

Capitol Network News

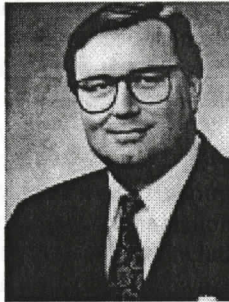
Today's news from Oklahoma's best government information resource

Daily Edition, Thursday, November 14, 1996

JOHNSON BIDS FAREWELL TO STAFF, HOUSE

By Shawn Ashley
Staff Writer

■(GIT) Outgoing Speaker of the House of Representatives Glen Johnson took the House floor one last time Thursday to bid his final farewell to members of the legislative staff.



Glen Johnson
Outgoing Speaker

A bipartisan group of approximately 80 staffers, including Johnson's own office staff, secretaries, House researchers and others, gathered in the House chamber for what Johnson described as his final thank you to those with whom he had worked since entering the House of Representatives 14 years ago. Greeted by a standing ovation, Johnson said, "I wish you all had been voters in the Second District on Nov. 5," referring to his unsuccessful effort to unseat Republican incumbent Congressman Tom Coburn.

The outgoing speaker opened his remarks with a story about the day in 1982 when he came to the House for the start of the legislative session. First, he said, then-Rep. Kelly Haney, D-Seminole, claimed the larger desk

in the office the two men shared by explaining that House rules dictated that the member with the most seniority received the better facilities.

"I don't think he ever showed me that rule," Johnson joked.

He then related how Sen. Gene Stipe, D-McAlester, visited his office following Gov. George Nigh's state of the state address. According to Johnson, Stipe said he had followed his campaign closely and praised him for the race he had run, saying that he was looking forward to working with the then-freshman lawmaker. As Stipe left, Johnson said, he said, "We country lawyers have to stick together."

Johnson admitted being impressed by the visit and said that he shared that feeling with Haney, who had sat quietly at his desk reading during the visit. Haney then told Johnson of an identical visit when he first entered the legislature. According to Johnson, Haney said the meeting concluded with Stipe say-

ing, "We Indians have to stick together."

Johnson said of his impending departure, "It was a privilege and a pleasure to work with most of you."

Speaking on behalf of himself and other representatives, Johnson said the dedication and sacrifices of those who work behind the scenes in the House were appreciated.

"I hope you all have a sincere appreciation for the fact that what you do here impacts on people's lives," said Johnson.

On behalf of many of the staffers present, chief clerk Larry Warden presented Johnson with a series of gifts, including a wagon, an umbrella and a statue of a golfer leaning against a club. Warden said the wagon would remind Johnson of the House's delivery system, that the umbrella would serve to remind the outgoing speaker of his discussions concerning the Rainy Day fund that the statue represented the staff's hopes that Johnson would "always have great fairways and greens."

VOSKUHL, MORGAN 'WIN' LEGISLATIVE SEATS

By Shawn Ashley
Staff Writer

■(GIT) More than a week after the votes were originally counted, residents of state House District 41 and state Senate District 21 have duly elected legislators.

In a decision reached late Wednesday and a recount completed Thursday, incumbent Sean Voskuhl, D-Marshall, was declared the winner in the House District 21. Voskuhl's apparent 11-vote victory last week was challenged by his Republican opponent, Curt Roggow, of Enid.

Roggow demanded a recount of the ballots cast in the three counties in the district and also alleged irregularities in some of the votes cast for Voskuhl. In the recount, which was completed Thursday, Voskuhl gained seven additional votes, State Election Board Secretary Lance Ward said, while Roggow neither gained nor lost any, giving the incumbent an 18-vote advantage over his op-

ponent. In a ruling issued Wednesday, the allegations of voter irregularities were dismissed, Ward said.

The conclusions mean Voskuhl remains the unofficial winner until Monday when the State Election Board will vote to certify the results.

Also on Thursday, a judge dismissed the allegations of Stillwater Republican Randy Wedel concerning some voting irregularities in his race against Stillwater Democrat Mike Morgan in the Senate District 21 race. Morgan notched a 32-vote victory over Wedel in the general election, but like Roggow, Wedel alleged some of those who voted for his opponent were either registered in other counties or not registered at all. A Lincoln County judge, Ward said, dismissed the allegations related to those voters who may have been twice-registered and recognized that 11 Payne County voters appeared to

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GROWING COMPANY HOLDS JOB FAIR

By Gerry Cherry
Staff Writer

■(GIT) The search for qualified machinists to help their booming business expand finally led Pro-Fab, Inc. of Oklahoma City to set up a Job Fair. Hoping to fill 50 new positions to add to the work force of 100, Pro-Fab will introduce prospective employees to their facility Saturday. If the job fair is successful, other growing businesses in Oklahoma might adopt the strategy.

Coordinator Mickey Quoetone said a nationwide shortage of skilled machinists has left the firm shorthanded at a time when growth is only waiting for enough people to do the jobs. "We have enough work for 24-hours-a-day," she said, "but only enough people for one and one-half shifts."

After trying all the traditional ways to attract experienced workers—newspaper advertising, radio spots, and use of employment services in Oklahoma and other states—Quoetone said the Oklahoma Department

of Commerce helped Pro-Fab come up with the idea of attracting potential employees with a job fair. "We hope to show experienced machinists our company can offer more than any other," Quoetone said.

The job fair, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the plant at 910 N. Morgan Road, will feature a tour of the facility and information about the company and its history. Interested visitors can fill out an application and interviews for qualified individuals will be arranged. Pro-Fab is looking for electrical and mechanical maintenance personnel, as well as skilled machinists.

"We know it's not feasible to get that many skilled machinists," Quoetone said, "but we will train workers with core skills, such as blueprint reading, and we are even looking at talented people with mechanical ability. There's an opportunity to move into engineering just by starting in the field," she said.

Jim Rice, founder of the company, started the business in his garage, with one machine, in 1987. Before beginning the venture he worked for Kawasaki as a mechanic, then moved into the construction industry, becoming head of his own firm. When the bottom dropped out of Oklahoma's economy, Quoetone said, Rice turned to other skills. Beginning with one machine, Rice built the company to its current status as a major supplier of parts for the GV jet, manufactured by Gulfstream Aerospace Technologies. Pro-Fab also has contracts with Rockwell International, Boeing, Cessna, Raytheon, British Aerospace and the U.S. Government.

