



**SECOND HALF EXPLOSION
CARRIES NORSEMEN**

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MIAMI News-Record

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**DOUBLE CAST BRINGS THE
NUTCRACKER TO LIFE**

Moira K. McGhee
news@reidnewspapers.com

Christi Leonard has been teaching children to dance for the past 42 years. She faces one of the biggest challenges of her career this year with a double cast for her Nutcracker ballet.

"I only do Nutcracker every other year," explained Leonard. "Last year should have been the year, but we couldn't get into the NEO theatre because of COVID. The kids were just devastated.

"I have 20 kids that this is their last Nutcracker and some of those kids should have got to do two Nutcrackers. Because we couldn't do it last year, they were only going to get one. So, I did two casts. In double casting, I gave them the opportunity to have their two Nutcrackers and be able to audition for bigger parts that they had wanted and they weren't going to be able to do."

The Nutcracker Ballet you see at many productions has a slightly different storyline from the original, but Leonard says her Nutcracker follows the traditional

story.

The Nutcracker is the story of Clara, a young girl who receives a magical Nutcracker as a gift from her uncle at her family's annual Christmas party. Later that night, her Nutcracker grows to life-size and defeats the villainous Rat King. The Nutcracker turns into a Prince who takes Clara on a grand adventure in the Kingdom of Snow and the Land of Sweets.

It's a fantastic story with a large cast and lots of costumes under normal circumstances, which is where it gets complicated for Leonard.

"I have 125 kids cast in the Nutcracker," she said. "Some roles are being played by two kids. Like the Arabian Queen, there were two girls who have always wanted that role and only one could get it if I just did one cast. By double casting, it allows one to do two shows and the other one to do two shows. That's why there are four shows."

Leonard's youngest cast member is just three years old.

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Christi Leonard efficiently faced the challenge of having a double cast for her Nutcracker Ballet this year to ensure all the kids had a chance to be part of the production that was cancelled last year due to COVID. On the left, Taytum Scott holds her green nutcracker, she plays Clara in the two Green Cast productions. On the right, Brynna Brodrick holds her red nutcracker, she plays Clara in the two Red Cast productions.

EVENT

*Rotary offers
pancakes to support
great causes'*

Moira K. McGhee
news@reidnewspapers.com

Saturday, Dec. 4 is the Rotary Club's annual pancake breakfast, one of the club's three annual fundraisers.

As you're enjoying your fluffy cakes of yumminess, consider all the good causes your dollars are helping the Rotary to support.

"Our pancake breakfast has been going on for more years than anybody in our club knows," joked Michael Addington, the Rotary Club's current Treasurer, Youth Exchange Officer and RYLA Chair.



As you're enjoying your fluffy cakes of yumminess, consider all the good causes your dollars are helping the Rotary to support.

"It's always the first Saturday in December every year on the same day as the Christmas parade."

The club also does a food drive during the pancake breakfast, so they'll have a box set up for people to drop off non-perishable foods. They donate these

items to a local food bank.

Current Rotarians are given \$80 worth of tickets, which they're responsible for paying for so the Club gets most of the money for the event upfront. You can also buy a ticket at

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NEWS

**No major
redistricting
plans for the
county**

Carla Nielsen
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As Oklahoma has been working through redistricting issues, Ottawa County will remain largely unaffected by any major changes.

Russell Earls, Ottawa County District 3 Commissioner and chairman, said, "What we did in order to get our population within the margin of error is we came inside the city of Miami and swapped blocks. In other words, we moved blocks from one district or another to get the population where we need it."

"Then there was one slight change, which had been in place for years, but they left it out when they drew the maps; I'm talking about Senate staff."

He said Districts 2 and 3 lines followed Highway 10 to Welch. That's where it was split.

"Years ago we had two what they call dead man's curves, two 90's, going to Welch. That was our district line between Districts 2 and 3," Earls said. "When the state straightened those out, we voted to follow the highway as we always have. When the senate staff drew the new lines a few weeks ago,

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Photo by Gary Crow

Miami's Christmas tree was set up Wednesday morning in preparation for Saturday night's parade along Main Street.

