



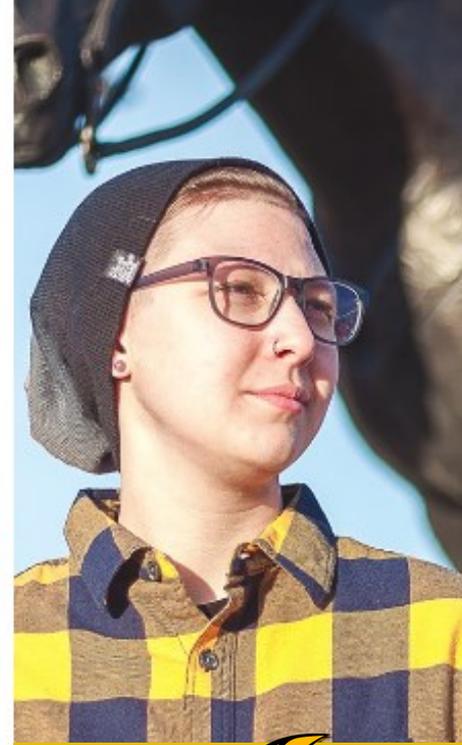
**STILLWATER**



**PERKINS**



**YALE**



**OK STATE**

**Inaugural Payne County Pride  
April 6, 2019 - Stillwater**



**Ignite Your Flame**  
*Official Pride Guide*



**RIPLEY**



**CUSHING**



**GLENCOE**



# *Hello and Welcome!*

The Payne County Pride Association is so excited for our inaugural festival! We hope to bridge communities and families from all across our county and region to celebrate LGBTQ+ folks and bring visibility to the diversity of queer folks and educate us all on the issues we face. We came together last summer with a vision to bring the pride tradition to our rural town and the hope of sparking more festivals; inspiring the flame of Pride as we light our own.

I was inspired to start Payne County Pride when I continually met LGBTQ+ people who kept telling me they wanted to leave Oklahoma because it was not a queer-friendly place. I wanted to show the world that Oklahoma can be a safe, accepting place for queer folk – even a rural area like Payne County. In this vein, we hope our event also reaches out to those who may be too afraid to engage with the Queer Community. One way we hope to do this is with our “No Dumb Questions” booth where people can come and ask whatever questions they may have without fear of judgment. We also hope that all of our attendees can take a share of this same ideal of patience and turning the other cheek when it comes to those who may disagree with us or try to bring negativity.

I, and the committee as a whole, felt strongly that we name ourselves after Payne County. There are LGBTQ+ folks in every town – Stillwater, Ripley, Cushing, Yale, Perkins, and Glencoe as well as OSU. Not only that, we are reaching out across all of Northern Oklahoma, which represents about 10% of Oklahoma’s population. We’re hoping to spark change and look forward to seeing more and more pride festivals spring up all over!

We hope you enjoy your time with our parade, picnic, and parties. We have stuff all day and look forward to seeing how you #igniteyourflame with us!

*André R. Durham*

Founder, Director



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# THE GAYLY

*The South Central region's only LGBTQ+ media source informing you on current news and events affecting our community and beyond.*

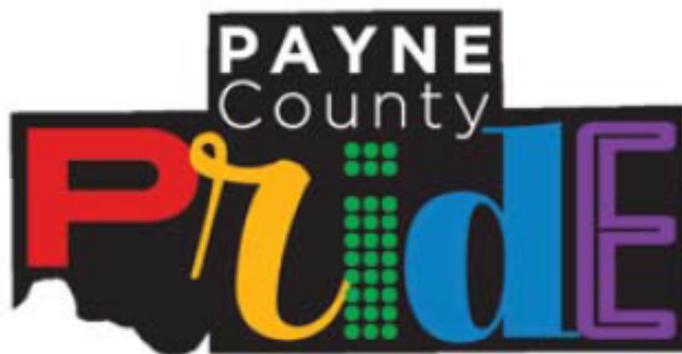
*Check out our daily news updates and view archives at:*

[www.gayly.com](http://www.gayly.com)

