Pawnee Bill Ranch Association annual meeting will take place. The meeting begins at 11:30 a.m. and will be followed by a meal. Immediately following the meal, the tour of the home will begin. The mansion will be beautifully decorated for the holidays, and from 1 to 3 p.m. reenactors portraying Santa Claus characters from all over the world from different time periods will be stationed in various rooms. Telephone 918/762-2513 for details and directions.

**Cherokee Strip Museum, Perry**
The Cherokee Strip Museum will be decorated for the Christmas season from December 8 through December 31, 2009. The museum specializes in decorating with “Scherenschnitte,” a German technique of cutting paper into fanciful designs. A popular craft, Scherenschnitte produces elaborately cut shelf papers, cards, doilies, and seasonal decorations. Many intricate designs are used throughout the museum to decorate for the holidays. On December 13 from 2 to 5 p.m. the annual Christmas Tea and Open House will be held in conjunction with the town of Perry’s Christmas Tour of Homes. Sunday afternoon provides an opportunity to see unique decorations at the museum and at selected homes in Perry. Call 580/336-2405.

**Drummond Home**
The Friends of the Drummond Home will be hosting their annual Christmas tour of homes in Hominy on Sunday, December 6. Eight local houses will be decorated for the holidays. The public is invited to tour them and view the outstanding seasonal decorations for a nominal fee of $1 per person. At 2 p.m. the Fred Drummond home will feature the Parade of Historic Santa Clauses, in which a number of reenactors will be attired in clothing from different eras and nations. Call 918/885-2374 for details.

**Murrell Home**
The historic Murrell Home at Park Hill will be hosting its Ninth Annual Christmas Open House on Sunday, December 13, from 1 to 5 p.m. Visitors are invited to tour the 1845 mansion and learn about Christmas customs from the mid-Victorian period. The halls will be decked in Christmas fashions of the 1800s. This year’s theme is “Father Christmas through the Years.” More than a dozen reenactors dressed in period costume will represent Santa Claus in different eras. The story of St. Nicholas began around the year 270 A.D. and has taken many twists and turns to become the modern Santa Claus. These vintage historic Santas will represent countries from all around the world, including Russia, Turkey, Holland, Ireland, France, the U.S., and more. Visitors are welcome to take pictures with the historic Santas. Murrell Home is featured this year on the American Association of University Women’s Twenty-eighth Annual “Homes for the Holidays” tour of homes in the Tahlequah area. The AAUW will offer Murrell Home Christmas ornaments for $12.50, and tickets for the Tour of Homes will be available for $5 in advance or $6 at the door. For more information on the AAUW “Homes for the Holidays” tour, contact Irene Wickham at 918/456-5584. A special exhibit of never-before-displayed nineteenth-century items from the Murrell family will also be showcased in the library of the home. The Friends of the Murrell Home will have a silent auction of items to raise money for the historic site’s continued preservation and interpretation. Live music and craft demonstrations will take place all day. The Friends of the Murrell Home and AAUW will sponsor a reception with refreshments. The event is free and open to the public. The museum is located three miles south of Tahlequah at 19479 East Murrell Home Rd. in Park Hill. For more information on Christmas Open House, contact Murrell Home at 918/456-2751 or e-mail them at <murrellhome@okhistory.org>.

**Frank Phillips Home**
In Bartlesville at Frank Phillips Home, on December 13 from 2 to 4 p.m. Santa and Mrs. Santa will greet kids in the Garden Cottage. There is no admission fee. The Santa family are portrayed by OHS reenactors Brandon and Rachel Reid. On December 17 and again on December 21 a reception and open house will be held in the Phillips Home. Guests may wander through the mansion and admire it in its Christmas splendor. Many varied Christmas trees will amaze the children. Father Christmas and his wife will be there for some light conversation. Admission to the open house is $5 for adults; children aged 11 years and under are admitted free of charge. The event begins at 6:30 p.m. on the 17th and 5 p.m. on the 21st and continues until 8:30 p.m. on both nights. Call 918/336-2491 for details.

**Pioneer Woman Museum**
On December 12 the Pioneer Woman Museum in Ponca City will again offer holiday classes. In cooking class, students will learn how to make a Yule log. The centerpiece class will allow each individual to create a holiday centerpiece and take it home. The cost for each session is $30, but if a student signs up for both classes, the total cost will be only $50. Holiday cooking
Sod House Museum
The Sod House Museum in Aline hosts a Christmas Open House on Saturday, December 12, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Come and see the vintage historic Santas and enjoy cookies and spiced tea. According to Renee Mitchell of the Sod House, “The Santa Claus of twentieth-century America is the legacy of Christian tradition, ancient and modern social customs, centuries-old legends, historical facts, and the conceptions of a long line of writers and artists on both sides of the Atlantic. The story of St. Nicholas begins around the year 270, in the ancient city of Lycia in Asia Minor. Since beginning, that story has taken many twists and turns to become our modern Santa Claus.” The Oklahoma Historical Society has developed a program that allows many of these vintage historic Santas to tell their own part of the story. They are dressed authentically from their time period and country of origin. The vintage historic Santas will educate and entertain their audiences and “make a list, check it twice, and find out who is naughty or nice.” As this is a busy time of the year for Santas, one or two of them might not be at the Sod House. Those who might just appear could include Ophelia Noel (1860, France), Irish Santa (1870, Ireland) and his wife, Tundra Santa (1840, mid-America), Tartan Santa (1850, Nova Scotia), as well as others. Come and enjoy a rare visit with the vintage Santas and hear their stories. Located north of Cleo Springs on State Highway 8, the Sod House Museum is operated by the OHS. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information contact Renee Mitchell at 580/463-2441 or e-mail her at sodhouse@okhistory.org.