Rice's first contracts were for machine gun parts. Today, one of Pro-Fab's defense contracts is the manufacture of the breechlock on the M-2 machine gun and the bipod on the M-60 machine gun. They also manufacture the refueling boom for the KC-135 aerial tanker for the U.S. Air Force. The company has expanded eight times since it's founding, and sales are projected at \$10 million.

According to Rice, it is Pro-Fab's technical expertise as well as precision, simultaneous, five-axis machining centers, and CAD/CAM equipment, that sets the company apart. Right now, more technical expertise is what they need.

"People are our most valuable resource," Rice said. "We stay on the leading edge of technology and it's imperative to have skilled workers handling our operations. Technol-

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STATE CHAMBER TO RELEASE GOVERNMENT REPORT

By Shawn Ashley
Staff Writer

■(GIT) Oklahoma 2000, Inc., the research affiliate of The State Chamber, will release the results of its two-year study of the implications a citizen-imposed limit on tax increases on state government on Monday.

Entitled "In Search of Smaller Government: The Case of State Finance in Oklahoma," the study focuses on the impact of State Question 640, which was approved by voters in 1982 and is considered one of the most strict measures so far in placing limitations on the legislature to raise revenues.

The study also examines governmental responses to the limitation imposed by the constitutional amendment, which indicates that officials have adapted to the amendment by identifying alternative methods of increasing funding without invoking the amendment's requirements, and a survey of voter opinions indicates a conservative orientation of the public toward government and further limitations of the program reduction prospects and revenue raising alternatives available to state government officials. Additionally, the study examines the conflicting pressures between state residents' desire for services and their emphasis on lower taxes. Evidence compiled by the researchers also indicates that the state is turning to "off budget enterprises" to perform governmental functions.

An important question raised by the study, according to the chamber, is whether the amendment has created the condition for a structural or long term deficit and whether this is insufficient to maintain the existing level of services. Although revenues will grow with economic expansion, the study concluded, the rigidity of the present tax structure is a further limiting factor. From a review of the tax structure and the changing program emphasis in Oklahoma, the study finds that it is most likely that revenue will grow less rapidly than both the overall economy and expenditure needs.

The study concludes, "Oklahoma's search for limited government may be over. As the state moves toward the 21st century, the quest will be to identify the most rational and creative pattern of response to the new budget realities."

The study will be released during The State Chamber's annual meeting and during an afternoon press conference at the State Capitol.

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have voted although they were not registered. The 11 voters were not enough to surmount the difference between the two men, and Morgan was declared the unofficial winner, pending action from the election board on Monday.

Either of the losing candidates, Ward noted, have one avenue remaining: An appeal to the Oklahoma Supreme Court, where they could seek a stay of the election board's action pending arguments concerning their cases.

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A division of
GIT, Inc.
P.O. Box 61206
Oklahoma City, OK 73146-1206
Office (405) 528-2546
Fax (405) 521-9807
Net: gitinc@ionet.net
Web: <http://www.exoweb.com/git>

Darwin P. Maxey, Publisher
Mary Millen, Editor

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OESC ACCEPTS GRANT FOR CAREER CENTERS

By Michelle Boyd Waters
Staff Writer

■(GIT)The U.S. Department of Labor recently awarded the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission a \$3 million grant to launch One-Stop Career Center Systems, Glen Robards, OESC's One-Stop coordinator, said.

The OESC, with the aid of local Job Training Partnership Act grant recipients, has divided the state into several areas and will centralize the employment information and services in that area to one or more integrated facilities. The facilities will provide referrals, testing and assessment and information on job openings and labor markets and careers.

"We aren't so interested in physical organization as in coordination," Robards said. He mentioned that leases and local office markets have made it hard for some partners to physically relocate.

In some cases, the program will just help the services have a centralized access point, the coordinator said.

One-Stop will enable all partners involved in the program to access the One-Net system and to develop a common data depository.

Robards said partners in Bartlesville have already begun to integrate their services at the Tri-County Vo-tech. The OESC and Lawton JTPA recipients are also working together to coordinate information and services.

"As we continue building a world class work force, the One-Stop Career Center System is the perfect tool for coordinating information and streamlining the delivery of service," Gov. Frank Keating said. "This grant money will put Oklahoma on the cutting edge of employment services. It will

especially be helpful as we continue the effort of providing jobs to get people off welfare."

The one-year grant will fund the purchase and coordination of technology and services among private and state job search and information organizations. Robards said Oklahoma employment organizations had discussed possible solutions to problems with coordinating employment information and services. Before One-Stop, people seeking employment or employees had to go to several places and through several organizations to locate information or services.

One-Stop will also provide easier access to information and services for disabled people.

"This nation depends upon all of its workers and it is important that we make the workplace more accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities," U.S. Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich said. "By increasing the accessibility of the nation's existing and future One-Stop career centers, we can better insure inclusion for all workers."

The DOL plans to use nearly \$300,000 in funding across the nation to develop technical assistance on disability issues for One-Stop centers. DOL's Bureau of Labor Statistics is also conducting further studies with the Census Bureau to gather information on the employment experience of disabled people.

Oklahoma was one of eight states who competed for and won One-Stop grants this year. Twenty-four states now are in the process of implementing the program. When the program becomes fully operational next year, 80 percent of the nation's civilian labor force in 33 states will be able to access the One-Stop services.

HEPATITIS A EPIDEMIC CONTINUES

By Michelle Boyd Waters
Staff Writer

■(GIT)The State Health Department is drafting a budget proposal to request additional funding from the state legislature to develop a more comprehensive system for dealing with contagious disease outbreaks, said Lauri Smithee, director of Communicable Disease for the State Health Department.

Oklahoma is experiencing a rise in the number of cases of Hepatitis A, Salmonella and E. Coli 0157:H7 infections, Smithee said.

Hepatitis A has reached epidemic proportions in central and western Oklahoma counties — including Oklahoma, Stephens, Garfield and Pottawatomie counties. Cases of Salmonella and E.Coli. have significantly increased this year, also, the director said.

The first cases of Hepatitis A were reported in far eastern Oklahoma in 1994, said Dr. J.R. Nida, State Health Department Commissioner of Health. The average number of cases per year prior to 1994 was 345 cases of Hepatitis A. Smithee said 2,139 cases of Hepatitis A have been reported to date this year.

"The epidemic took off last winter," Smithee said. "We have five times as many cases as we did before."

The director said that part of the epidemic can be attributed to natural processes. In the United States, the number of cases rise approximately every 10 years because the number of people who have never been infected has increased, she said.

Another contributing factor is the increase in 20- to 40-year-olds who participate in parties where drugs are used or shared, Smithee said.