*For advertising, call:*

**(405) 496-0011**

*The Gayly is a PROUD sponsor of Payne County Pride 2019*



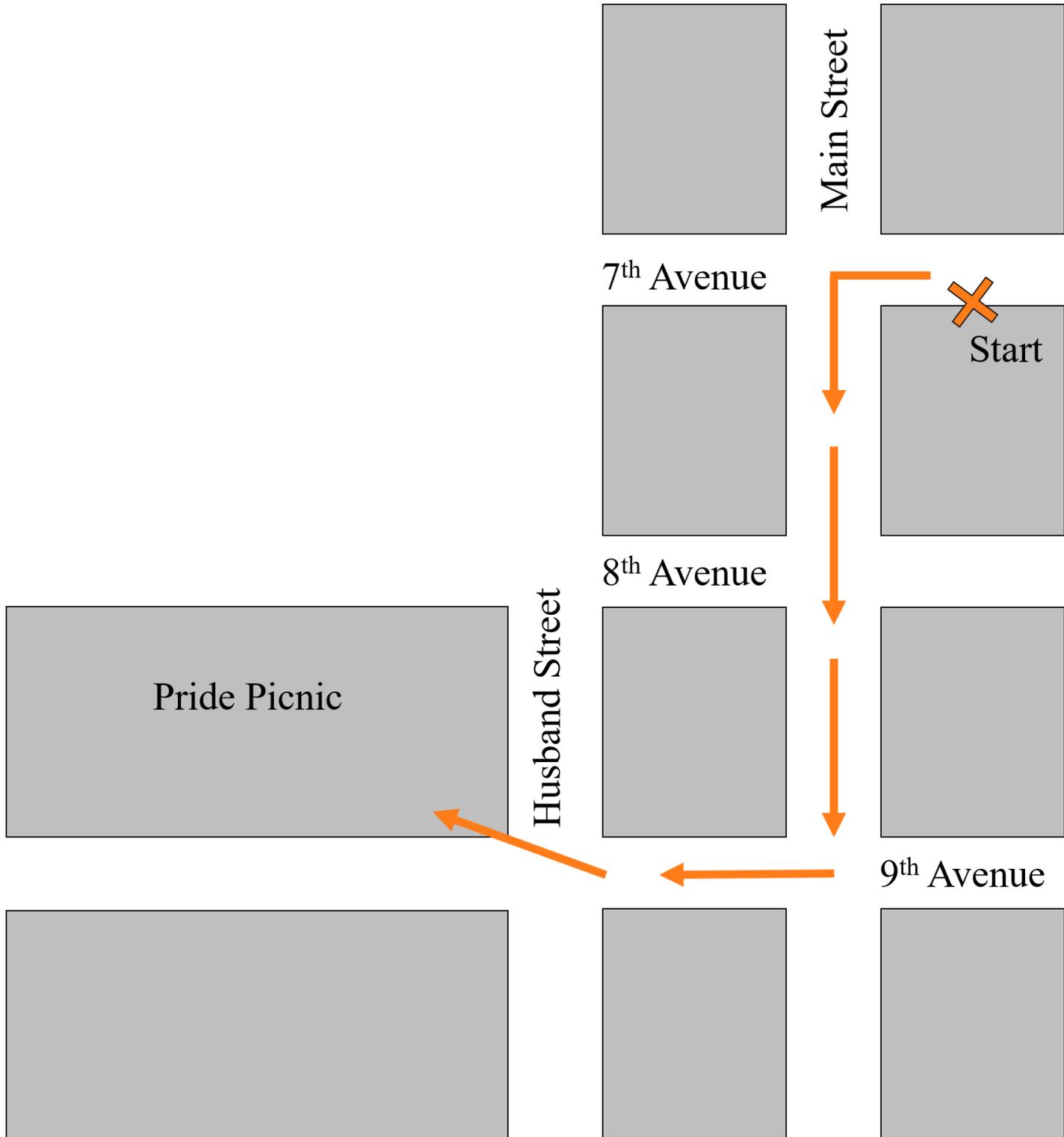
# Schedule of Events

<b>10am</b>	<b>Parade</b> Begins at 7th Ave. & Main St. heads South, turns right on 9th Ave. and terminates at Block 34
<b>11am - 5pm</b>	<b>Picnic</b> Block 34 in Downtown Stillwater: vendors, music, food trucks, bounce house, info booths
<b>6pm - 9pm</b>	<b>Red Earth Yoga Youth Pride Party</b> Hosted by Stilly Arts, this is for folks from 7th to 12th grade: music, dancing, snacks, art, fun!
<b>7pm - 10pm</b>	<b>“One Heckuva Gay” Pride Party</b> Hosted by OSU Queers & Allies, this is for folks aged 18 to 22ish. Held at Boomer Lake: music, games, food, fun!
<b>8pm - 2am</b>	<b>21+ Pride Party &amp; Drag Show</b> Hosted by the Stonewall Tavern: enjoy our amateur drag performers, live music, and our specialty pride drink!