PARADE GRAND MARSHALS ANNOUNCED
4 Christmas parades Saturday

Community leaders have been announced as grand marshals for two of Saturday's Christmas parades.

Ethel Cook, chief of the Ottawa Tribe of Oklahoma, will be honored during Miami's "Music of Christmas" parade.

Burly Grimes, who has been a longtime supporter of sports and other activities at Picher, will lead its seventh annual "Coming Home for Christmas" parade.

The schedule for Saturday includes Picher at 10 a.m., Quapaw at noon, Commerce at 2 p.m. and Miami at 6 p.m.

In addition to her duties with the Ottawa Tribe, Cook is chairman of the Inter Tribal Council and serves

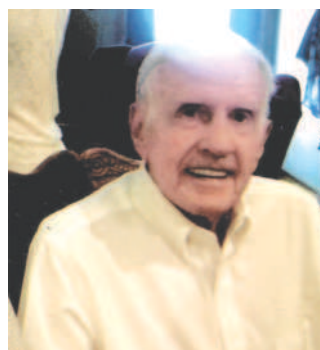


Ethel Cook

on a number of committees that supports Miami, Ottawa County and northeast Oklahoma.

The Miami parade will follow Main Street from 5th North to 2nd Street South.

There will be awards for first, second and third places in best float, best vehicle, best pedestrian and best overall entries.



Burly Grimes

Winners will be announced at a ceremony on Wednesday, Dec. 8 at the Miami Regional Chamber of Commerce office.

Grimes coached girls softball for 33 years,

He coached in the MKO League and assisted several coaches at Picher-Cardin

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NUTCRACKER *cast list*

Red Show Cast

Clara: Brynna Brodrick
 Fritz: Jake Jordan
 Head Parents: Lacinda and Neil Brewster
 Aunt Pitty Pat: Jennifer Jauert
 Herr Drosselmeyer: Jaydon Walker
 Parlor Maids: Keely Barngrover, Lilli Kichler, Ann Meador
 Concierge Maids: Rylie Hensley, Cate Jauert, Addie Schmitz
 Concierge: Creed Jarvis
 Party Parents: Nakilah and Michael Allgood, Leyenda and Jeremy Lamb, Janna and Steve McCormick, Angel and Skyler Riggs-Austin
 Party Children: Alivia Allgood, Elizabeth Bradshaw Ashtyn Brodrick, Rosalea Crafton, Kenzi Fecke, Andrew Jauert, Luci Lamb, Blair McCarly, Ellie McPherson, Emma Clare McCormick, Aurora Miller, Sofia Provence, Addy Razor, Jace Riggs-Austin, Taytum Scott, Wyatt Scott, Josie Walker, Charlotte Watts, Addi Webster, Emilia Webster
 Ballerina Doll: Lexi Johnson

Solider Doll: Kailey Brewster
 Mice: Aaliyah Coombes, Paisley Cummings, Willa Fecke, Kennedy Hanson, Jaylee Harrison, Kali Heatherly, Caroline Hemphill, Ella Huston, Olivia Jauert, Malia Mathis, Ally Pulley, Ivy Turner, Kloe Waggoner, Riley Waggoner, Izzy Wahl
 Ding Dong Mice: Monroe Coots, Willa Fecke, Malia Mathis, Delaina Wells
 Nutcracker: Jenna Burgess
 Rat King: Alexis Riggs-Austin
 Soldiers: Ellie Adams, Emeri Bowen, Naveah Garrison, Mylela Grant, Presley Griswold, Heaven Leigh Harris, Andrew Jauert, Anna Martin, Holly Perez, Jace Riggs-Austin, Avery Shoultz, Kobie Wahl, Emmalynn Wallain, Aspen Winkfield
 Baby Angels: Zayda Baker, Ellie Brandon, James Crafton, Caroline Garner, Evie Henson, Roselyn Mosby, Addy Razor, Elly Whitney
 Snow Queen: Kiah Payton
 Snow Queen Cavalier:

