

## Featuring Alex, our Superstar

Alex, a sophomore and proud member of the Comanche Nation, is a young man with some special gifts, as well as the passion to put them to use. He has been at the Oaks Indian Mission for a year now and we are looking forward to his next three here before we send him forth to accomplish some amazing things.



This is the thing about Alex—he is as strong a kid as we’ve had here at the Mission, fiercely strong, Comanche strong. But he has a calling to use his considerable strength to defend the weak. And that is Biblical! For instance, he will make a point of walking a new kid here at the Mission across the way to school, a kid who may very well be unsure of himself, intimidated, even perhaps a little frightened by it all. Alex will counsel that student in the ways of dorm life and offer insights into getting along here at the Mission. Whatever they might need of him, Alex will give. It’s actually a beautiful thing to behold.

These are leadership skills that far exceed age, in this case. And come from a place one can only call spiritual, certainly not from any human sources. It has gained Alex respect in both his cottage and across campus.



Alex is a defensive stalwart, anchoring the line at nose guard, on the Oaks Warrior football team, but wrestling is his first love, athletically speaking. And, if it was a sport, auto mechanics probably wouldn’t be far behind. He’s interested in all things related to the automobile, and constantly quizzing his cottage-parent on the make and model of cars met while traveling the open highway.

We give thanks for the blessing it is to be graced with Alex’s presence here at the Oaks and the opportunity to share his journey toward adulthood. Indeed, the shaping of a man of God!

## Photos by Jordan, “Artist in Residence”



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# The Oaks Arrow



Under new administration and a number of new faculty members, the Oaks Mission School began its Fall term almost in the heart of summer, following a shortened July summer school leading into the start of regular classes the first week of August. The school being very diligent in following CDC protocols—teachers and students wearing masks and plenty of social distancing and hand washing. At this printing, there have been no Covid-19 cases reported.

After the extended lay-off, due to the spread of the virus, our kids were actually delighted to be back in the classroom and competing in sports programs.



We have girls who are already at work on the Yearbook, Jordan (Miami Nation, Senior) official photographer; she is also leading cheers at football games. And Alissa (Cherokee, Sophomore) is a member of the Warrior softball team. Four boys Josh (Cherokee, Freshman) Alex (Comanche, Sophomore) Darnell (Cherokee, Junior) and Nick (Cherokee, Freshman) are hard at work on the football field and currently undefeated. We also have



three boys on the Junior High Team: Damian, John and Timmy.



We gathered together in the Commons Room, staff and kids of the Oaks Indian Mission, the first week of school to celebrate the welcomed start of classroom education, again. We were happily joined by members of the Oaks Mission School, including the new Superintendent, Bruce Davis, and his wife, Holly, also an educator. We shared introductions, a short program, highlighted by the reading of selections from a missionary journal dating back to the



early 1800’s, when this was Springplace Mission, located in Georgia, prior to the Trail of Tears, and we closed the evening with good food and even better fellowship. It was indeed a special moment, experiencing up close and personal again that historical relationship between Oaks Mission School and the Oaks Indian Mission, now being renewed in a bold and exciting way.

## Needs List

### ~Health Items~

Toilet Paper  
 Shampoo  
 Tampons & Pads  
 Laundry Detergent

### ~Home Items~

Mops  
 Brooms & Dustpans  
 Rugs  
 Quality Vacuum Storage Bags  
 Trash Bags

### ~Pantry Items~

Canned Fruit  
 Cereal  
 Cake Mixes  
 Frosting  
 Juice Drinks

### ~Outdoor Items~

Lawn chairs  
 Ice chests

### ~Large Items~

Mid-size Vehicle (lightly used)  
 Washers & Dryers (New or Used)



The new cottage is fast taking shape, inside and out, with stone on the exterior that matches the church next door about to be applied and a sprinkler system installed within that will free up the next step in the process. Each child will have a goodly sized bedroom and share a well-equipped bathroom with the

child in the bedroom on the opposite side. Eight bedrooms, four baths, with a spacious common living area, dining room and kitchen, plus a roomy apartment for cottage-parents and smaller relief-parent accommodations.



The Oaks Indian Mission has long enjoyed a special relationship with Trinity Lutheran, Great Bend, Kansas, but more recently, these past few years, the partnership between the two, congregation and social ministry, has grown even stronger, including Trinity annually hosting groups from the Mission, kids and staff, as well as the congregation and individuals within the congregation providing generous financial support. To celebrate this vibrant partnership, an artist and member of Trinity, Gene Wilson, created the rendition pictured below, which now proudly hangs on a wall in the newly painted lobby of the administrative offices here on campus.