Hepatitis A can be contracted from intimate (and sexual) contact with people who are carrying the virus. Hepatitis A is carried in fecal material and people who do not wash their hands can spread it to foods, which people eat and ingest the virus. Carriers of the virus are contagious for as long a month, she said.

Hepatitis A is a liver disease that can result in fever, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting and generalized weakness, Nida said. These symptoms may be followed in a few days by darkened urine and yellow eyes and skin. It causes problems such as missing work, often as much as six weeks. The related health care costs can be high.

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Job Fair, continued from page 2

ogy will only take us so far . . . our employees will get us the significant results."

Hoping to solve some of the company's work-force woes, Rice said, "we're looking forward to exploring career opportunities, talking about our competitive company benefits and telling interested individuals about our continuing education and advancement program at our job fair this Saturday."

This week, Pro-Fab, Inc. was named one of the 50 fastest-growing private companies in the area by *The Metro Journal*. Rice will be featured in the December issue.



DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S COUNCIL MEETS TO DISCUSS LAW ENFORCEMENT

By Michelle Boyd Waters
Staff Writer

■(GIT) The state of Oklahoma only spends a nickel — or 5 percent — of its annual revenue on police, prisons and prosecutors, said Bruce Walker, executive coordinator of the District Attorney's Council. The council and the Law Enforcement Alliance will hold a town meeting in Stillwater on Monday to discuss the problems associated with Oklahoma's underfunded justice system.

"The Law Enforcement Alliance is trying to inform the public about what is truly happening in the criminal justice system, so that the public can decide how much public safety it wants," Walker said. "The cost to the average Oklahoman to make our criminal justice system funded at the national average level is fifteen pennies a day."

Each Oklahoman would be spending approximately \$55 on law enforcement per

year. Currently, each person is spending just over \$18 per year. The additional money would go to funding agencies involved in investigating, arresting, prosecuting, defending appeals of, imprisoning and supervising criminals, Walker said.

More than 20,000 felony guilty pleas were submitted in 1995, Walker said. However less than 6,000 people convicted of the crimes were sent to prison.

Oklahoma came in 48th when its criminal justice spending per crime was compared to all 50 other states. Arkansas and Mississippi were 49th and 50th, respectively. Missouri came in just above Oklahoma at less than \$4,000 per crime. The top state in nation was Alaska, which spends nearly \$12,000 per crime.

The council has planned several more meetings.

NEW MAPPING, SURVEYING METHODS UNDER STUDY

By Gerry Cherry
Staff Writer

■(GIT) The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) awarded a contract to complete a study of the surveying and mapping activities of federal civilian agencies, state and local governments, and the private sector last week. The National Academy of Public Administration won the contract. The Academy's study will be a collaborative effort of the BLM, the U.S. Geological Survey, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the U.S. Forest Service, all of which are funding the study. The study began in early October and is expected to be completed by June 1997.

"As an agency that manages 270 million acres of public lands on behalf of all Americans, the BLM is committed to finding better ways to meet the needs of the land and the people who depend on it," said BLM Acting Director Mike Dombeck. "Mapping and surveying are essential components of effective land management. This study will help the BLM and other federal agencies advance their efforts to improve mapping and surveying activities."

Neil Suneson, a geologist with the Oklahoma Geological Survey, said the new techniques being studied involve satellite location mapping and sensitive aerial photography with infrared and ultraviolet camera techniques. "I go out in the field and look around," Suneson said of the way surveying has been done for centuries. Geographical Positioning Satellites (GPS) can pinpoint a specific location to within a three-inch circle Suneson said, and elevations can be determined with these satellites also. Use of these new technologies is being studied to see if there is a more accurate way to map and survey.

Other areas of concern in the study is who does the mapping and surveying and why. Could some current federal mapping and surveying activities be better handled at the state or local level? Could some of the work be turned over to private or commercial enterprises with cost-effective results? Should the federal government consolidate or restructure surveying and mapping activities? These and other issues will be addressed in the study.

For example, Dombeck noted, accurate maps are necessary for locating and preserving threatened and endangered plant species. In addition, he said, accurate land surveys

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Nida also said that those with chronic liver disease are at increased risk for complications and death due to infection from this disease.

Those at high risk of acquiring hepatitis A are children who attend a child care setting such as day care, persons whose children attend a child care center or similar institution. Also, persons who live in or travel to counties with epidemic rates of hepatitis A or persons who travel internationally to developing countries where hepatitis A is endemic have increased risk or infection, Nida said.

Smithie said that restaurant workers with Hepatitis A have not been a factor in propagating this epidemic. No outbreaks have been reported from cooks to the general public, she said.

"The real risk has been related to personal contact," the director said.

According to the City-County Health Department of Oklahoma County, the best way of preventing the spread of the virus is practicing good personal hygiene. Conscientious hand washing after using the restroom is an effective way of avoiding this illness.

The State Health Department has issued public health warnings. Also, Smithie said the department is currently working on a media campaign. Immune globulin can be effective in preventing the disease if it is administered within a short time after exposure.

Immune globulin is a short-term, one exposure preventative measure. But in the case of high-risk population or prolonged exposure, the disease can be prevented by immunization with the new hepatitis A vaccine.

Salmonella, on the other hand, is transmitted through the ingestion of contaminated food, such as chicken and eggs. The foods transmit the bacteria when they are not cooked properly, the director said.

The best way to prevent Salmonella poisoning is to wash fruits and vegetables and to properly cook meats.

E.Coli 0157:H7 cases have increased since the United States began requiring that all cases be reported, Smithie said. She also added that laboratories have gotten better at identifying the bacteria.

The bacteria is transmitted through improperly cooked ground beef.

The most cases reported have been from individuals who did not properly cook their beef at home.

Legislature Swearing In Tuesday, November 19

Senate 11 am
Senate Chamber

House at noon
House Chamber

PARENTS LEARN GOOD LISTENING SKILLS

From U.S. Dept. of Education

■(WASHINGTON) Brochures for parents are available from the U.S. Government (see box). Following is one brochure on listening to the child.

HOW CAN PARENTS MODEL GOOD LISTENING SKILLS? Listen Better, Learn More

By Carl Smith, Director, ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills

In one of the Family Circus cartoon strips, the little girl looks up at her father, reading the newspaper, and says, "Daddy, you have to listen to me with your eyes as well as your ears." That statement says almost all there is to say about listening, whether in personal conversations or in learning in school.

Do Listening Skills Affect Learning?

