

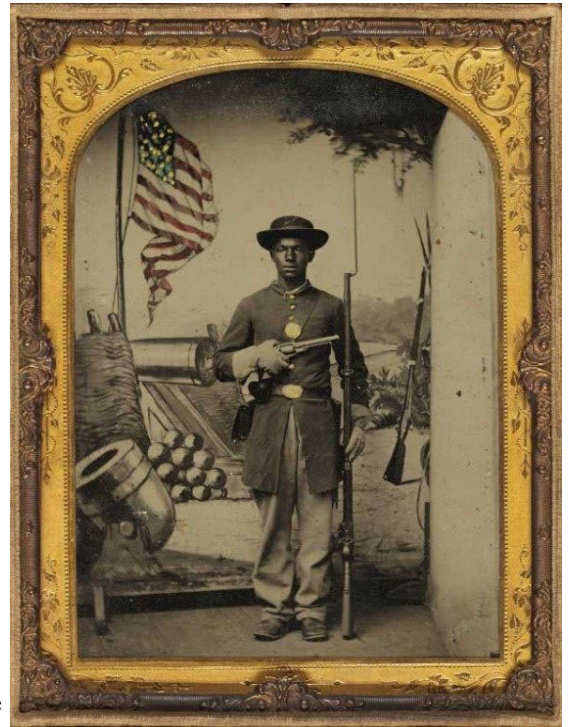
*Celebrating Black History Month*

# Did You Know?

The Battle of Honey Springs, also known as the Affair at Elk Creek, was fought on July 17th 1863 and was one of the most culturally diverse battles of the Civil War. The majority of the soldiers from both sides were African American and Native American. This was one of the first battles in which black soldiers fought side-by-side with white soldiers as white soldiers were the minority in both Union and Confederate fighting forces. The battle was fought approximately 45 minutes from KI BOIS Community Action Administrative office in Stigler and was a turning point in the American Civil War.

Honey Springs was a stage stop on the Texas Road (which is now Highway 69) before the Civil War. Its several springs provided water for men and horses. The U.S. Army equipped it with a commissary, log hospital, and numerous tents for troops. To prepare for an invasion, in 1863 the Confederate Army sent 6,000 soldiers to the spot. Provisions were supplied from Fort Smith, Boggy Depot, Fort Cobb, Fort Arbuckle, and Fort Washita. However, the Confederates failed to stop a 200-wagon Federal supply train in an engagement known as the Battle of Cabin Creek. The supply train reached Fort Gibson about the same time as General James G. Blunt himself arrived, accompanied by more troops and artillery. Federal forces at the fort totaled only about 3,000 men.

Believing they were numerically superior, the Confederates plotted a counteroffensive against Union forces at Fort Gibson, to be launched by General Douglas H. Cooper's Indians and some attached Texan troops, and 3,000 soldiers of Brigadier General William Cabell's brigade, camped in Fort Smith, Arkansas, which were expected to reach Honey Springs by July 17. Cooper moved his army forward to Honey Springs, Indian Territory to rest and equip, while awaiting Cabell's brigade, marching to link up with Cooper. Union forces under General Blunt got wind of Cooper's plan however, and opted to attack him first, before Cabell arrived, which would have given the Confederates overwhelming numerical superiority.



**Black Freedom Fighter during the Civil War.**

Blunt's troops crossed the Arkansas River in the late afternoon of July 16. They began marching toward Honey Springs at 11 P. M., and continued through the night. They encountered a Confederate picket near Chimney Rock, a local landmark. After routing the picket, they met a Confederate scouting party north of Elk Creek. They came upon the Confederate camp on Elk Creek early in the morning on July 17. Confederate pickets saw the enemy guns in the early light and rushed to inform Cooper. After eating breakfast and resting from the march, Blunt formed his men into two brigades. One brigade, led by William A. Phillips and composed of a battalion of the Sixth Kansas Cavalry, the First and Third Regiments of Indian Home Guards, a battalion of the Second Colorado Infantry, and Capt. Henry Hopkins's (four-

*(Continued on page 4)*

**See Breaking Weather 10 Day Forecast  
for Southeastern Oklahoma.....Page 2**

# From the Desk of the Executive Director / CEO

February 2021

February 2021 is here and our annual agency audit is complete. The CPA audit team reported to us that it is a clean audit with no question costs. Our compliments to our financial staff for their hard work throughout the year.

