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## Evil spirits won't foul blessings

It is becoming a Thanksgiving tradition to go around the table before the blessed feast and express specific thanks, to articulate what means the most.

On the freaky pay-cable television show "Dexter," the Thanksgiving table featured the presence of two homicidal maniacs.

One is portrayed by John Lithgow and is evil, crown to corns.

The other, Dexter himself, does his dead-level best to slice and dice only those who deserve it.

After one swing around the Thanksgiving table, it became apparent to Lithgow that neither his wife nor his son or daughter had expressed thanks for his presence in their lives, the omission caused most likely because he had tortured them.

There's obviously no such thing as the "family hour" on the pay-cable circuit.

One thing led to another, with Lithgow trying to take out his son, who threw an urn containing the ashes of his murdered sister against the dining room wall.

The Thanksgiving celebration ended with Dexter and Lithgow pledging to harm one another worse than the most deranged mind could imagine.

Happy holidays, everybody. See you next week.

**Saying grace:** Here's a Thanksgiving list with a better ending.

**Thanks for:**

Friends.  
Health.  
Soldiers.  
Pills that kill fleas.  
Precooked meals.  
MADD.  
Cops.  
Insurance.  
Good dogs.  
The end of the college football season.  
Call blocking.  
Good neighbors.  
The Turner Classic Movies channel.  
The Kaiser Family Foundation.  
Deductions.  
Sump pumps.  
Febreze.  
Teachers.  
Pansies.  
The extremely doable New York Magazine crossword.  
Women.  
Coffee.  
Fleece.  
The mute button.  
Libraries.  
People who feed the needy.  
This perfect fall.  
The Daily Double.  
Readers.

## Adoption study panel discusses violent kids

One legislator says DHS needs a thorough review of its policies on troubled children.

BY MICHAEL McNUTT  
The Oklahoman

OKLAHOMA CITY — The Department of Human Services' adoption policies need further review, the co-chairman of a legislative task force said Monday.

Especially troubling is when an adopted child develops violent tendencies and the adoptive parents are told that they must keep the child despite the threat the child poses to them or others, Rep. Jason Nelson, R-Okla., said.

"People are just looking to adopt a child from DHS, but they're basically getting a child that needs therapeutic care of some kind whether DHS knows about it or doesn't," he said.

SEE **ADOPT** A13

# No action on ouster attempt

A public hearing on an effort to remove a Planning Commission member results in more questions.

BY KEVIN CANFIELD  
World Staff Writer

### UNDER FIRE

**Elizabeth Wright:** She is accused of three violations of the Planning Commission's policies, procedures and code of ethics, and other planning commissioners have questioned her behavior as being detrimental to the board. For her part, Wright says she has been on the receiving end of plenty of rude behavior, too.

A public hearing to consider removing a Planning Commission member from the panel ended Monday with more questions raised

than answered and the member's fate still uncertain.

After a nearly two-hour hearing, the Tulsa County Commission agreed to use the next week to fur-

ther study the possible ouster of Elizabeth Wright.

A vote is scheduled for next Monday.

"Quite a bit of information was

given to us today, quite frankly from both sides," County Commission Chairman John Smaligo said.

"I think it would be helpful to go back and check some of the minutes of meetings and visit with" staff of the Tulsa Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, he said.

The petition seeking Wright's removal was brought by District 2 Commissioner Karen Keith.

It is thought to be the first of its kind in the Planning Commission's history.

SEE **OUSTER** A13

## BOULDERING: IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL CLIMB



Workers install three new rock climbing boulders near the entrance of Turkey Mountain on Monday. Photos by JAMES GIBBARD/Tulsa World

# ROCKIN' TULSA

Fabricated climbing structures added to Turkey Mountain 'playground'

BY P.J. LASSEK  
World Staff Writer

Tulsans of all ages could be rock-climbing at Turkey Mountain as early as Thursday with the installation of three climbing boulders Monday.

"I think they are really cool and will appeal to all ages," River Parks Authority Executive Director Matt Meyer said.

Three fabricated climbing boulders from Monolithic Sculptures Inc. of Boulder, Colo., were delivered and installed at the River Parks site off Elwood Avenue just north of 71st Street.

The boulders vary in size and difficulty. "There's nothing else like these structures around here, and they fit well with the rustic theme of Turkey Mountain," Meyer said.