Listening is not a school subject like reading and writing. Many of us seem to feel it comes naturally, and as long as we can listen to directions to find the restroom, nothing more need be said. The latest studies reveal that listening is a very large part of school learning and is one of our primary means of interacting with other people on a personal basis. It is estimated that between 50 and 75 percent of students' classroom time is spent listening to the teacher, to other students, or to audio media.

Can Parents Guide Their Children to Better Listening?

According to research on listening skills, being a good listener means focusing attention on the message and reviewing the important information. Parents can model good listening behavior for their children and advise them on ways to listen as an active learner, pick out highlights of a conversation, and ask relevant questions. Sometimes

it helps to "show" children an active listener is one who looks the speaker in the eye and is willing to turn the television off to make sure the listener is not distracted by outside interference.

Guidelines for Modeling Good Listening Skills

- Be interested and attentive. Children can tell whether they have a parent's interest and attention by the way the parent replies or does not reply. Forget the telephone and other distractions. Maintain eye contact to show you really are with the child.

- Encourage talking. Some children need an invitation to start talking. You might begin with, "Tell me about your day at school." Children are more likely to share their ideas and feelings when others think them important.

- Listen patiently. People think faster than they speak. With limited vocabulary and experience in talking, children often take longer than adults to find the right word. Listen as though you have plenty of time.

- Hear children out. Avoid cutting children off before they have finished speaking. It is easy to form an opinion or reject children's views before they finish what they have to say. It may be difficult to listen respectfully and not correct misconceptions, but respect their right to have and express their opinions.

- Listen to nonverbal messages. Many messages children send are communicated nonverbally—by tone of voice, facial expressions, energy level, posture, or changes in

behavior patterns. You can often tell more from the way a child says something than from what is said. When a child comes in obviously upset, be sure to find a quiet time then or sometime that day to help explore those feelings.

Suggestions for Improving Communication with Children

- Be interested. Ask about children's ideas and opinions regularly. If you show your children you really are interested, they will become comfortable about expressing their thoughts to you.

- Avoid dead-end questions. Questions that require a yes or no answer lead a conversation to a dead end. Questions that ask children to explain, describe or share ideas extend the conversation.

- Extend conversation. Try to pick up a piece of your child's conversation. When you use children's own phrasing or terms, you strengthen their confidence in their conversational and verbal skills and reassure them their ideas are being listened to and valued.

- Share your thoughts. Share what you are thinking with your child. Ask your child's opinion of where to rearrange the furniture.

- Observe signs. Watch the child for signs it is time to end a conversation. When a child begins to stare into space, give silly responses, or ask you to repeat several comments, it is probably time to stop the exchange.

- Reflect feelings. A good listener can put themselves in the shoes of others and empathize with the speaker. As a parent, try

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BROCHURES FOR PARENTS

From U.S. Dept. of Education

■(WASHINGTON) More than two dozen brochures for parents aim to help answer questions such as:

- How can I BE INVOLVED in my child's education?
- How can I help my GIFTED child plan for college?
- How can I improve my child's READING?
- How can I receive FINANCIAL AID for College?
- How can parents find a high-quality PRESCHOOL program?
- How can parents model good LISTENING skills?
- How can we help children learn GEOGRAPHY?
- How important is HOMEWORK?

These and other brochures are available on the "Parent Brochures" homepage at the ACCESS ERIC web site: <http://www.aspensys.com/eric/parent.html>

Paper copies may be ordered by calling 1-800-LET-ERIC; by writing to ACCESS ERIC at 1600 Research Boulevard-MS 5F, Rockville, MD 20850-3172; or by sending an e-mail to: acceric@inet.ed.gov

Access Eric is the promotional and outreach arm of the U.S. Department of Education's Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) system.

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are needed to carry out land transfers and help avoid costly legal boundary disputes.

The Academy will issue a final report on the study, which will be available through the Academy's publications office at (301) 617-7801.

The National Academy of Public Administration is a congressionally chartered, independent, non-profit, non-partisan organization that provides expert advice to government agencies on matters of public administration. The Academy will work with the participating Federal agencies and the American Congress on Surveying and Mapping to carry out the study.

STATES TRY NEW MEDICAID PROGRAMS

By Gerry Cherry
Staff Writer

■(GIT) Fourteen states, including Oklahoma, have been approved by the Department of Health and Human Services to conduct experimental comprehensive health care reform demonstration projects for Medicaid clients. These experiments are testing new and innovative ideas relating to benefits and services, eligibility requirements and processes, program payment and service delivery. The aim of the pilot programs is to serve more low-income and uninsured people, while saving money through more efficient delivery systems.

Section 1115 of the Social Security Act provides the Secretary of Health and Human Services broad discretion to waive certain laws pertaining to Medicaid, in order to conduct experimental, pilot or demonstration projects. Since January 1993, HHS has approved 14 demonstration projects, and the framework of one additional demonstration. In addition, 19 states have received Medicaid waivers since January 1993, as part of larger welfare reform projects. These complementary Medicaid waivers enable states to continue providing essential health care services while encouraging independence from welfare.

Oklahoma's project is called SoonerCare. Managers of the project, the Oklahoma Health Care Authority, under the direction of Dr. Garth Splinter, hope the project will increase access to primary care for benefi-

ciaries through a managed care program in urban and rural areas. To guarantee the development of managed care in rural areas, key incentives will be provided to urban plans who undertake linkage efforts with rural providers. A Managed Care Task Force, with Sen. Stratton Taylor as chairman, is following the program in an oversight capacity. This program was implemented on July 1, 1996, and increases in rates to Medicaid recipients are part of the experiment. HCFA will monitor implementation of this and other programs throughout the 5-year life of the demonstration projects.

A plan to increase federal participation for Medicaid and foster care funding was presented to agency heads who were members of the Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth, last month, which cited pilot programs in Oregon, Illinois and Florida as possible models for some funding practices. Basic outlines of their programs are listed below.

FLORIDA: The Florida Health Security Program is a voluntary, employer-based, discounted premium program designed to provide access to private health insurance for employed but uninsured Floridians. The program will use a managed competition model and will provide health insurance for 1.1 million uninsured Floridians with incomes at or below 250 percent of the FPL. The state is working on required state legislation. HCFA granted Florida an exemption from the 75/25 enrollment composition require-

ment for a 1-year period beginning July 1, 1996, for health plans achieving a rating of over 90 percent in the state's annual review.