Find us on social media @paynecopride - use #igniteYOURflame and #paynecopride2019.

# Pride Parade



# Pride Parade

**We are excited to welcome the following groups, organizations, and businesses as a part of the parade of our inaugural Pride Festival!**

1. Grand Marshall: Sara Cunningham of Free Mom Hugs  
(walking with Payne County Pride Director André Durham)
2. Free Mom Hugs
3. PFLAG of Stillwater
4. Stillwater Gender & Sexuality Alliance
5. Ponca City High School Gender & Sexuality Alliance
6. Work It Coworking Center
7. OK State Representative Trish Ranson of District 34
8. OKDHS Foster Care and Adoptions Recruitment
9. Payne County Youth Services
10. *The Gayly*
11. Sisters of the Sacred Heartland
12. OSU Museum of Art
13. Enid LGBT Coalition



*Inaugural Grand Marshall*

# Sara Cunningham

Founder & Executive Director

Free Mom Hugs

**FREE  
MOM  
HUGS**

<https://www.freemomhugs.org/>

   @freemomhugs



## **How do you identify within the LGBTQ+ community?**

Ally + Momma Bear

## **Please tell us a little about the mission of Free Mom Hugs**

The mission of Free Mom Hugs is to encourage the LGBTQ+ Community and their parents to have authentic relationships. Free Mom Hugs offers a platform to celebrate our LGBTQ+ family and friends and education to empower families, together those things make for a safer, kinder, more loving place for everyone.

## **What inspired you to found Free Mom Hugs?**

Standing at the Pride parade with my son in 2015 allowed me to look past my own fears of what it means to be gay and to connect with the LGBTQ+ community and through that hearing horror stories from families who've been blown apart by fear and ignorance. Together with mom's, friends and allies we started collecting donations to help with basic needs, to be a loving presence in the lives of these beautiful Spirit filled people who've been alienated and separated from their families, church homes and many parts of society and that makes me accountable to those things.

## **What has been the most inspiring aspect of your work with Free Mom Hugs?**

Seeing family and friends in the LGBTQ+ community thrive as they live authentically, seeing families restored, and the ability to offer hope in the form of educating, resources, and love.

## **What keeps you motivated to keep moving forward each day?**

My motivation comes from knowing my straight son has more rights than my gay son and the fact that conversion therapy is still legal, sought out, and paid for in Oklahoma. That keeps me standing up and speaking out like my hair is on fire. Any negativity, anger/frustration/sadness/fear I have pales in comparison to what my LGBTQ+ family and friends face and have endured and to that I remind myself with every backlash hurled my way "I'm not here for them (scoffers)."