SHPO to conduct workshops in December
The Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) will hold its annual fall workshop series on December 9-11, 2009, in the classrooms at the Oklahoma History Center. Each workshop is devoted to a SHPO federal preservation program and is designed for preservation professionals, government agency representatives, and concerned citizens. The workshops are free and open to the public, but those interested in attending should register by 5 p.m., Wednesday, December 2. Space is limited.

December 9 (10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.) - Federal and State Tax Incentives for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings
December 9 (1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.) - The Secretary’s Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings
December 10 (10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.) - The Section 106 Review Process: A Workshop for Agency Officials and Cultural Resource Management Consultants
December 11 (10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.) - Working with the National Register of Historic Places
If you have any questions about the workshops’ content, contact Melvena Heisch at 405/522-4484 or at <mheisch@okhistory.org>. To register for any or all of the workshops, contact Betty Harris at 405/521-6249 or <bharris@okhistory.org> by 5 p.m., Wednesday, December 2. You may also register online at <www.okhistory.org/shpo/workshops.php>.

Enjoy Fort Gibson by candlelight on December 12
Fort Gibson Historic Site is taking reservations for the 2009 edition of the Candlelight Tour. The 2009 tour will be presented Saturday, December 12. Admission will be $7, and reservations are required. This year’s production is entitled “Peace On The Plains” and is set in 1835. As headquarters of the southwestern frontier, Fort Gibson played a major role in the government’s effort to remove the Five Civilized Tribes from the Southeast. One very important part of this effort was guaranteeing peace with the tribes that already lived in Indian Territory. From 1832 through 1835 several expeditions went out from the fort attempting to contact the Plains Indian tribes. They eventually succeeded, and this resulted in important treaties of peace and friendship. Although these treaties made the territory a safer place to live, they also cleared the way for the forced removals of thousands of eastern Indians. Visitors will get to see the fort on the eve of the forced removals and hear the views of the officers, enlisted men, government officials, and tribal leaders. Tours will begin at 6 p.m. and continue with groups starting approximately every fifteen minutes. The event ends at 9 p.m. For reservations or details call 918/478-4088 or e-mail <fortgibson@okhistory.org>.

Spiro Mounds winter solstice walk is December 20
The pace of life today is so rushed and hectic that we forget about the natural rhythms of the Sun, Moon, and stars. Native American farmers understood these rhythms. In the rhythm of the Sun, the winter solstice is a period of rest, preparation, and celebration. Come to the Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center on December 20, 2009, and join one of the three guided walks to learn more about the winter solstice and how Native Americans dealt with the changes in the seasons. Archaeologist and manager Dennis Peterson will lead guided tours starting at 11 a.m., 2 p.m., and 7 p.m. He will discuss this unique prehistoric Native American mound site, the types of mounds, why they were created, and why some of the mounds are lined up for the sunsets of the solstices and equinoxes. Each walk will take about two hours and require a mile of easy walking.

For those wishing to see the sunset, the 2 p.m. walk will end just before sunset, which is when the alignment will take place. Come out to experience one of the unique historical sites in the United States, as seen by an archaeologist.

There is a small fee for this series of tours of $3 for adults and $2 for children. No reservations are required except for a big group. Dress warmly for the weather!

The Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center is the only prehistoric Native American site open to the public in Oklahoma and is administered by the Oklahoma Historical Society. Hours are Wednesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. and on Sunday from noon until 5 p.m.; closed on state holidays. Admission, except for special programs, is free. The center is located 3 miles east of Spiro on Highway 9/271 and 4 miles north on Lock and Dam Road. For more information or to schedule a group tour, call 918/962-2062.

OHS Historic Homes
Director Martha Ray admires one of the quilts that resulted from the Sod House Museum’s monthly Quilt Days (Staff photo).
Hidden Collections . . .

The Hannah Atkins Collection
By Larry O’Dell

The Oklahoma Historical Society’s staff becomes very excited when one of the state’s true pioneers chooses our institution to care for some of her precious records. That is the case with the Hannah Atkins Collection (2007.114). In 2005 she donated more than twenty-three cubic feet of material to the OHS. From this assemblage researchers can choose among a plethora of topics to study in the collection, including politics, women’s issues, education, jazz music, and Civil Rights.

