

ADOPTION AWARDS TO BE PRESENTED DURING CEREMONY OCT. 24

From House Media

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) The co-chairs of the Legislature's Adoption Law Reform Committee, three "created families" and a professional in the field of adoption services will be honored later this month.

The honorees will be recognized during the third annual "Celebration of Created Families." The banquet is scheduled Oct. 24, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Oklahoma City Marriott Hotel, as a prelude to observance of National Adoption Awareness Month nationwide in November.

The celebration will be sponsored by Mercy Health Center and St. Anthony Hospital in Oklahoma City, with assistance from Associated Catholic Charities and the Oklahoma Adoption Coalition.

Legislative awards will be presented to state Rep. Russ Roach, D-Tulsa, and Sherri Finik, executive director of Adoption Affiliates.

Roach, an adoptive parent, was the principle author of House Bill 2975, the Oklahoma Adoption Act which passed the Legislature and was signed into law this year. Finik, who has been involved in political and community advocacy for women's and children's issues for several years, also played a key role in passage of the legislation.

"Created Family Awards" will be presented to adoptive parents Glenda and Sam Ssali of Tulsa, Chris and Caressa Mason of Broken Arrow, and Dr. and Mrs. J. Mark Knox of Edmond.

The Ssalis have adopted seven children, making theirs a multi-cultural family (Asian, African-American and Caucasian). The Ma-

sons had a biological daughter of their own, then adopted five more children. The Knoxes have adopted four children, and both teach a course to physicians stressing adoption as an alternative to abortion or single parenting.

Nominated for the Hilde Lillegaard Service Award are Julia Reed, director of Family Support Services for Catholic Charities, and Finik, who has worked with Adoption Affiliates for more than 17 years.

Adoption Affiliates is a women's reproductive health facility and licensed adoption agency. Associated Catholic Charities, which was created in 1912, is a non-profit social service organization that focuses on maternity issues such as adoption and teen parenting, and operates a maternity home for teen-age mothers.

The winner of the Hilde Lillegaard Service Award will be announced during the banquet.

Keynote speaker for the event will be Evonne Winhaus, an author, licensed counselor and clinical social worker who is nationally recognized for her expertise in the field of parenting.

GINGRICH SETS OKLAHOMA CITY FUND-RAISING STOP

By Shawn Ashley
Staff Writer

■(GIT) Speaker of the US House of Representatives Newt Gingrich will be in Oklahoma City on Wednesday during a multi-state fundraising and endorsement trip.

According to Genevive Kopel, from the speaker's political liaison office, Gingrich will visit Oklahoma City for a Republican National Committee fund-raiser. Because the event will be private, rather than public, Kopel would not reveal where or when the event will be held or what candidates might specifically benefit from the event.

Similar events, Kopel noted, are planned later that day in Charlotte, North Carolina, and Columbia, South Carolina.

The Oklahoma and Carolinas appearances will conclude a nearly week-long series of events for Gingrich, which included fund-raisers and other events in Georgia, Colorado, Utah and Texas. The speaker will return to Washington, DC, on Thursday.

During his Oklahoma City stop, the speaker will meet with members of the press during an 8:15 a.m. press conference. Gingrich will be joined at the press conference by Governor Frank Keating.

ROMINGER ANNOUNCES
USDA'S SUPPORT OF
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

From US Dept. of Agriculture

■(PELZER, SC) Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Richard Rominger last Friday announced a policy directive expressing USDA's commitment to sustainable development which includes sustainable agriculture, forestry, and rural communities. Rominger made the announcement while visiting a dairy farm that demonstrates sustainable production methods.

"USDA is committed to working toward the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of diverse food, fiber, agriculture, forest, and range systems," Rominger said. "In a Secretary's Memorandum on Sustainable Development issued recently, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman articulated the need to balance the goals of production and profitability, stewardship of the natural resource base and ecological systems, and viability of rural communities."

Rominger's remarks were made at a pre-Farm Aid event at Trantham Dairy that featured a rotational grazing tour for farmers and Clemson University Extension agents.

The goal of sustainable agriculture is to increase economic profitability, enhance environmental stewardship, and improve the quality of life on farms and in rural areas. The policy directive is in response to the President's Council on Sustainable Development and a USDA working group's recommendations on ways the Department could better incorporate sustainability into its missions and programs.

Through this Memorandum, Glickman will establish a USDA Council on Sustainable Development for the coordination and integration of policies, programs, activities, and education on this issue throughout the Department. Adela Backiel, director of Sustainable Development, will chair the Council, consisting of representatives from various USDA agencies.

"I'm very optimistic about how the Council on Sustainable Development can encourage the breadth of USDA agencies to meet the needs of all of USDA's customers and work together to implement the recommendations of the President's Council on Sustainable Development," Backiel said.

Rate Cut, continued from page 3

tell how the recommended rate reductions would be distributed among the various OG&E customer classes. Edmondson anticipates filing this so-called "rate design" testimony next week.

"The recommended rate reductions will be allocated among the various customer classes as fairly as possible," Edmondson said. However, he cautioned that any such rate design must recognize the differing costs of serving the different classes, as well as the difference in competitive alternatives among classes.

The current scheduling order in the case calls for the hearing to be held Nov. 22 through Dec. 13, with an order to be issued by the end of the year.