Malachi Crafton
 Snow Waltz: Keely Barngrover, Zoey Brewster, Lexi Brodrick, Jenna Burgess, Shayla Crafton, Caitlyn Garrett, Cate Jauert, Lilli Kichler, Samantha Mantooth, Ann Meador, Allee Rice, Alexis Riggs-Austin, Ruby Stover, Addie Schmitz and Ruby Stover
 Sugar Plum Fairy: Kiah Payton
 Sugar Plum Cavalier: Malachi Crafton
 Dew Drop Fairy: Lexi Brodrick
 Dew Drop Cavalier: Jaydon Walker
 Waltz of the Flowers: Alivia Allgood, Kailey Brewster, Autumn Campbell, Myleigh Dunn, Neeley Grimes, Presley Griswold, Lexi Johnson, Zoe Jordan, Fallon Kinsey, Luci Lamb, Emma Clare McCormick, Journee McSarrow, Austin Miller, Ella Moore, Dani Owens, Rory Reynolds, Taytum Scott, Kylie Smith, GraceAnna Straub, Kloe Wagoner, Emmalynn Wallain
 Spanish Attendants: Zoey Brewster, Cate Jauert, Allee Rice
 Chinese: Jenna Burgess (Umbrella), Samantha Mantooth, Addie Schmitz
 Trepak: Kailey Brewster, Jake Jordan, Kylie Smith,

Kloe Wagoner
 Mere Gigigone: Caitlyn Garrett, Kyle Shoultz
 Clowns: Ellie Adams, Rosalea Crafton, Willa Fecke, Jaylee Harrison, Olivia Jauert, Avery Shoultz, Harmony Taylor, Ivy Turner, Rylee Waggoner, Rowan Witten
 Arabian Queen: Keely Barngrover
 Arabian Cavalier: Jake Jordan
 Arabian Attendants: Alivia Allgood, Ashtyn Brodrick, Kennedy Hanson, Lexi Johnson
 Mirliton Queens: Shayla Crafton, Ann Meador
 Mirlitons: Aaliyah Coombes, Myleigh Dunn, Fallon Kinsey, Journee McSarrow, Dani Owens

Green Show Cast List
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 Ballerina Doll: Lexi Johnson
 Soldier Doll: Kailey Brewster
 Mice: Aaliyah Coombes, Paisley Cummings, Kennedy Hanson, Jaylee Harrison, Kali Heatherly, Caroline Hemphill, Ella Huston, Olivia Jauert, Ally Pulley, Ivy Turner, Kloe Waggoner, Riley Waggoner, Izzy Wahl
 Ding-Dong Mice: Monroe Coots, Willa Fecke, Malia Mathis, Delaina Wells
 Baby Angels: Camdyn Bonham, Kinley Boyd, Tori Brinkley, Emma Coulter, Kenzi Fecke, Emberlee Mathis, Ellie McPherson, Vivian Varner
 Snow Queen: Lexi Brodrick
 Snow Queen Cavalier:

Malachi Crafton
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NEWS

Road projects top county agenda

Carla Nielsen
news@reidnewspapers.com

Various road projects around Ottawa County were discussed at the commissioners' regular meeting Monday.

A presentation was given by John Blickensderfer with Guy Engineering concerning completed, current and proposed transportation projects in the county.

"I have received a lot of input over last six to nine months about adding projects to the plan," Blickensderfer said. "With the (budget) reductions over the past few years, it put all plans into a negative situation. Your county is in the negative also, but we are still moving forward with projects as money is available. We didn't cancel projects, we just slid them."

Chairman and District 3 commissioner Russell Earls said, "We are expending all of our dollars, putting us into the negative, which is a good thing."

Blickensderfer then recapped several projects in progress or upcoming, including 680 Road in District 2, Sycamore Creek, Windy Creek, Route 66 and others.

Discussion continued and Blickensderfer noted that public meetings aren't required unless the county is expanding or realigning a roadway, etc., and that Guy Engineering uses an eight-year plan, but that ODOT (the Oklahoma Department of Transportation) only approves five (at a time).

Project bridges were then reviewed and Blickensderfer said he will follow up with each commissioner on their various projects.

Approved at the meeting Monday

was a service order for use with the master agreement between the Quapaw Nation and CJW Transportation Consultants, LLC, to rehabilitate approximately two miles of county Highway 137 (TTP Route 112 Section 010), from the north edge of E. 66 Road to the south edge of Route 69A.

