



# The Eufaula Indian Journal

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-Kahlil Gibran

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## SNAKES SLITHERING AMONG US!

By Donna Pearce  
Managing Editor

Both a state park naturalist and a snake enthusiast agree on the main thing to do in the case of a poisonous snakebite.

Stay calm and proceed to the nearest hospital.

They also say do not cut into the wound or suck on the wound with your mouth. And, they don't recommend applying a tourniquet, even though they're included in snakebite kits, because it can do more harm than good.

Lorraine Richmond, naturalist with Lake Eufaula State Park at the Deep Fork Nature Center, is an expert on snakes, along with other area wildlife.

With Deep Fork for the past 11 years and a volunteer for 10 years before that, she has never been bitten by a snake.

On the other hand, literally, Jerry Rider has...several times.

In fact, his left index finger is shorter than his right as the result of a meeting with a Copperhead.

"I'm the rule of what you don't do," said Rider, best known as the Okie Noodler.

"Do not try this at home," said Richmond, commenting on Rider's fascination with snakes that has sometimes led him to ignore the caution needed around the poisonous varieties.

Rider is working on caution. He's currently studying to get a license through the Department

of Wildlife to become a Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator.

"It's the equivalent of a college course. There is lots of reading and tests to take," said Rider. "Once I have my license, people will be able to call me to relocate or eradicate the nuisance."

Rider said he didn't like the idea of eradicating, but in some cases there may be no choice. He said if an animal must be eradicated, it will be done in the most humane way possible.

This article on snakes was prompted by almost every member of the newspaper staff connecting with a snake in some way during the last month.

Why were so many of us seeing snakes? Were there more snakes around for some reason?

Park Ranger Ed Rodebush said the snakes were out looking for food after the winter hibernation.

Rider and Richmond agreed, plus Rider said he believes the high lake level is driving water snakes out of their flooded dens in search of higher ground.

"Most water snakes are curious and aggressive," said Richmond.

"All snakes are capable of biting," she said. "Most roll over and play dead. They don't want to be around us anymore than we want to be around them."

She said snakes will strike as a defense mechanism, warning any trespasser to stay out of the way.

Richmond also said everyone

who lives around the lake area needs to have a copy of "A Field Guide to Oklahoma Amphibians and Reptiles" published by the Oklahoma Dept. of Wildlife Conservation.

"It will help people identify the snakes they see around their homes. We have them for sale at the park gift shop."

Richmond and Rider talked about the five poisonous varieties of snakes prevalent in the Lake Eufaula region—the Pygmy Rattlesnake, the Timber Rattlesnake, the Western Diamondback, the Copperhead, and the Cottonmouth Water Moccasin...our only poisonous water snake.



Photo by Donna Pearce

This ratsnake was found climbing the wall at the back of Katherine Smith's house in Eufaula last week.

See "Snakes" page 3



## Foley Building gets a facial

By Nicole Riley  
Summer Intern

The owners of the Foley Building are bringing new life to the historic landmark in Eufaula.

Mike and Jill Dew began a brick repair job on May 1 to repair old lime mortar and reinforce the existing brick, Jill Dew said.

"Our choice was to repair and restore as much as we could without covering the original work," she said. "We love the old architecture."

C.E. Foley, who became Eufaula's first mayor, began building the Foley Building in 1899 at the intersection of Foley Avenue and Main Street, according to the book "Lake Eufaula Reflections."

The copper-like dome was completed April 3, 1900, according to "Eufaula: A Pictorial History."

The book said the 3-story Foley Building is "perhaps the most noted of the Main Street buildings," and that the building housed the First National Bank of Eufaula and the Foley Hotel.

Jill Dew said she and her husband hired Doug Hardin, owner of Hardin Masonry in Muskogee, to repair the brick because they wanted a skilled mason who knows how to work with the old architecture.

The focus of the repair work has been structure reinforcement and preventive maintenance.