OREGON: The Oregon Health Plan expands Medicaid eligibility and shifts delivery of Medicaid services into fully and partially capitated plans and primary care case management programs. The state utilized a public prioritization process to establish the service package provided under the Medicaid demonstration. The demonstration extends Medicaid coverage to individuals with incomes up to 100 percent of the FPL, expanding coverage to over 120,000 additional low-income Oregonians. This program was implemented on February 1, 1994 and HCFA is monitoring implementation of the program.

ILLINOIS: MediPlan Plus will increase access and quality of health care for the state's 1.1 million Medicaid beneficiaries through increased use of managed care. Managed care will be provided through a mix of health maintenance organizations, provider-run managed care community networks (MCCNs), pre-paid health plans (for a limited period), and enrolled managed care providers who agree to provide case management services. These providers will include Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) and physicians. MediPlan Plus will be implemented statewide. Illinois anticipates that it will take a minimum of 13 months to implement the program.

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to mirror your children's feelings by repeating them.

- Help clarify and relate experiences. As you listen, try to make your child's feelings clear by stating them in your own words.

Why are Parents Important in Building Children's Communications Skills?

Parents play an essential role in building children's communication skills because children spend more time with their parents than any other adult. Children also have a deeper involvement with their parents than with any other adult, and the family as a unit has lifelong contact with its members. Parents control many of the contacts a child has with society as well as society's contacts with the child.

The greatest audience children can have is an adult who is important to them and interested in them.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

From U.S. Dept. of Commerce

■(WASHINGTON) This report presents initial lessons learned from the Telecommunications and Information Infrastructure Assistance Program (TIIAP) projects funded in 1994 and 1995. The report looks at the community impacts of TIIAP projects, and presents examples of how specific projects are using advanced telecommunications and information technologies to provide better services, strengthen community ties, and provide increased access to information for thousands of Americans.

Lessons learned to date include insights into project planning, selecting the appropriate technologies, developing and maintaining productive community partnerships, and securing long-term financial support.

Material for the report was gathered from a workshop and focus group sessions conducted with TIIAP project directors in June 1996, and a review of TIIAP project reports and documents. The report is intended for community-based organizations and government agencies wishing to incorporate new information technologies into services they provide the community, as well as those who seek to better understand the TIIAP program.

The TIIAP program is administered by the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). It is a competitive, merit-based grant program providing seed money for innovative, information infrastructure projects by state and local governments, schools and school districts, non-profit health care and

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community organizations, libraries, colleges, and public safety. In 1994 and 1995, TIAP awarded 210 grants in 48 states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Approximately \$60 million in Federal grant funds were matched by \$100 million in non-federal funds. A significant amount went to rural areas generally underserved by information technologies; disadvantaged urban Americans also benefited from projects.

The Impact of TIAP Projects

Two-thirds of the TIAP projects are still underway, but in discussions with project directors and a review of project reports, significant impacts are beginning to emerge.

- **Innovations in Education.** Schools are using the Internet to provide teachers with new teaching tools and students with new educational opportunities. Students in rural areas are using distance learning networks to take advanced placement courses from teachers hundreds of miles away.

- **Increased Access to Lifelong Learning Opportunities.** Rural public libraries are expanding services, schools are using networks to open doors to their communities, and adult learners are improving job skills by taking courses through distance learning networks.

- **More Responsive Public Institutions.** A number of government agencies, schools, libraries, and other community organizations that previously had limited means of reaching their constituencies now provide information over the Internet.

- **Enhanced Economic Development in**

Rural and Disadvantaged Areas. TIAP grants demonstrate non-profit and public service organizations no longer need to be bound by geography and time. For example, several rural businesses with limited resources and technical skills, now market their products over the Internet.

- **Increased Access to Health Care.** Many groups with limited access to health care services, particularly rural communities, now gain greater access through telemedicine networks.

- **Increased Sense of Community.** Workers in government agencies, students, health care providers and others are using e-mail and other electronic messaging to expand the network they reach, improve service delivery, and increase communication with others.

- **Replicable Models and Strategies for Introducing Information Infrastructure into the Public and Non-Profit Sectors.** TIAP projects receive frequent inquiries from people all over the world interested in learning to implement similar projects.

Case Studies

Plugged In of East Palo Alto, CA demonstrated that young people from urban, low-income neighborhoods can become providers of information technology, not just consumers. Plugged In operates a community access center for the community to connect to information technology. Working in a state-of-the-art lab, young people create multi-media slide shows about their community, conduct videoconferences with others,

and operate computer service businesses creating and selling Internet home pages for local and national clients.

Technical Learning Centers and Schools. The Foundation for Educational Innovation (FEI) created a Technical Learning Center in a Washington, D.C. middle school and took students on "virtual visits" to distant museums. Over the course of the project, students participated more and more interactively. FEI developed a three-stage model for integrating virtual visits into a science curriculum.

The Tri-State Network Project of Jackson, MS, showed that an advanced telecommunications infrastructure can help further a community's educational and economic goals. The Tri-State Project assists development initiatives in rural Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee.

Charlotte's Web, a regional computer network spearheaded by the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg Counties of North Carolina, demonstrated that schools, libraries, police and fire departments, and community groups can work together to create an electronic information system residents will rely on and use. Classrooms use the educational resources of the Internet and residents search job listings, access a comprehensive weather service, and discuss regional issues on-line.

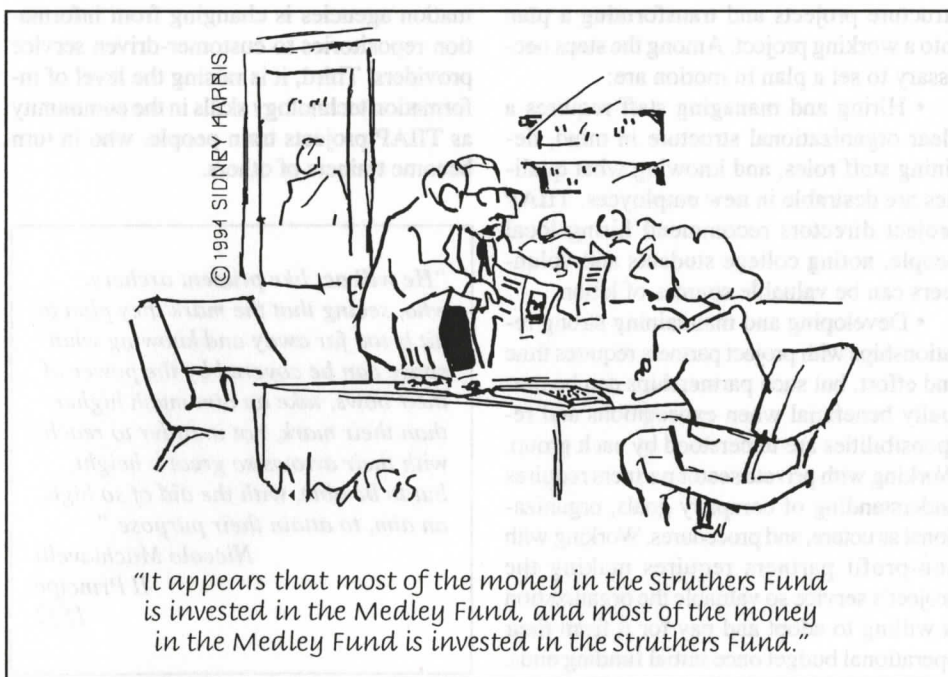
The Inland Northwest Community Access Network (TINCAN), based in Cheney, WA, has shown that residents in isolated areas can access local and national networks without high costs. TINCAN, a community network, provides six counties in eastern Washington and one in western Idaho with local free-net and access to the Internet.