LeaAnn Slamons, our Administrative Coordinator, decided the office lobby needed a bit of a makeover—at least a good, old-fashioned paint job, which she single-handedly took on, the rest of us enjoying the fruits of her labor! LeaAnn is such a valued member of our team here.



Local hero, Ryan Dirteater, world champion bull rider, is proud to be Cherokee and he came back to Oaks to share his story with our kids. He even brought along a mechanical bull to demonstrate the art of the ride. But this being no urban cowboy, Ryan is country through and through, happily so. Call him an Indian cowboy, if you like, a celebrated tradition around here, Cherokees have often been prominent in the national Indian rodeo circuit, many qualifying for the finals every year, from calf roping to bronc riding. Riding the bull, though, is a special category. Ryan works closely with Cherokee Nation, in fact, who sponsored his appearance in the local summer school activities program at Oaks Mission School this past July, which our kids greatly enjoyed participating in. A couple of them got particularly excited with the archery contest. There were academics involved, of course, but the emphasis was on participation in activities and the acquiring of specific skills.



## Honors, Memorials & In-kind May-August 2020

### Honorariums

- Larry's Birthday**  
Mrs. Norman Wallman
- Donald Pedersen - Father's Day**  
Ted, Ayda, Gillian, Oden
- Rev. Carl Petering - Father's Day**  
Todd & Kera Petering
- Dan & Ashley Cooper**  
Rev. Don Marshall
- Rev. Dawn Enderwood**  
Rev. Roger Bruns
- Esther Tesh**  
Rev. Roger Bruns
- Rev. Elwin Bergstraesser**  
Rev. Evelyn Phillips  
Paul & Marcella Petersen
- OIM Alumni Association**  
Rev. John Mark & Dawn Nielsen
- Rev. Evelyn Phillips**  
Paul & Marcella Petersen
- Zion WELCA Creighton, NE**  
Rev. Don Marshall

### Memorials

- Our Parents**  
Herbert & Helen Bechthold
- Roy Schubert**  
Rev. Don Marshall
- Dorothy Ann Romer**  
Craig & Mary Romer
- Harold Romer**  
Craig & Mary Romer
- Julie Powell**  
Rev. Don Marshall
- Ezra Larsen**  
Sandra Elliott
- Arthur & Arline Powell**  
Doug & Debbie Lemons
- Rev. Ernie Lantz**  
John & Barbara Nellermoe
- Elsie Wendel**  
John & Barbara Nellermoe
- Lisa Ohlde**  
Rev. Don Marshall

### Memorials

- Glenys Quinlan**  
Alice Howard
- Rev. Henry Thorberg**  
Alice Howard
- Chuck Nienow**  
Rev. Roger Bruns
- J.B. Bruns**  
Rev. Roger Bruns
- Erv & Pearl Goldenstein**  
Jeff & Dr. Ingrid Goldenstein
- Anneliese Griffith**  
Lora Neddenriep
- Gilbert Dick**  
Tabitha Circle Bessie, OK
- Kim Renison**  
Tabitha Circle Bessie, OK
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- Bruce Klitzky**  
Patricia Klitzky
- Martha Briggs Campbell**  
Sally Schneider

- Sally Leffler**  
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- Dennis Gast**  
Rev. Don Marshall
- Victor Fleury**  
Lora Neddenriep
- Ray Babitzke**  
Herbert & Helen Bechthold
- Kenneth Jensby**  
James & Jean Jensby  
Don & Janet Parsons
- Dallas Winders**  
Arnita Winders
- Gretchen Marshall**  
James Jr. & Sandra Sieg  
Rev. Don Marshall
- John O. Schepeler**  
Marie Schepeler
- Bob Stepp**  
Mary Stepp

### Memorials

- Rev. Harold Laursen**  
Paul & Marcella Petersen  
Janet Malpert
- Barbara Laursen**  
Ruth Ellen Rebelein  
Rev. William & Valerie Koeber  
Craig & Kathryn Fulwider  
Elizabeth Kaldahl  
Paul & Marcella Petersen

### In-Kind Donors

- St. John's LC Thrivent Team Pryor, OK**
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- Reformation Quilt Makers Wichita, KS**
- Jolene Daugherty**
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- Judy Carlson**
- Susan Martin**
- Julie**