Several members of the KI BOIS Community Action staff have been in trained by the IRS to do free Income Tax Preparation for our low-income clients under the VITA program.

Weatherization, CSBG, SSVF, Transit, RSVP, and Foster Grandparent programs are funded through September 30, 2021. State funded programs are funded until June 30, 2021.

Our hearts and prayers go out to those who are dealing with Covid. We are so grateful to those in the Health Care field who are caring for those affected.

Our agency continues to grow and prosper due to the hard work and dedication of our board, staff, and volunteers. We look forward to the challenges of 2021. February 14<sup>th</sup> is also St. Valentine's Day so don't forget your sweetheart or you may be in trouble. We will also be celebrating the upcoming President's Day Federal Holiday weekend!



Carroll Huggins

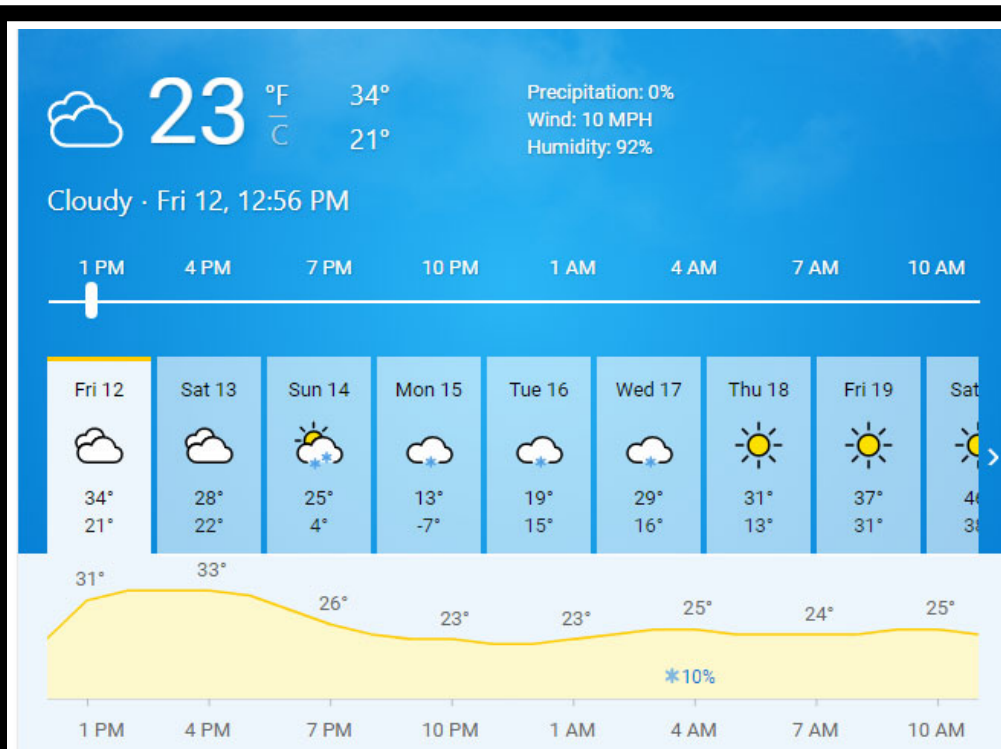
Carroll Huggins, CCAP  
Executive Director / CEO



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**Temperatures are extremely dangerous over the next several days.....**

remember to protect those you love, check in on the elderly, protect your pets and your pipes, practice fire safety and look out for a rancher. Check to make sure smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working and never leave fire pits, fire places, or space heaters unattended. Space heaters account for 4 out of 5 home heating deaths around the nation. A space heater must be operated away from anything that can catch on fire and must be plugged directly into a wall.

## KI BOIS News

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## *In Loving Memory*

Loretta Bernice Vinson passed away on Saturday evening, January 16, 2021. Loretta was born on April 7, 1930 in a neighbor's home in Red Oak, OK. She grew up in a home with five brothers, Delbert, Don, J.R., Cecil, and Jack.

She was a tiny baby and she had an uncle who observed that she was no bigger than a mosquito; hence, she was nicknamed "Skeet" and that name followed her throughout her years. Though small in stature, growing up in a household full of boys, she learned quickly how to hold her own.