## **Any parenting advice for parents of LGBTQ+ children?**

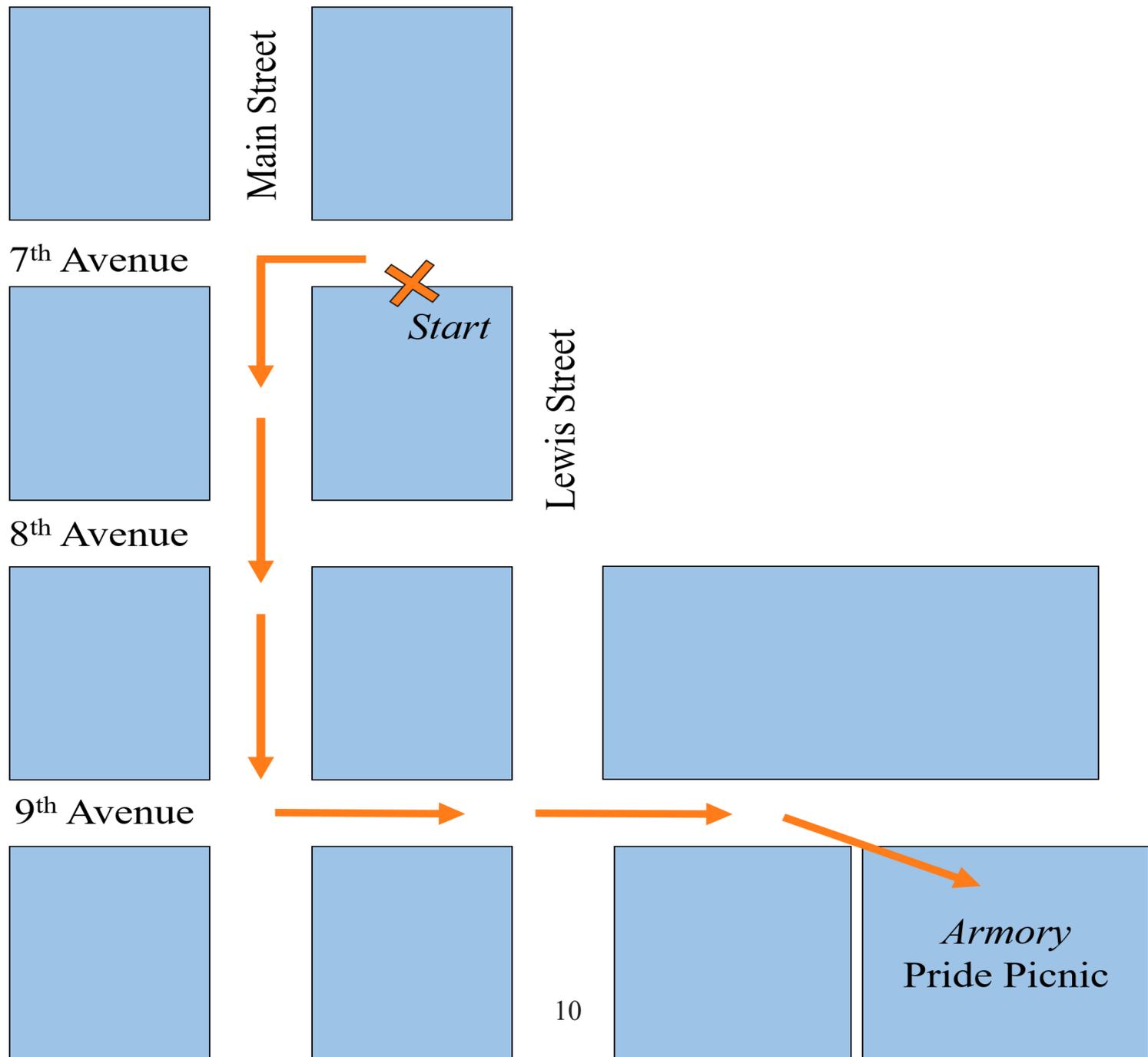
1. Make your home a safe place; your child should not have to "check" themselves at the door.
2. Get educated. We have the history of human sexuality, evidence, testimonies from LGBTQ+ people – we have too much information now that, no matter where you stand, to not have a better understanding on what it means to be LGBTQ+ is enough to prove beyond a doubt that it is ONLY a choice to remain in fear and ignorance of it.
3. Celebrate your child or you will suffer with them.

## **How do you "Ignite Your Flame"?**

Spending time with my family and laughing out loud. These two things are my lifeblood.

# What if it Rains?

As long as there is no lightning, the parade will carry forward. If there is more than light precipitation, we will move to our rain location, the Stillwater Armory (315 E 9th Ave, Stillwater, OK 74074) which is located on 9th Avenue, across from the Post Office. The parade route will shift to end the parade at the Armory.