"We've always been worried about the brick, knowing there was loose brick," Jill Dew said. "We had no idea we could restore [it]."

Hardin said they used a high-pressure power wash to clean the brick.

"We're just giving it a good water blasting, cleaning the joints and then fixing defective joints between the bricks," he said.

He said the brick definitely needed repair, but it wasn't the worst he's seen.

He also said the job's been pretty easy. "Usually the high pressure water wash will knock it (a bad joint) out," Hardin said. "You take a new mortar mix and you take a little tool and pack it back into the crack and finish it off there."

"We are very proud of the workers," Jill Dew said. "They've done just an excellent job."

She said the brick repair, except for the curvature under the dome, should be finished next week. She and her husband were interviewing a painter for the dome Tuesday, and they hope to finish the brick repair and painting at the same time, she said.

"We apologize for any inconvenience in parking," Jill Dew said. She said the next step is window replacement.

"We are trying to do everything we can to improve Main Street."

"Eufaula: A Pictorial History" reveals a developing Eufaula, showing black and white pictures dating from 1900 through the 1990s. The Foley building stands out in them all, an unchanging memorial to the birth of the city.

"We enjoy seeing these older buildings come back to life," Jill Dew said. "We are thrilled, absolutely thrilled."



Photo by Nicole Riley

A little boy jumps into the Eufaula City Pool on 6th Street North of Foley. Smiling kids filled the clear pool as they splashed and jumped about in the mid-day heat.

## Eufaula pool opened June 2

Eufaula City Pool is open from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, from June 2 through August 1.

Season passes are \$25 per person with a family pass (up to four people) for \$50.

Two sessions of swimming lessons are scheduled: Session

one—11 a.m. to 11:55 a.m., Monday through Friday, June 16-27. Session two—11 a.m. to 11:55 a.m., Monday through Friday, July 7-18.

Swimming lessons cost \$25 per session.

Water aerobics will be available on Tuesdays and

Thursdays at 6 p.m., June 10-July 31. Cost is \$2 per session or \$20 for the season.

Pool rental is also available for \$25 per hour plus lifeguard fees.

The Eufaula City Pool can be reached during business hours at 689-1015.

## Accused killer returned to facility

By Donna Pearce  
Managing Editor

Rodger Dale Stockton's family was happy with the judge's decision last Thursday—as happy as anyone can be who's lost a family member to a violent crime.

"We thought they were going to let him out," said Linda Stockton about the accused killer of her brother.

She and her sister, Nona Smith, and Rodger Dale Stockton's daughter, Dora, along with other family members were in court again to keep watch that justice remains served.

They all feared Berry Joe Williamson, who was convicted in 2005 of the May 24, 2004 shooting death of Rodger Dale Stockton, 65, of Checotah, would be set free.

However, following testimony, District Judge Thomas Bartheld ordered Williamson returned to the Cedar Canyon Adventure Program, a juvenile group home near Weatherford, Oklahoma.

Age 14 at the time of Stockton's death, Williamson was remanded to the custody of the Office of Juvenile Affairs after being sentenced to 10 years.

See "Accused" page 3

### —Ticket Sales— —Notice—

Lynrd Skynrd concert tickets are now available for purchase at Eufaula Food Market. They are no longer on sale at Lakeside Mart since the business has changed ownership and name.



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## Crime doesn't pay but Crime Stoppers will

By Connie Morris  
Edited by Donna Pearce

McIntosh County Crime Stoppers has reorganized and announces a new 800 number

for tips on crimes in the county.

"We have a national number which automatically routes the calls to our local agencies," said Mike Garrett, an original founder of the local organization and

chairman of the reorganized group.

"We will have three local agencies with dedicated phone lines, and one of them should be hooked up by the time this arti-

cle comes out," he said.

The national number to call is 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

Up to \$1,000 reward will be offered for tips that lead to an arrest in felony crimes commit-

ted in McIntosh County. As in the past and with other crime stopper organizations, the caller will remain anonymous.

See "Crime" page 3

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