She grew up in the area of LeFlore, Oklahoma where she began her education at a small community school known as Punkin Cen-

ter at the age of five. Despite being so young, she walked two miles to the one room school building before she moved and began school at LeFlore. At that time, the enrollment process was not nearly as sophisticated. She merely caught the bus and arrived willing and ready to learn. Upon arrival, she was told she was too little to be in school. Nevertheless, after her mother provided proof of her age she was allowed to begin her education with a determination and willingness to learn and graduated from LeFlore High School in 1947.

She loved to cook and shared food with many of her neighbors, family and friends. She had been accustomed to cooking for a big family. In fact, until she became unable to cook, she continued to do so, knowing there was always someone she could call who would enjoy a home cooked meal. She was a homemaker in the early years of her life.

She worked hard, always raised a big garden and canned everything that she could. She was a good seamstress and made the majority of the clothing she and her daughter, Claudia, wore. Later on, she took a job as the office manager for Dr. J. M. Duffey in Wilburton, OK where she was privileged to work with two of her closest friends, Nadine Walker and Doris Oliver.

She began playing Senior Olympic basketball at the age of 65. She had never played basketball before, but loved learning and playing the game. She won the National Free Throw Shooting Contest in Las Vegas, Nevada in 2001 at the age of 71. She gained many new and special friends through the Senior Olympic League on the Oklahoma Stars team coached by former classmate and husband, Melvin Winegarten.

Mrs. Vinson was the other of KI BOIS Community Action County Director Claudia Jeffrey. She was also the grandmother of KI BOIS Community Action Rx for Oklahoma and VITA Coordinator Amy Fair.



Loretta Vinson



## *This is a success story....*

Veteran Gregory Robinson was the first one to ring the bell! After successfully completing the program and going from homeless to housed and stable, Veteran Robinson rang the newly installed bell in the SSVF office to celebrate! You can see a big smile even under his mask. Automatically all of the staff cheered and wished him well as he headed out. Sometimes its the smallest things that remind us to take time and appreciate what we do.

Thank you Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Director Tammy Randazzo and your staff for making a difference in the lives of those who made a difference in our lives by serving our Country!

## *Did You Know...continued from page 1*

gun) battery of Kansas Artillery, plus two guns of Captain Edward A. Smith's battery attached to the cavalry. The other brigade, commanded by Col. William R. Judson, consisted of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry, the Second Regiment of Indian Home Guards, and the First Kansas Colored Infantry with an estimated 700 soldiers, and the remainder of Smith's battery of Kansas Artillery.

Bunt's attack began on a rainy Friday, July 17, 1863 with desultory morning skirmishing that revealed many of the Confederate soldiers had wet gunpowder, causing numerous misfires and accidents. The main Union attack began at mid-afternoon, and the beginning of a rain squall intensified the Confederate's ammunition problems. Opposing artillerymen each eliminated one gun on the opposing side during an early artillery duel. Then Blunt saw an opportunity, and ordered the 1st Kansas Colored Infantry to attack. Colonel James M. Williams led the Colored Volunteer infantry forward, but the confederates held their ground. Williams was wounded, but his troops conducted a disciplined withdrawal and sporadic firing continued.

Cooper pulled his men back towards the depot to obtain new ammunition, but the Federals continued to press his army closely. Heavy fighting occurred when Cooper's men made a stand at a bridge over Elk Creek, roughly 1/4 of a mile south of the original position. Union forces continued driving them back further and gradually beginning to turn Cooper's left, causing a general Confederate retreat. Cooper attempted to fight a rearguard action, making a last stand another 1/2 mile south near Honey Springs Depot. Despite a notable half-hour stand by the Choctaw and Chickasaw regiment, the Indians and Texans were badly organized, disheartened, and in many cases due to poor powder, unarmed. Most simply continued to flee.

Victorious Union forces took possession of the Honey Springs depot, burning what couldn't be immediately used, and occupying the field. Blunt trumpeted the battle as a major victory, claiming Union losses of only 76 (17 dead and 60 wounded), with enemy casualties in excess of 500, although Cooper reported only 181 Confederate casualties (134 killed or wounded and 47 taken prisoners. Cooper claimed that his enemy's forces losses were over 200.

After the battle, the defeated Confederates withdrew, leaving their dead comrades behind, and met up with Cabell's 3,000 man relief force about 50 miles away. General Blunt did not pursue them because his own troops and horses were very tired. He ordered them to camp overnight at the battlefield, where they could treat the wounded and bury the dead of both sides. Blunt himself was still suffering a high fever from his bout of encephalitis. He finally had to spend the rest of the day in bed. Late the next day Blunt ordered the troops to return to Fort Gibson. Later, Cooper wrote a letter to Blunt, thanking him for burying the Confederate dead.