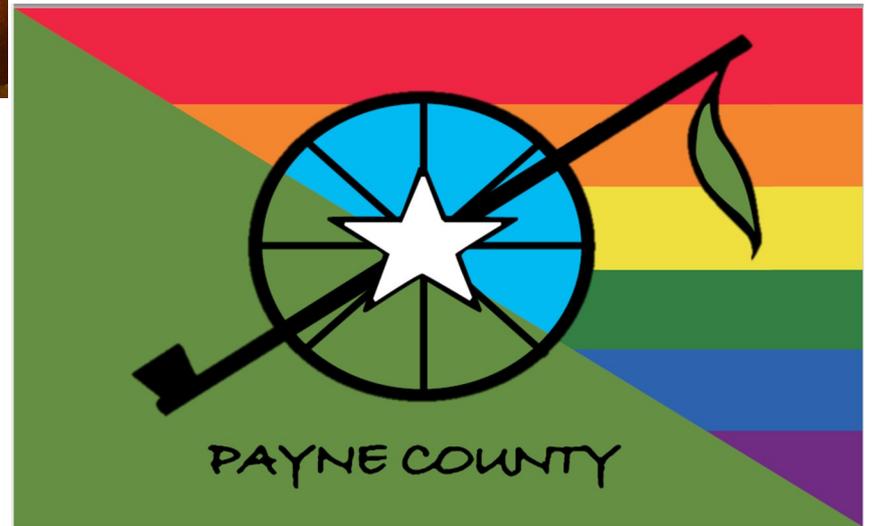


# Don't forget your Pride Merchandise!



Get your official Payne County Pride t-shirt. Commemorate the inaugural pride festival with this **Ignite Your Flame** shirt.

Youth sizes go from S to L  
Adult sizes go from S to 3XL.  
All shirts are \$15.



Interested in getting a pride variant of the Payne County flag?

Pre-order yours for just \$25!



There's only a select number of stickers and buttons remaining. Get yours before they're gone!

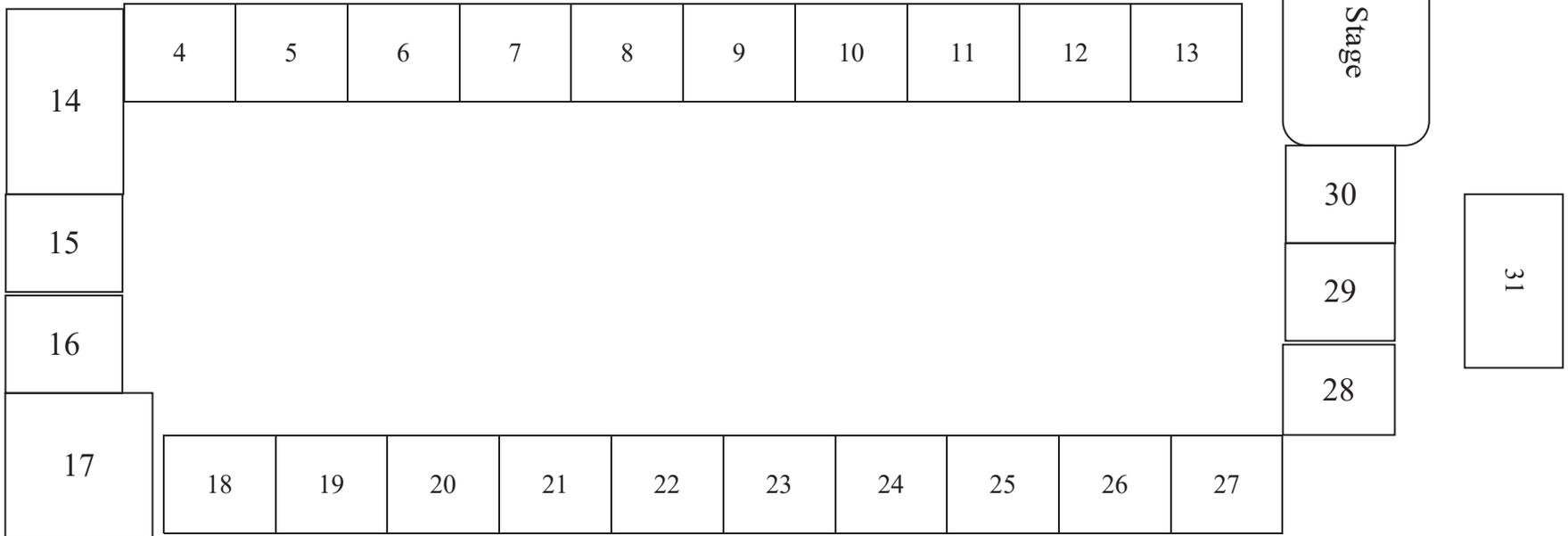
Stickers: \$2 for one, \$5 for all three