Terri Birch, construction manager with the Quapaw Nation, spoke to the commissioners about the project.

"The road coming from downtown Quapaw down to 266 goes past several facilities the nation has been working on," Birch said. "Over the last couple of years we have put in new housing and built the new learning center. And the fitness and community centers are right there and sit right on 137. We were able to get the four-way stop put in and now we want to do everything we can to maintain that road in the best quality possible."

Plans were then discussed for 137, including those from ODOT and the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority (OTA).

Mike Furnas, District 1 commissioner, said, "This is obviously very exciting and I thank Terri Birch for her work over the last three years (or so). This is a cooperative effort to see how we can maintain the bridge and its integrity. We have had to patch some things on there and, as with most construction, it's worth mentioning that there is some urgency on that overpass. I would love to coordinate with ODOT and the OTA to do the work all at the same time."

"We don't want to inconvenience the public by closing the road down twice," he said.

Earls said the Turnpike Authority is responsible for the substructure and "we have the top of those overpasses.

Anything we do we have to get approval, and the driving surface will have to be milled and overlaid as well."

Furnas added, "This area is growing and traffic is increasing, and that is very exciting, from the use of farm vehicles to family passenger vehicles. We would like to make it better to navigate there, if we can get a project like that."

Also approved was a service order, also for use with the master agreement between the Quapaw Nation and CJW Transportation Consultants, to develop final civil site construction drawings for approximately 1.7 miles of East 66 Road from the edge of S. 590 Road to the west edge of County Highway 137 in Quapaw.

"On East 66, a few years back the Quapaw Nation asphalted down to the process facility in preparation to open that facility. It has since been opened and we have found that from that facility down to 137 there is heavy truck traffic from the process facility and cattle trucks," Birch said. "It's narrow and there are drainage issues. For the most part you have to drive down the center of that road to get where you are going. We couldn't touch that section of the road because it wasn't on our travel inventory, but it involves the Peoria Nation, so (Peoria) Chief Craig Harper agreed to support putting the road on our inventory and it got put into our long-range transportation plan. We are all about community meetings and we will have meetings to let the community be involved from the beginning."

Furnas thanked all the area tribal nations and everyone that has been working together on the county roads for "finally reaching the reality that together is better."

Miami Friends Church

Miami Friends Church pastor

David Frazier shared a message, "Advent-Hope."

Israel was in waiting for the messiah, and that was their hope. Biblical hope is rooted in Jesus.

"Look at my Servant, whom I have chosen. He is my Beloved, who pleases me. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations. He will not fight or shout or raise his voice in public. He will not crush the weakest reed or put out a flickering candle. Finally he will cause justice to be victorious. And his name will be the hope of all the world." Matthew

12:18-21 NLT

Our job as the church is to choose Hope in spite of what we see. Jesus' birth was proof that God had not abandoned them and that He always had been and was still in charge.

"Jesus is the hope of the world and the local church is the vehicle of expressing that hope to the world" — Andy Stanley

Choose Hope this season.

Miami Friends is a church family that believes everyone has value and purpose.

We welcome people from all walks of life to join us to worship Sunday's at the meeting house across from NEO.

First Christian Church

First Christian Church, 2424 North Main St., Miami, Oklahoma. Morning services are at 8:30 and 10:45. Bible School classes for all ages are available at 9:45.

There is Children's worship during the 10:45 service.

We will continue to offer online opportunities for services through the church's YouTube Channel and on the

church's Facebook video.

If you have any questions during this time, call the church office at 918-542-9816.

This Sunday, Senior Minister Brian S. Brubaker will be preaching. The title of the sermon is "Listen until the end" from Second Timothy 4:9-22.

The sermon is part of a series entitled "Faithful to the End." All are welcome.

Cast

•Continued from Page 1

She plays one of the 16 baby angels (eight angels in each show). The rest of the angels range between 4 and 6 years old. The rest of the cast goes up in age into the late teens. There are also about 15 adults in the production.

While it's challenging to keep the cast lined out, it's even more difficult to keep the costumes organized since some are being shared by multiple cast members. To help with this, the shows are divided into red and green with the cast from the red group doing two shows and the cast from the green group doing two shows. The costumes are all color-coded accordingly, so Leonard knows which kid has which costume in which show.