- Trinity LC Russellville, MO**
- Rev. Carl & Virginia Petering & Family**
- United LC Bella Vista, AR**
- Jill Holmes**
- Elizabeth Fisher**

*Note: All individuals, families and churches are listed to the best of our knowledge. It is not our intent to omit any donors and contributions from our lists. If you see we have made a mistake, please accept our apology, and let us know so we can make a correction.*

## WELCOME TO TEAM MINISTRY



Hesci vn'hessvlke ("Hello my friends!"). As a former Oaks student, I am honored to rejoin the Board of Directors. Oaks is among the oldest of Indian boarding schools with a proud history. The Mission faces challenges but also is afforded auspicious opportunities. As Oaks moves deeper into its third century of service it must aggressively evolve its mission and programs so as to meet the highest standards of care and education for our students. Our students and our stakeholders rightfully should expect nothing less from their Board. I will endeavor to embrace the future while standing firm on the foundation of our proud tradition. Mvto cekicis ce! JD

J.D. Colbert (Chickasaw/Muscogee-Creek) is a veteran banker whose career has spanned 42 years. He is a former bank examiner for the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, a community bank chief financial officer, commercial lender for a large regional bank, president and CEO of two banks as well as a board member of five banks.

For the past 10 years, Mr. Colbert has owned and operated a financial consulting services firm, Holisso Hakv, Inc. In this role, Mr. Colbert has assisted ten Indian tribes in acquiring state or nationally chartered banks. He has also assisted many tribes in forming Community Development Financial Institutions.

Mr. Colbert is a recognized expert on matters related to commercial banking and Indian tribes. He is active in legal, regulatory and policy formation in the areas of banking, economic and community development and Federal-Indian policy. He is a widely published author in his areas of expertise as well as a sought after speaker and presenter.

Mr. Colbert holds an undergraduate degree in business management from the University of Oklahoma and holds master's degrees from both Harvard University and Johns Hopkins University.



My name is Monique Sharp. I am 30 years old and the mother to a beautiful very active 9 year old, Miss Satara Mae. She keeps me on my toes being on two competitive All-Star Cheer teams. I worked at Oaks Mission Schools for 3 years where I finally realized I was meant to work with kids, and I have a great passion for it. I am very blessed with the opportunity to work as the Case Manager at Oaks Indian Mission. I look forward to the opportunities I have to help mold these kids into successful adults. **Editors Note:** What a great addition to our team Monique is and, we hope, for years to come.

## VAYA CONDIOS

Dan Cooper, our very capable and dedicated Campus Director these past four years has, sadly, accepted the position of CEO of another non-profit, Solid Waste Institute of Northeast Oklahoma, an agency of the State of Oklahoma. He will have responsibility for the work of numerous counties throughout the northeastern part of this state.



Dan has worked tirelessly during his tenure here improving the quality of our childcare wherever possible, at the same time overseeing the many affairs related to building and grounds maintenance, including numerous details involved in the construction of the new cottage on campus. Dan has had the unenviable task, as well, of partnering with agencies of the state to ensure the Oaks Indian Mission is ever compliant with licensing guidelines that come with operating a group home for children in Oklahoma. While the Oaks receives no funding for operations from government sources of any kind, that does not prohibit the Mission from adhering closely to the many regulations demanded of us. Dan has taken this challenge on and met it at every turn.

So, it is with a sense of genuine loss that we send Dan off to assume his new and important position. He has been such an integral part of the team ministry that happens here, the camaraderie that has been shaped these past four years to create the chemistry we now enjoy as the staff of the Oaks Indian Mission. We give thanks for his service to this ministry and celebrate the opportunities that await him. May the Lord bless Dan Cooper on this next adventure in his life.

We are also missing these days another valuable member of our team, in fact, the cottage-parent with, by far, the longest running tenure, having served the Oaks Indian Mission in such a capacity for well over a decade, faithfully nurturing children in his care, day in and day out, 24/7. Not for the weak of heart, to be sure. Dave Sanders did an amazing job of working with kids, ever patient, strong when necessary, but loving, always, tough love with the emphasis on love. Dave also enjoyed driving a van load of Oaks folks to various congregations and church gatherings throughout the country. He was a hit with people wherever we went, putting folks at ease with his good humor and easy laugh.



Thankfully, his wife, Julienne, remains with the Oaks team, serving in the office, and since they live just down the street from the Mission, Dave drops in every once in awhile to remind us how much he is missed!