The United Neighborhood Houses, a settlement house organization, demonstrated that a small social service organization with a tight budget can use the same technology as large corporations to improve delivery of services and efficiency of its workers through a network.

Telecommunications Uniting Native Americans to Develop Rural Alaska (TUNDRA), in Bethel, AK, demonstrated that rural groups can overcome the cost of the "last mile" in delivering services. Working with a consortium of organizations, TUNDRA reduced the cost of reaching a network in western Alaska, allowing people of the Delta region to access the Internet and communicate with other native villages.

SmartCities, a project of the Kansas City

See **Telecommunications**, page 8



Telecommunications, continued from page 7

Area Development Council, demonstrated that a regional group can accelerate the deployment of advanced technologies to attract businesses and create jobs. Working with a coalition, the group developed a blueprint for modernizing the information infrastructure in the greater Kansas City area, thus contributing to the region's reputation as a leading-edge area for electronic business.

Coordinated Care for Tuberculosis Patients, a project led by Columbia University in New York City, demonstrated the information infrastructure can be used to fight serious health problems, such as tuberculosis. This consortium established an electronic sharing of TB case reports, automated protocols to detect new cases of TB, wireless links from visiting nurses in patient homes to health records stored at the hospital, and a touch-screen kiosk at clinics providing health information for TB patients. As a result, patients receive better care and health agencies have greater control over the spread of infectious disease.

Making Healthy MUSIC. In New Jersey, a coalition led by the Newark Public Schools created an electronic community network to revitalize an inner-city community with better communication. The project is also re-defining the relationship between the school and the community to foster higher levels of student literacy.

Getting Started

Successful projects create a disciplined, business-like approach and foster communication with other groups, often leading to partnerships. TIIAP projects demonstrate how to plan the successful introduction of information technology into a public service setting.

In general, steps in the planning process include:

- Gathering information about community needs, assets and resources, existing information infrastructure, end-user training requirements, and related issues.
- Developing a business plan involves defining: project goals, specific problems or needs, potential partners and roles, staffing, marketing, detailed budget and timeline, and a plan for financially sustaining the project.
- Developing an evaluation plan identifies project goals and provides a means of measuring the extent to which goals are met. Such a plan provides important feedback during development of the project.
- Identifying potential sources of funding, including: corporate and foundation funding, third party in-kind donations of

goods or services, fees for services rendered, other federal grants, or state, tribal, local and/or non-federal grants. Financial support brings legitimacy and status to a project, making the organization a serious contender for additional funding.

- Soliciting potential partners who can play a critical role in providing advice, leveraging financial support, and serving as powerful community advocates is vital. Partners are drawn from local organizations that complement the talents and resources of the project group. Potential partners include end-user organizations, equipment vendors, technical consulting firms, and government entities.

- Planning for sustainability must begin at an early stage. Ideally, funding to sustain a project should come from many sources, in return for a variety of services.

- Determining which technologies to use is complicated by the current pace of technological change. In general, project directors should follow technology trends, remain flexible, and be prepared to adapt to unplanned contingencies.

- Replicating models that can be adopted in other locales is a feature of TIIAP programs. A new group seeking to develop a service should learn what happened in the model project, extract the core elements, and adapt the model to the new context, taking into account the context of the community where the application must take root and grow.

Moving Forward

TIIAP projects offer valuable lessons about implementing new information infrastructure projects and transforming a plan into a working project. Among the steps necessary to set a plan in motion are:

- Hiring and managing staff requires a clear organizational structure in mind, defining staff roles, and knowing what qualities are desirable in new employees. TIIAP project directors recommend hiring local people, noting college students and volunteers can be valuable sources of labor.
- Developing and maintaining strong relationships with project partners requires time and effort, but such partnerships can be mutually beneficial when expectations and responsibilities are understood by each group. Working with private sector partners requires understanding of company goals, organizational structure, and procedures. Working with non-profit partners requires making the project's service so valuable the organization is willing to adopt and pay for it from their operational budget once initial funding ends.

- Marketing the project means non-profit organizations must think like businesses, which involves researching potential markets, targeting services and products to clearly defined groups, and following-up with strong customer service.

- Working with equipment vendors and technical consultants requires careful research, knowledge of the equipment and services needed, a realistic budget, and clear expectations regarding timelines and delivery schedules.

- Managing some project costs can be anticipated and built into a budget, but hidden costs can quickly escalate. This category includes costs of training end-users, retrofitting old equipment, internal wiring, ongoing maintenance, and network connections.

- Working with end-users is challenging, because they often have limited experience with new technologies. Overcoming this obstacle requires training and time. End-users also want a service that is easy to use and quickly displays content that is useful, timely, and well-organized.

Next Steps

Lessons learned to date suggest that TIIAP is serving important needs in the community. First, the projects are helping cities, schools, libraries, economic development groups, police and other public safety departments, and social service organizations become anchor tenants on the National Information Infrastructure (NII), thereby attracting others to use the NII. Second, the role of many government agencies, libraries, schools, and other information agencies is changing from information repositories to customer-driven service providers. Third, it is raising the level of information technology skills in the community as TIIAP projects train people, who in turn become trainers of others.

"He will act like prudent archers, who, seeing that the mark they plan to hit is too far away and knowing what space can be covered by the power of their bows, take an aim much higher than their mark, not in order to reach with their arrows so great a height, but to be able, with the aid of so high an aim, to attain their purpose."