After the war, the Union corpses were exhumed and reburied in Fort Gibson National Cemetery.<sup>1</sup>



**D.C. Minner during one of his many performances**

The battle was the largest ever fought in the Indian Territory, and would indeed prove to be decisive. The Oklahoma Historical Society even compared its importance to the Battle of Gettysburg. The victory opened the way for Blunt's forces to capture Fort Smith and the Arkansas River Valley all the way to the Mississippi River.<sup>1</sup> The Confederates abandoned Fort Smith in August, 1863, leaving it for the Union forces to recover. Despite the efforts of notable Confederate officers like Stand Watie, Confederate forces in the region would never regain the initiative or engage the Union army in an open, head-on battle again, instead relying almost entirely on guerrilla warfare and small-scale cavalry actions to fight the Federal Army. The loss of the supplies at Honey Springs depot would likewise prove disastrous. Confederate forces, already operating on a shoe-string budget and with bad equipment, would come to increasingly rely on captured Union war material to keep up the fight.

Honey Springs Historic Site, near Rentiesville features a large visitors center and museum. The 1,100 acre battle site features six walking trails and reenactors recreate the July battle every other year. (see advertisement for this years production on page 5.) Rentiesville is also one of Oklahoma's many All Black towns. Between the end of the Civil War and 1920, more than 500 All Black towns and communities were established. Another big attraction in Rentiesville is The Down Home Blues Club and Museum. This club was founded by the late D.C. Minner and his wife Selby, on property that has been in his family over 100 Years. Minner and his wife also held a long-running annual blues festival, the 'Dusk 'til Dawn Blues Festival. Minner an American blues musician, teacher, and philosopher who was known for sharing music with children and adults alike throughout Oklahoma and beyond. Born in Rentiesville, Oklahoma, he performed with O. V. Wright, Freddie King, Chuck Berry, Eddie Floyd and Bo Diddley, and was inducted into the Oklahoma Jazz Hall of Fame in 1999. The couple had won an international KBA from the Blues Foundation in Memphis for their BITS (Blues in the Schools) work with children.



# REENACTMENT THE BATTLE OF HONEY SPRINGS



**NOVEMBER 5-6-7, 2021**

The Battle of Honey Springs fought July 17, 1863 was the most important engagement of the Civil War in Indian Territory. Event activities include two battle reenactments and self-guided tours through the Union, Confederate and civilian camps. Witness various military drills, demonstrations and living history programs. "Sutlers Row" features a number of vendors selling 19th-century reproduction military equipment, clothes, books, and souvenirs.

- **CHARGES & COUNTERCHARGES!** • **INFANTRY**
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**ADMISSION- Adult \$5.00 12 & under FREE**

*Reenactments begin at 1pm - Sat. & Sun.*

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## RSVP Celebrates with Drive Through Events...

Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) Coordinate Sandie Rutherford and her RSVP Advisor Council members decided COVID 19 wasn't going to stop them from celebrating and recognizing the 2020 RSVP Volunteers. The RSVP volunteers have been limited on what they could and could not do within the guidelines not only of the RSVP Program but the Center of Disease Control (CDC) too. "Our greatest desire is for our volunteer to remain healthy and safe and given the rise of COVID causes without our service area we just couldn't put them at risk with a sit down event....but it's amazing what

you can come up with when you put your heads together," states Rutherford.

"A lot of different ideas were thrown around, but the drive-through event seemed to cover everything we wanted to achieve," declared Rutherford. There were two different locations selected giving the volunteers the option to select their own day to participate. Each volunteer was greeted with bags of goodies along with smiles of encouragement from other AmeriCorps Program leaders.

The first event was held on Friday, January 29th at the KI BOIS Community Action office in Stigler. The second event was held in McAlester at the KI BOIS Workshop.



### AmeriCorps Seniors



Top photo: Sarah Sockey receives her goodies for being a RSVP Volunteer from Foster Grandparent Program Director Shaunda Noah, Karen Lyons Choctaw Nation and RSVP Coordinator Sandie Rutherford. Bottom left photo: Lucille Johnson is all smiles as she receives her goodies from Foster Grandparent Program Coordinator Ukari Garcia and above photo Donna Carolan receives her goodies from KI BOIS CAF Wellness Coordinator Denice Daniels, Noah, Lyons and Rutherford.