Born Hannah Diggs in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, in 1923, Atkins attended Saint Augustine’s College and the University of Chicago before moving to Oklahoma in 1952. She worked as a librarian for the Oklahoma City Public Libraries and then at the Oklahoma State Library. In 1968 Oklahomans elected Atkins as the first African American woman to serve in the state’s House of Representatives. In 1980 President Jimmy Carter appointed her as an ambassador to the United Nations. In 1983 she served as assistant director for the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, and in 1987 she became Oklahoma Secretary of State. Throughout her career she has been active in several organizations, including the National Association of Black Women Legislators, the Democratic National Committee, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the NAACP. Atkins founded the Oklahoma Black Political Caucus and co-founded the Oklahoma Chapter of the National Women’s Political Caucus.

Atkins’s papers date from 1950 to 2005 and cover her career, including her time as a legislator and in other offices. Other items are notes and ephemera from numerous conferences and organizations in which Atkins participated. Some of these are the 1997 African American Summit, the 1975 Black Child Development Institute, the 1981 Black Women’s Summit, the 1972 National Black Political Convention, and the 1997 Inter-Faith Alliance. The collection also contains Atkins’s personal correspondence, with the bulk of the letters dated between 1990 and 2005. Included are several items and documents of Hannah’s husband, Charles Atkins.

The OHS Research Division also has an oral interview with Hannah Atkins. A finding aid for the Hannah Atkins Collection may be viewed in the Research Division’s online catalogue by visiting the Historical Society’s web site at <www.okhistory.org>. The collection itself may also be accessed at the Oklahoma History Center in the John and Eleanor Kirkpatrick Research Center.

OHS Places . . .

Oklahoma Territorial Museum
406 East Oklahoma Ave.
Guthrie, OK 73044
Phone: 405/282-1889
Hours: Tues.-Sat., 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Closed: Sun., Mon., and state holidays.

The Oklahoma Territorial Museum embraces the history of the settlers who rushed to the newly opened land in Oklahoma Territory on April 22, 1889, and established Guthrie in an afternoon. Before that fateful day in 1889, Guthrie was merely a water stop along the Southern Kansas Railway (later the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway). Settled by progressive citizenry, Guthrie soon gained prominence and served as the territorial capital from 1889 to 1907 statehood and as the state capital from 1907 to 1910.

Located at 406 East Oklahoma Ave. in Guthrie, the facility covers approximately 10,000 square feet divided between two floors. The museum holds artifacts, photographs, and paintings that portray the lives of those hopeful pioneers, who came to establish homes, farms, and businesses on the open Oklahoma prairie. Exhibit items also relate to territorial government, transportation, education, and recreation.

In February 2009 a new exhibit entitled Opportunity Awaits: The African-American Experience in Territorial Oklahoma was debuted. Currently placed outside the museum entrance, the display examines the settlement and influence of African Americans before 1907 statehood. Sponsored by the Friends of the Guthrie Museum Complex and made possible by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Oklahoma Humanities Council, the exhibit will eventually be incorporated into the museum’s second-floor gallery.

Situated adjacent to the Oklahoma Territorial Museum, the Guthrie Carnegie Library, built in 1901, is one of twenty-four libraries in Oklahoma that steel magnate and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie provided with grants for their construction. Of historical significance, Oklahoma’s first governor, Charles N. Haskell, was sworn-in on those library steps on statehood day, November 16, 1907. The Guthrie Carnegie Library is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NR 71000666).
Volunteers feted at banquet

Amidst a glorious sunset behind the Capitol dome, the Oklahoma History Center volunteer banquet was held Friday night, October 30. The festivities included a Hula-Hoop contest and a bubble-blowing contest, won by volunteer Joyce Keel.

Ed Gahl from Entertainment-to-Go provided an evening of 1950s and 1960s radio hits, including tunes by Oklahoma artists. The delicious dinner carried a “diner” theme. Table decorations included nostalgic candies and “real” sundaes.

From October 1, 2008, through September 30, 2009, the volunteers served 7,000 hours, an amount of work that equaled the efforts of four full-time staff members. The OHC volunteers are those friendly faces at the meet ‘n’ greet events and also serve as gallery hosts and as tour guides.

They also provide the staff with support in education, collections, and exhibits in the Oklahoma Museum of History. They serve a collective 600 hours each month, or approximately 62 hours per volunteer.

Anyone who is interested in the OHC Volunteer Services Program is encouraged to contact the volunteer office at 405/522-0754 or to send an inquiring e-mail to <rdavis@okhistory.org>.

Quilt block classes continue around the state

In December the Pawnee Bill Ranch hosts the regular Quilt Block of the Month class on December 8 in the museum conference room at 6:30 p.m. The fee is $85. New quilt projects will be discussed for the upcoming year.

See page 5 for a photo of a quilt created by one of OHS Quilt block classes, at the Sod House Museum in Aline.

Inside

Results of OHS Kids! student art contest—page 1
Holiday events at OHS sites and museums around the state—page 4