Niccolo Machiavelli
Il Principe
1532

UNLIMITED LIABILITY LIMITS ON INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS APPROVED

From U.S. Dept. of Transportation

■ (WASHINGTON) The Department of Transportation this week approved agreements to allow U.S. and foreign airlines to implement on an interim basis three agreements waiving the Warsaw Convention's liability limit for injury or death on international flights.

"With today's action we are taking a historic step towards realizing President Clinton's goal of allowing victims and their families to receive appropriate compensation for airline accidents without facing the prospect of decades of litigation," Secretary of Transportation Federico Pena said. "Our quick action to allow the agreement to take effect will allow the traveling public to benefit immediately from the carriers' voluntary action while we explore ways to further protect passengers on international flights."

"I want to thank the victims' families for their tireless efforts to attain a better system for compensation."

The department's decision, which is effective immediately, will permit passengers and their families to recover the full amount of damages incurred on international flights of signatory carriers without any limit. Under the previous standard they were limited to \$75,000 unless they could prove that the carrier was guilty of "willful misconduct," an extreme form of gross negligence.

The department deferred action on a number of conditions it proposed in its Oct. 3 show cause order tentatively approving the agreements. DOT said that it would allow passengers to benefit immediately from the carriers' voluntary waiver of the limits while it considers ways to enhance the agreement.

The 1971 Montreal/Guatemala Protocols to amend the Warsaw Convention, together with a proposed supplemental compensation

plan, would have effectively eliminated the limits for U.S. passengers. However, Congress failed to ratify the protocols and the effort to provide American passengers with a fairer standard stalled. Determined to take a new approach, in February 1995 the department granted authority to the Air Transport Association of America and the International Air Transport Association to develop agreements that would meet department-specified guidelines.

U.S. carriers signing the agreement are Alaska Airlines, Allegheny Airlines, American Airlines, American Trans Air, AM Eagle, AMR Combs BJS, Continental Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Hawaiian Airlines, Kiwi International Airlines, Midwest Express Airlines, Northwest Airlines, Piedmont Airlines, PSA Airlines, Reeve Aleutian Airways, Trans World Airlines, United Airlines, UPS Airlines and USAir.

Foreign carriers signing the agreement are Aer Lingus, Aeromexpress, Aeromexico, Air Afrique, Air Aruba, Air Baltic, Air

Canada, Air Exel Commuter, Air France, Air Mauritius, Air New Zealand, Air UK, Air Vanuatu, All Nippon Airways, Augsburg Airways, Austrian Airlines, Azerbaijan Hava Vollary, British Airways, Canadian Airlines International, Cathay Pacific Airways, Cimber Air, Croatia Airlines, Crossair, Deutsche BA Luftfahrtgesellschaft, Deutsche Lufthansa, Egyptair, Finnair, Garuda Indonesia, GB Airways, Iberia, Icelandair, Japan Air System, Japan Airlines, Jet Airways (India), Kenya Airways, KLM Cityhopper, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, Korean Air Lines, LAPSA Lineas Aereas Paraguayas, Luxair, Malaysia Airlines, Pakistan International Airlines, Qantas Airways Limited, Regional Airlines, Royal Air Maroc, SABENA, Saudi Arabian Airlines, Scandinavian Airlines System, Singapore Airlines, South African Airways, Swissair, TACA, TAP Air Portugal, TAT European Airlines, Transavia Airlines, Trinidad & Tobago BWIA International, Varig and VIASA.

COMMENTS REQUESTED ON EXPORT SALES REPORTING FOR MEATS

From U.S. Dept. of Agriculture

■ (WASHINGTON) The U.S. Department of Agriculture is requesting public comments on a proposal to begin collecting data on meat export sales. The proposal was first announced by Secretary Glickman in late July as one of a series of initiatives to improve competition in livestock markets.

Under the proposal, private firms involved in the export of U.S. meats and meat products, including poultry meats, could be required to report these sales to USDA on a weekly basis. USDA would compile and publish the aggregated data for individual

meats, meat cuts, and export destinations.

"This proposed action," Glickman said, "responds to one of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Agricultural Concentration, which investigated concentration in the livestock, poultry, and rail sectors. Among its findings was a strong endorsement of the view that widely accessible, timely, and accurate information is vital to an efficient and competitive marketplace that best serves the interests of producers, processors, and consumers."

The advisory committee reported that increased concentration within the livestock and poultry sectors has contributed to gaps and inequities in information flows to producers. Among the gaps identified was the lack of timely data on meat exports. Exports represent a growing source of demand for meat. In the mid-1980s, exports accounted for less than 2 percent of annual production of both beef and pork, and less than 4 percent of poultry production. In 1996, exports are forecast to account for 8 percent of beef production, 6 percent of pork production, and 17 percent of poultry production.

"Many livestock and poultry producers view the export information now available as failing to provide the timeliness and depth

See *Meat Sales*, page 10



Meat Sales, cont. from page 9

they need to anticipate and plan for changing market conditions." Glickman said.

"The intent of this proposal is to provide broad access to current export sales data on meats," Glickman said. "Although we believe such data would contribute to fairness and efficiency within these markets, we will carefully review all comments and views before we move ahead with any new rule. Our aim is to ensure that the benefits of the additional information justify the costs, and that the best and most useful information is obtained in a manner that maximizes its value and minimizes the burden of collection and reporting."

The formal request for public comment identifies the existing Export Sales Reporting Program of USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service as one of the tools available for collecting the new information. Comments are invited on all aspects of the proposal and related issues, including the need for export sales data on meats, the benefits and costs of mandatory and voluntary reporting, and specific procedures regarding the frequency and content of the information to be collected and published. To be assured of consideration, comments on the proposal should be received within 60 days.

The complete Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking appears in Thursday's edition of the Federal Register (Nov. 14, 1996, Vol. 61, No. 221, page 58343). Copies of the Federal Register can be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office (202-512-1800).

All comments on the proposal should be sent to: Export Sales Reporting Branch, Trade and Economic Analysis Division, Room 5959—Stop 1025, Foreign Agricultural Service, USDA, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20250-1025. Written comments will be available for public inspection. For further information, contact Thomas B. McDonald, Jr., Chief of the Export Sales Reporting Branch, at 202-720-3273 (fax 202-690-3275).

"By comparison with the greatest subjects of art . . . all politics seem like provincial struggles for booty between dusky tribes."