SEE **CLIMB** A13

### Turkey Mountain boulders

**Sandstone Flake:** beginner, 7 feet tall  
**Large Delicate Arch:** intermediate, 11 feet wide, 9 feet tall  
**Hueco Tanks:** advanced, 11 feet wide, 9 feet, 6 inches tall



The fabricated boulders have natural-looking rock indentations as opposed to a climbing wall's finger grips.

# Tribe battles for role in poultry lawsuit

The Cherokee Nation cites water rights in its appeal of its exclusion.

BY ROBERT BOCZKIEWICZ  
World Correspondent

DENVER — The Cherokee Nation told a federal appeals court Monday that a judge in Tulsa erred in excluding it from Oklahoma's lawsuit against the poultry industry regarding pollution in the Illinois River watershed.

The Cherokee Nation is seeking

to overturn the Sept. 14 ruling by U.S. District Judge Gregory Frizzell that denied the tribe's request to join the state as a plaintiff against the industry.

"Any ruling that (Frizzell) makes at trial will impact the Cherokee Nation's water rights, and the Cherokee Nation must be at the table for that discussion," the tribe's attorney general, Diane Hammons, said in a statement.

The tribe submitted 23 pages of arguments Monday to the Denver-based 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, based in Denver.

The state is suing numerous poul-

try companies, claiming that they are legally responsible for the handling and disposal of poultry waste that the state alleges has polluted the watershed.

Oklahoma Attorney General Drew Edmondson has said Tyson Foods is the principal defendant.

The trial began Sept. 24 and is expected to last several more weeks, although Frizzell has expressed frustration several times at its pace.

The tribe's written arguments contend that Frizzell considered improper factors — issues about delay of the trial and added expense in the litigation — in denying its request.

The Cherokee Nation also contends, contrary to Frizzell, that it was not tardy in asking to intervene.

Hammons said the poultry industry in July "attempted to change this case from a water quality case to one that was about the Cherokee Nation's water rights."

In view of the judge's rulings, the tribe's water rights have been put at issue and the Cherokee Nation has "no choice but to become a party" to the case, she said.

The appeals court is not expected to issue its decision in the dispute until next year.

## OUSTER:

Planning Commission members call Wright's actions unprofessional.

FROM A9

The petition included three alleged violations of the Planning Commission's policies, procedures and code of ethics.

But early in the meeting Monday, Keith moved to have one of the allegations dropped.

That left county commissioners to consider whether Wright had violated the conflict of interest section of the Planning Commission's ethics code or engaged in conduct that harmed the Planning Commission's operation.

Chip Ard, a former chairman of the Planning Commission, said he was not there to advocate any position regarding Wright's future.

"I had some concerns during my time there relating to her interactions publicly with the parties involved in applications in cases before us," he said.

"The end result of that, I believe, is that it could, and I think did, in fact, damage the credibility of some of our decisions and in some cases kind of cast a shadow over the integrity of our body."

Bill Leighty, a current member of the Planning Commission, cited several incidents he found objectionable.

Leighty discussed a work session at which he said Wright challenged him and another commissioner to state whether they had ever profited from their votes on the commission.

"The fact is, Ms. Wright has demonstrated time and again a pattern of behavior which clearly reflects a lack of respect for her fellow professionals," he said.

Wright responded by telling the county commissioners that she had put up with her own fair share of rude behavior by her fellow planning commissioners.

Wright said she resented questions and comments that she said were made by a male commissioner regarding her breasts.

She said she reported the comments to Assistant City Attorney Pat Boulden, who represents the city at Planning Commission meetings.

Boulden, who did not attend Monday's hearing, said he had a conversation with Wright about the male planning commissioner about a year ago.

"I don't remember it as being anything that I would describe as a comment about her figure or her appearance," he said. "If that was true, I think I would remember that."

Late Monday, the planning commissioner in question told the Tulsa World that he had made no such comments.

"I don't know how to react to it (Wright's accusations) other than I'm just disappointed that there was any suggestion of impropriety," the commissioner said.

Wright also said she did not appreciate another male commissioner's gender references or comments about catfights.

The conflict of interest allegation concerns whether Wright acted properly when she said she could be fair and unbiased about QuikTrip's application for a new store at 21st Street and Harvard Avenue, in the Florence Park neighborhood.

Wright, who had been president of the Florence Park Neighborhood Association, told an attorney for QuikTrip that she could be impartial.

She later voted against the application.

Wright told county commissioners Monday: "As to a direct conflict of interest, I personally don't have one. I don't live close enough for it to affect me."

Next week's County Commission meeting is slated for 9:30 a.m. in Room 119 of the Tulsa County Administration Building, 500 S. Denver Ave.