## ***FREE Income Tax Preparation***

If your income is less than \$57,000 and you have a BASIC Income Tax return, KI BOIS Community Action will prepare and e-file your Income Tax at no charge. Contact the city nearest you for help.



Wilburton: 918-465-3381

McAlester: 918-423-3525

Poteau: 918-647-3267

Stigler: 918-967-3325

## ***KI BOIS Community Action Job Posting - February 12th, 2021***



### ***KI BOIS COMMUNITY CARE PROGRAM***

**JOB TITLE:** CASE MANAGER - FT (Program Service Area)

**JOB REQUIREMENTS:** Will provide case management for the Advantage Program. Requires BS in social work or related field with two years of experience in human services. An equivalent combination of education and experience may be substituted. Must be willing/available to complete other program training as required.

*Continued on page 8*

# Notice of Job Posting

*continued from page 7*



## ***KI BOIS SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR VETERAN FAMILIES***

### ***SOUTHEASTERN OK – VETERANS HOUSING FIRST***

**JOB TITLE:** VETERAN PROGRAM CASE MANAGER - 2FT - Current funding for this position is 18-24 months (Service Area)

**JOB REQUIREMENTS:** Bachelor's Degree from accredited University required. Preferably in Social Services, Management or Leadership. Case Management experience preferred.

**JOB SUMMARY:** This position will be responsible for providing intake and eligibility screening for the program. Will provide needs assessment, program orientation, case management, maintain liaison with area resources and attend community meetings. Will develop housing stability plans for participants, maintain case files and prepare required data and reports.

## ***KI BOIS AREA TRANSIT PROGRAM***

**JOB TITLE:** TRANSIT DRIVERS (Please verify current openings with local transit office.)

**JOB REQUIREMENTS:** Maintain a valid driver's license. Good driving record. Must be physically able to assist passengers and their belongings while entering and exiting the vehicles. Must be able to lift a minimum of 50 lbs. and provide wheel chair assistance. Should have knowledge of area resources and live within convenient distance of city where job opening is available.

## ***KI BOIS DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES***

**JOB TITLE:** HABILITATION TRAINING SPECIALIST - PT/FT (Stigler GROUP HOMES)

**JOB REQUIREMENTS:** Will serve as direct support staff for consumers. Ability to handle sensitive issues while protecting others' welfare. Able to exercise patience, understanding, creativity and flexibility. HS Diploma/GED, valid DL and auto insurance. Must complete Foundation, CPR and First Aid Training (and any other training as required/requested.) Able to lift a minimum of 50 lbs.

**JOB TITLE:** HABILITATION TRAINING SPECIALIST - PT/FT (Stigler, Poteau, McAlester, Ada, Ardmore, Pauls Valley and Sulphur)

**JOB REQUIREMENTS:** Will serve as direct support staff for consumers. Ability to handle sensitive issues while protecting others' welfare. Able to exercise patience, understanding, creativity and flexibility. HS Diploma/GED, valid DL and auto insurance. Must complete Foundation, CPR and First Aid Training (and any other training as required/requested.) Able to lift a minimum of 50 lbs.

***ALL POSITIONS SUBJECT TO CONTINUED PROJECT FUNDING. All positions are open to KI BOIS Community Action Foundation Staff as well as to the public - unless otherwise noted. Deadline for all openings: Until Filled. CURRENT AGENCY EMPLOYEES – please submit a letter of interest, and updated resume (if applicable) to Human Resources. Applications for new hires are available online at [www.kibois.org](http://www.kibois.org), or may be picked up at any KI BOIS Community Action office. Applications should be returned to KI BOIS Community Action Foundation, Inc. P. O. Box 727 Stigler, OK 74462, Attention: Human Resources or e-mailed to [doylene.knowlton@kibois.org](mailto:doylene.knowlton@kibois.org). Fax: 918.967.9100.***

***Applicant will be subject to a criminal history records search, as well as drug testing. KI BOIS Community Action Foundation, Inc. is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer. It is the policy of the KI BOIS Community Action Foundation, Inc. to not discriminate against or deny equal employment opportunity to any applicant or employee on the grounds of race, sex, color, age, national origin, genetic information, religion, or disability, so long as the disability does not render the person unable to do the work for which employed. All employees of KI BOS Community Action Foundation, Inc. are "at will" employees.***

**KIBOIS COMMUNITY ACTION FOUNDATION, INC. IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER!**