Buttons: \$3 for one, \$5 for both

# Pride Picnic

1 2 Interactive Family Area 3

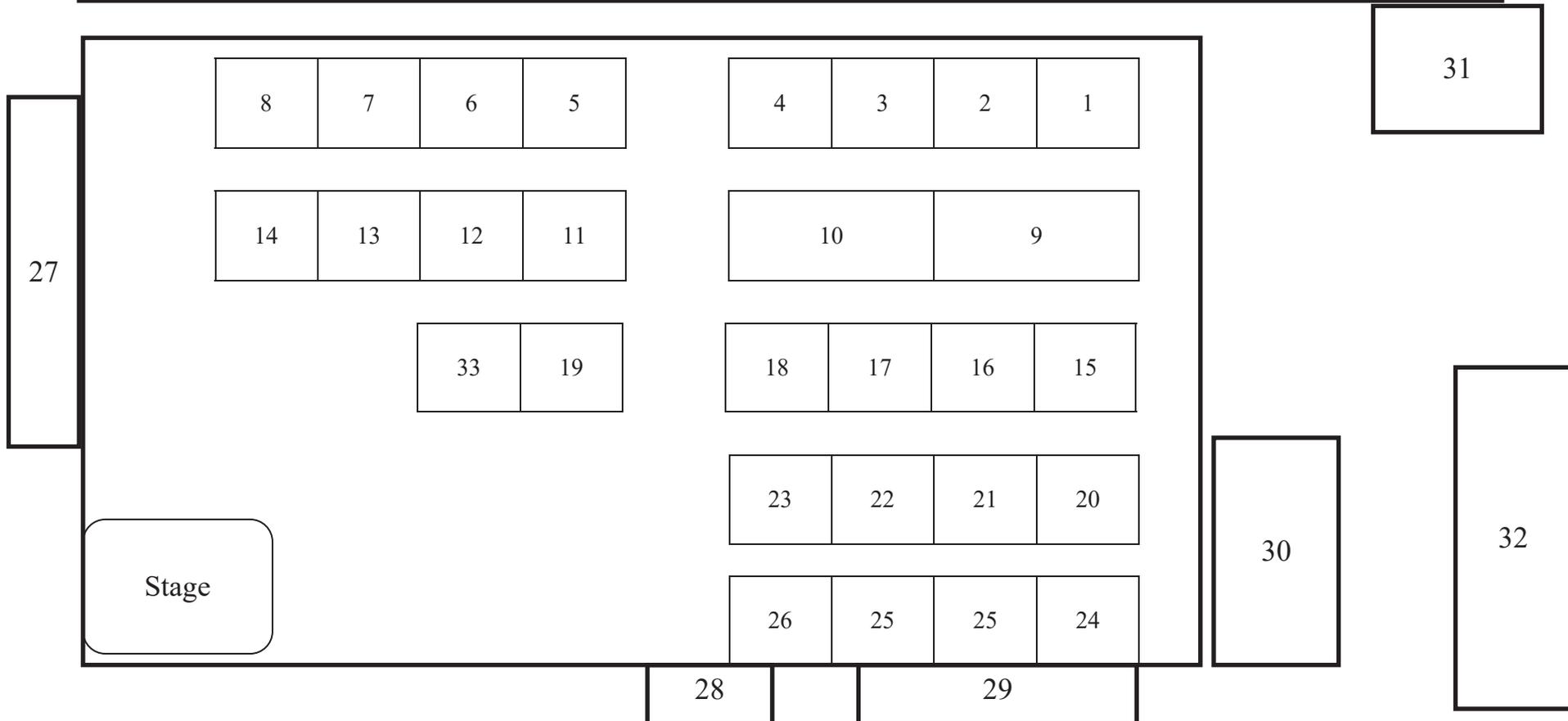
Porta  
Potties



- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| 1. Bounce House  | 11. PFLAG of Stillwater                           | 22. Sage & Elm Apothecary                          |
| 2. Stillwater Fire Dept.                               | 12. Enid LGBT Coalition                           | 23. Resting Beauty Face                            |
| 3. OSU Museum of Art & Stw GSA                         | 13. Free Mom Hugs                                 | 24. Sarah's Stylish Bling Slingers                 |
| 4. Payne County Youth Services                         | 14. Pride Gone Wild                               | 25. Pink Gypsy Nails                               |
| 5. Youth Services of Tulsa                             | 15. Midnight Maille Jewelry                       | 26. Lady West Creations                            |
| 6. OKDHS Foster Care and Adoptions Recruitment         | 16. Lady West Creations                           | 27. McDonalds of Payne County                      |
| 7. UCO Women's Research Center & BLGTQ+ Student Center | 17. Ron Trimble Sales                             | 28. Work-It Coworking Center & Dear Brit           |
| 8. Diversity Center of Oklahoma                        | 18. Friends of Sanborn Nature Camp                | 29. <i>The Gayly</i>                               |
| 9. Freedom Oklahoma!                                   | 19. Stillwater Public Library                     | 30. Payne Co Pride Merch & No Dumb Questions Booth |
| 10. Doni's Banging Bling                               | 20. OSU Counseling & Counseling Psychology Clinic | 31. Payne County Health Dept.                      |
|  | 21. The Metallic Sheep                            |  |

# What if it Rains?

We move to the Stillwater Armory (315 E. 9th Ave.)



1. Doni's Banging Bling
2. Lady West Creations
3. Resting Beauty Face
4. Sage & Elm Apothecary
5. Payne County Youth Services
6. Youth Services of Tulsa
7. OKDHS Foster Care and Adoptions Recruitment
8. Diversity Center of Oklahoma
9. Pride Gone Wild
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20. McDonalds of Payne County
21. Stillwater Public Library
22. OSU Counseling & Counseling Psychology Clinic
23. Midnight Maille Jewelry
24. Work-It Coworking Center & Dear Brit
25. *The Gayly*
26. Therapeutic Massage & Personal Training