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The rock-climbing boulders at Turkey Mountain will offer three levels of challenge to climbers. Photos by JAMES GIBBARD/Tulsa World



Crews use heavy equipment to install new fabricated rock climbing boulders near the entrance of Turkey Mountain on Monday.

## CLIMB:

Bouldering is a popular style of rock climbing undertaken without a rope and done in short climbs.

FROM A9

The boulders will give the most realistic experience of "bouldering," said Keith Franklin, owner of LandPlan Consultants and a design consultant for the improvement project.

Bouldering is a popular style of rock climbing undertaken without a rope but done in short climbs requiring problem-solving to reach the top.

The fabricated boulders have natural-looking rock indentations instead of the finger grips on climbing walls.

Franklin said the bouldering area is a creative playground with interactive structures surrounded with a bark mulch safety surface.

The boulders are just south of the main trailhead where the new restrooms are and where everyone makes the transition to go up to the Turkey Mountain wilderness area, Franklin said.

If the restrooms pass inspection Wednesday, the area will be open on Thanksgiving, he said.

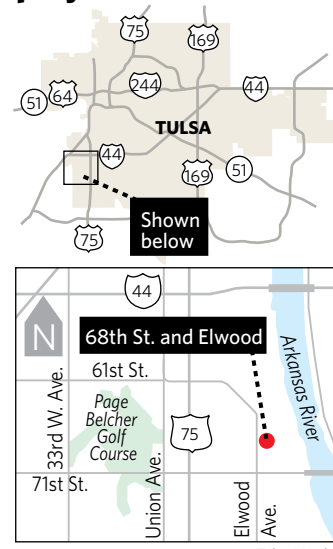
Guidelines for using the boulders are posted. Children younger than 12 must be supervised, Meyer said.

The boulders are the final enhancement feature at the site as the first phase of a two-phase improvement plan for the area comes to a close.

Franklin said a few small items, such as landscaping, need to be addressed to complete the project.

Other first-phase improvements are a new parking lot with 80 spaces, six spaces for horse trailers, lighting, flagstone pavers, restrooms, and

## Turkey Mountain project



landscaping with benches and water fountains.

The first phase cost \$1.5 million and was funded by the George Kaiser Family Foundation.

"What is great about this is that it is a public improvement paid for by private funds," Meyer said. "We thank the foundation for the gift."

The second phase, which is not yet funded, is estimated to cost \$1.5 million, as well, Franklin said.

It will include a shelter and seating area that overlooks the river and Oral Roberts University and the realignment of the steep stretch of trail that leads to the park area from the north, Franklin said.

River Parks Public Relations Manager Tonja Pitzer said a volunteer group also is organizing to maintain the area. People who are interested in volunteering should call the River Parks Authority at 596-2001.

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## ADOPT:

A DHS official says the agency doesn't always know everything about a child.

FROM A9

The adoption review task force, which met Friday, will discuss the matter again early next year, Nelson said.

"These kids are in foster care or up for adoption for a reason — things have not gone well — but you don't think you're going to get somebody who's going to poison you or set your house on fire or stand over your bed at night with a knife," he said.

Karen Poteet, DHS' manager of post-adoption programs, said the agency places in its custody only those children who are suffering from abuse or neglect.

"We disclose all of the written information that we have regarding the child's medical issue, how they came into custody, all the social history, medical history, everything we have we disclose," she said. "The key is 'everything we have,' because sometimes we have birth families who are uncooperative with us because we remove their children. So sometimes they control the flow of information that is given to us."

DHS tells adoptive parents that the information on the child is what was made available and that the child might have physical, mental or emotional issues that have not yet been diagnosed, Poteet said.

Parents who adopt children through DHS also must complete a 27-hour course in which they are advised to look closely at the child's records, she said.

"Adoptive parents need to understand this is their child forever," Poteet said.

"It is just like giving birth. And that any kind of treatment of them in the eyes of the law is that same way — just as if they gave birth."

Erin Porter of the Oklahoma Attachment and Bonding Coalition in Tulsa said several parents have had to hospitalize their adoptive children because of mental illness or violent tendencies.

Often parents are left with few choices, she said.

The child is being released from the hospital because he or she doesn't meet the criteria to be kept in the hospital, but the hospital tells the parents that if they take the child home, the parents could be charged with endangering their other children, Porter said.

"But if they leave the child at the hospital and refuse to pick the child up," she said, "DHS will file abandonment charges on them."

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