Sir Stephen Spender
"A Look at the Work"
Horizon
Sept. 1940

**A PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION
THANKSGIVING DAY, 1996**

America's oldest tradition, Thanksgiving is also a reaffirmation of our most deeply held values; a public recognition that, in the words of Thomas Jefferson, "God who gave us life gave us liberty." In gratitude for God's gift of freedom and "for all the great and various favors which he hath been pleased to confer upon us," George Washington made Thanksgiving his first proclamation for the new Nation, and it is one we are privileged to renew each year.

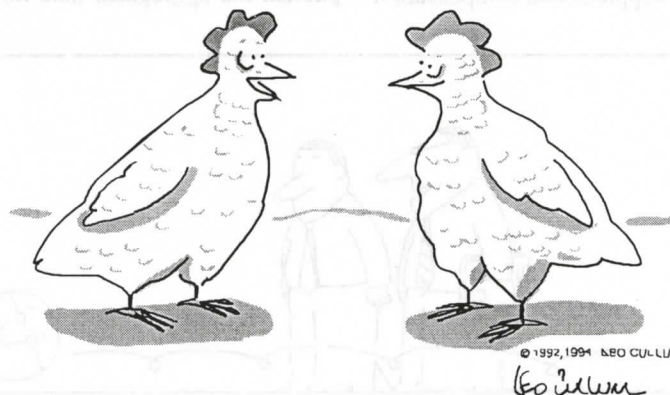
Much has changed for America in the two centuries since that first Thanksgiving proclamation. Generations of hardworking men and women have cultivated our soil and worked the land, and today America's bounty helps feed the world. The promise of freedom that sustained our founders through the hardships of the Revolution and the first challenging days of nationhood has become a reality for millions of immigrants who left their homelands for a new life on these shores. And the light of that freedom now shines brightly in many nations that once lived in the shadows of tyranny and oppression.

But across the years, we still share an unbroken bond with the men and women who first proclaimed Thanksgiving in our land. Americans today still cherish the fresh air of freedom, in which we can raise our families and worship God as we choose without fear of persecution. We still rejoice in this great land and in the civil and religious liberty it offers to all. And we still — and always — raise our voices in prayer to God, thanking Him in humility for the countless blessings He has bestowed on our Nation and our people.

Let us now, this Thanksgiving Day, reawaken ourselves and our neighbors and our communities to the genius of our founders in daring to build the world's first constitutional democracy on the foundation of trust and thanks to God. Out of our right and proper rejoicing on Thanksgiving Day, let us give our own thanks to God and reaffirm our love of family, neighbor, and community. Each of us can be an instrument of blessing to those we touch this Thanksgiving Day — and every day of the year.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 28, 1996, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage all the people of the United States to assemble in their homes, places of worship, or community centers to share the spirit of goodwill and prayer; to express heartfelt gratitude for the blessings of life; and to reach out in friendship to our brothers and sisters in the larger family of mankind.

Signed by President William J. Clinton, November 11, 1996.



"I understand you laid an egg at the committee meeting today, Hilda."

Calendar of Meetings & Events

Friday, November 15, 1996

- 9:00** **State Fire Marshal Commission**
4545 Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City
-
- 9:30-11:30** **Joint Task Force on Parity for Mental Illness Insurance Coverage**
State Capitol, Room 511-A
-
- 10:00** **Alcoholic Beverage Laws Enforcement Commission**
Lincoln Plaza Office Center, Suite 270, 4545 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City
-
- Ethics Commission**
Public Hearing
Board Room, Second Floor of Administration Building, Rogers University/Tulsa Campus,
700 North Greenwood, Tulsa
-
- 1:00** **Managed Care Task Force**
Conference Center, Conference Room C & D, Integris Baptist Medical Center,
3366 NW Expressway, Oklahoma City
-
- 2:30** **Dispute Resolution Advisory Board**
Denver Davison Building, 1915 N. Stiles, Suite 305 Conference Room, Oklahoma City

Monday, November 18, 1996

- 10:00** **Oklahoma Board of Corrections**
Special Meeting
Administration Building, North Conference Room, Oklahoma City
-
- 1:30** **Energy Administration Reform Task Force**
Created by SB 911
Auditorium, University Center at Tulsa/Rogers State College, Tulsa

Wednesday, November 20, 1996

- 9:00** **Police Pension & Retirement Board**
1001 NW 63rd Street, Suite 305, Oklahoma City
-
- 10:00** **Adult Day Care Task Force — DHS**
312 NE 28th, Oklahoma City
-
- Oklahoma State Banking Board**
Okla. State Banking Dept., Conference Room, 4545 N. Lincoln, Suite 164, Oklahoma City

Calendar of Meetings & Events

Thursday, November 21, 1996

- 9:00** **Horse Racing Commission**
Shepherd Mall Activity Center, 2426 Plaza Prom, Oklahoma City
-
- Commission on Children & Youth**
4545 N. Lincoln Blvd., Suite 114, Oklahoma City
-
- Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Commission**
Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Dept., Colcord Bldg., 15 N. Robinson,
First Floor Conference Room, Oklahoma City
-
- 9:30** **Joint Interim Committee on Electric Utility Task Force**
Created by SJR 37
State Capitol, Senate Chamber
-
- 10:00** **Interim Study 96H-03, Manufactured Homes**
State Capitol, Room 412-C
-
- 2:00** **Commission on Natural Gas Policy**
State Capitol, Room 432-A

Monday, November 25, 1996

- 10:00** **Rehabilitation Services Commission**
3535 NW 58th Street, Second Floor Large Conference Room, Oklahoma City

Tuesday, November 26, 1996

- 10:00** **Commission on Children & Youth**
4545 N. Lincoln Blvd., Suite 114, Oklahoma City
-
- House Interim Study 96H-25, Ft. Sill State/National Cemetery Site**
State Capitol, House Chamber

Monday, December 2, 1996

- 10:00** **State Board of Equalization**
State Capitol, Governor's Conference Room
-
- 11:00** **Oklahoma Transportation Commission**
200 NE 21 St., Commission Room, 1st Floor, Oklahoma City

Tuesday, December 3, 1996

- 9:30** **Oklahoma Commission for Human Services**
Room 214, Sequoyah Office Bldg., Oklahoma City

Calendar of Meetings & Events

Tuesday, December 10, 1996

9:00 **Commissioners of the Land**
State Capitol, Governor's Large Conference Room

Thursday, December 12, 1996

1:00 **Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Prep**
Dyer Room, Oklahoma Education Association, 323 E. Madison, Oklahoma City

Friday, December 13, 1996

10:00 **War Veterans Commission**
Conference Room, Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs, Oklahoma City

1:00 **Board of Corrections**
Lexington Correctional Center, Lexington, OK

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