27. OSU Museum of Art & Stw GSA
28. Payne Co Pride Merch
29. Payne County Health Dept.
30. Stillwater Fire Dept. (*outside*)
31. Bounce House (*outside*)
32. Food Trucks (*outside*)
33. *No Dumb Questions booth*

# *Pride Picnic*

## **Food Trucks!**

There is a varied array of food options available to you. Below are our participating food trucks with some recommendations for what to try. There is also an array of food options in Downtown Stillwater.

[\*\*D's Down Home Bar B Que\*\*](#)

[\*\*I Don't Know and I Don't Care\*\*](#)

**Starbucks of Stillwater**

[\*\*Trina's Tastee Treats\*\*](#)

## **Interactive Family Area**

There is a bounce house for children. Please note, no shoes are allowed in the bounce house and kids play at-their-own-risk.

The Stillwater Fire Department are here with one of their firetrucks!

The **OSU Museum of Art** is offering interactive activities for kids (of all ages!). They have sculpture building, arts & crafts, and an equity booth. These are great activities for families to do together.

The **OSU Museum of Art** is also offering face painting for kids (of all ages!)

# Pride Picnic

## Performers

**11:00 am: Kick-off with Payne County Pride Committee**

**Grand Marshall: Sara Cunningham, Free Mom Hugs**

**11:30 am: Functional Polly**

**12:30 pm: New Time Zones**

**1:30 pm: On the Doss**

**2:15 pm: Marcu Perry**

**3:00pm: Drag Queens of Pride**

**4:15 pm: Jared Tyler**



**Syren, the reigning Miss OKC Pride, is our emcee for the day**

## Our Headliner



**Jared Tyler** is a Tulsa-native and multi-instrumentalists. Tyler released his first of four solo albums in 1996 and has been featured on a multitude of others, including eight with longtime collaborator Malcolm Halcombe.

Tyler's music brings together elements of red dirt, bluegrass, country, gospel, pop, swing and Hawaiian music, marrying his past with a vision for his musical path forward.

Tyler is happily rooted with his partner in the supportive Tulsa community where he grew up singing in church and where his grandfather taught him to play mandolin. He says Tulsa's "humble nature" is what separates it from other music enclaves: "We're all in it together. There's gentle competition for gig slots and all that, but we're all friends."

\*Bio adapted from Jared Tyler's website: <http://www.jaredtyler.com/>.

Visit

# STILLWATER

and Join the Crowd

Experience the *Traditions*  
Experience the *Live Music*  
Experience America's *Friendliest*  
College Town!