"It's all been a challenge," said Leonard. "Costumes have been an especially big challenge since some of the kids will use the same costumes because I only have one whole set. I had to make sure on a lot of those double ones that I either had enough costumes for everyone or I had enough time in between shows to launder the costumes and bring them back."

She developed an efficient color-coding system to keep costumes on track. The child's name is written in all red if they're in the red show or all green if they're in the green show. For those children who are actually in all four shows, their name is written in red and green. On the tags of costumes with two performers, one name is in red and the other in green, according to when the child performs.

"We know exactly when each costume is needed and who's wearing it," she said.

As for the number of costumes she must keep track of, there are 100s. While she has 125 kids cast in the show, some children are in both acts of the two-act ballet, so they actually have two costumes instead of one. For some parts, she has enough costumes

for all the kids from the red and green shows to have their own costumes, which doubles the number of certain costumes.

It's A LOT of costumes to keep track of, but Leonard does it with aplomb. She's made many of the costumes over the years herself and adds new ones as needed. Some of the costumes have seen numerous shows like the white costume for the snow scene which she's had since 1998. Others are new.

"We raised money for the flower costumes, so those are new," said Leonard. "I'd made the ones that were there and they were just coming apart. The tutu, if it's not tulle, will kind of dry rot."

"I try to add new costumes when I can or where I need to, to fit the cast members. Because I don't ever want to take a part away from a child because I don't have a costume to fit them so I always tried to adjust for that."

Due to an availability issue with costumes this year due to the ongoing pandemic, adding new costumes wasn't going to work out. It meant her performers had to fit the costumes she had instead of replacing costumes that didn't fit. During auditions, the kids had to make sure they fit the costume of the part(s) they wanted to play because that's all they had.

"They do have to audition," Leonard said. "I don't pick the parts."

Her judges this year were all former students along with one local teacher who'd performed the Nutcracker in the Tulsa Ballet.

"Ironically, all my judges had all danced every single part in the Nutcracker so they knew how much it meant to these kids to do it. The kids had to go table to table to audition for each judge, then they selected the parts. It was a fun day."

Besides allowing all the kids to be in the Nutcracker, some for the very last time,

Leonard said having the extra shows also gives the community better options to come watch the performance. With more shows, audience members can also be more separated to promote staying healthy.

"When I was trying to roll all this, NEO was still under some restrictions," said Leonard. "I thought I was going to have to restrict the audience. It's open right now and I'm hoping it makes it through the show. I don't have to do the restrictions but with doing more shows, it allows the audience to split up more."

She said her dancers have also taken precautions to stay healthy. Anyone who has had a fever, they've Zoomed into practice instead of coming in person.

Leonard has been putting on Nutcracker performances since 2001 and there's a very heartfelt reason why she began doing it.

"When I saw the Nutcracker as a little girl and then when I went to college and had the chance to be in it with the Kansas City Ballet, it just made so many cherished memories," she said. "I wanted the kids to have this memory and it's already happened this year, it happened last week and I'm so excited."

She explained that one of her baby angels who also plays a party kid was in a store shopping with her mom when all of sudden she froze and said, "Mom, they're playing my music. That's my party girl music. Don't you hear it? That's my music."

"What that tells me," Leonard said, "is that at age four, from now on, she'll hear that song and remember how it felt to be that party kid on stage and that's why I do it."

"Our kids right now, they're just struggling so much, they need some happy stuff. This has brought them a lot of good and they're so, so excited."

She said one thing she definitely learned



The Nutcracker, wearing the original trash can head that Christ Leonard made herself and used for years in her Nutcracker Ballet performances.

from COVID was that she can never retire. When her dance studios were shut down for 11 weeks, she missed her kids terribly and her kids missed Miss Christi. Luckily, the show did eventually go on for Leonard and her students.

The Nutcracker will be performed in the NEO Fine Arts Center where it really does snow on stage during the snow scene and the Christmas tree really does grow from 8 feet to 22 feet tall.

Showtimes are Friday, Dec. 10 at 7 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 11 at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.; and Sunday, Dec. 12 at 3 p.m. Tickets are available at the door for \$12.

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