# Youth Pride Party



## Red Earth Yoga Presents: The 7th Grade – 12th Grade Youth Pride Party hosted by Stilly Arts

**Who:** Folks aged 12 to 18 regardless of how they identify  
Adults will be present to chaperone.

**When:** From 6pm to 9pm.  
Some of you may have prom that evening, you can leave early if you need to!  
Some of you may have to work, come late after your shift is over!

**Where:** At Still Arts (1207 S Main St, Stillwater, OK 74074)

**What:** There will be dancing, music, yoga, snacks — a good time for all!

**Why:** It is a great chance to meet other teens from across the LGBTQ+ spectrum in a fun-filled environment. Students from all school districts, private schools, homeschool – all folks 12 to 18 are welcome!



Oklahoma State University  
S a i n t            A u g u s t i n e  
**Canterbury Center**

*Faith. Fellowship. Friendship.*

*God loves you.  
The Episcopal Church welcomes you.  
The Canterbury Center invites you.  
No exceptions. None.*

**Address;** 519 W. University Ave., Stillwater

**Email:** [osucanterbury@gmail.com](mailto:osucanterbury@gmail.com)

**Phone:** (405) 624-0141

**Instagram:** [@osucanterbury](https://www.instagram.com/osucanterbury)

**Twitter:** [@osucanterbury](https://twitter.com/osucanterbury)

# 18 - 22 Year Olds' Pride Party



## The “One Heckuva Gay” Pride Party for 18-22 Year Olds Hosted by OSU Queers & Allies *rain or shine*

- Who:** Folks aged 18 to 22sh regardless of how they identify  
This party is open to ALL folks in this age range, regardless of whether or not they’re affiliated with OSU.
- When:** From 7pm to 10pm.  
Some of you may have to work, come late after your shift is over!
- Where:** At Boomer Lake Park (the area by the [Boomer Lake Playground](#))
- What:** There will be dancing, music, games, food — a good time for all!
- Why:** It is a great chance to meet other young adults from across the LGBTQ+ spectrum in a fun-filled environment. Again, this is **open to anyone** too old for the youth party, but not old enough for the pride party at Stonewall.

# 21+ Pride Party & Drag Show



The 21+ Pride Party and Drag Show  
Hosted by Stonewall Tavern  
(115 S Knoblock St, Stillwater, OK 74074)

New Time Zones return to the Pride stage, providing live music until midnight.

Be sure to try the *Raging Flamer* – a spiked Moscato punch made especially for Payne County Pride 2019!



**Who:** Folks aged 21+ regardless of how they identify

**When:** From 8pm to 2am.

The Drag Show kicks off the night at 8pm

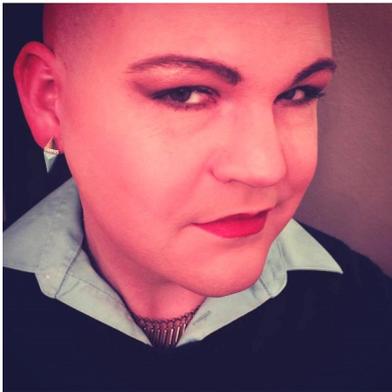
New Time Zones takes to the stage by 10pm

**Where:** At Stonewall Tavern (115 S Knoblock St, Stillwater 74074)

**What:** There will be drag, dancing, music, drinks – a good time for all!

**Why:** In addition to having some of the fiercest drag performers in Oklahoma, Stonewall Tavern has some of the best drinks in Stillwater, and New Time Zones is one of the best bands in the state!

# 21+ Pride Party & Drag Show



The night will begin with Oklahoma's *newest* drag show – hosted by Stillwater's own Ami Rhetto, renowned queen and past winner of *Dragonfly*. Join Ami as she showcases drag performers, new and old, to kick-off the night.

Featuring top drag queens from across the country, including:



*Syren*

Miss OKC Pride 2018  
Mr. Gay Lawton 2014 USofA



*Monica Seduction*

Miss Drag Las Vegas 2016  
Miss Diva Latina 2016



# got promo fomo?

When left untreated, Promo FOMO\* can escalate into a serious condition. Symptoms include trade show tables that no one stops at, cabinets full of unused tchotchkes, lack of employee support for marketing campaigns, promotional product selection paralysis, & recurring nightmares of brand obscurity.

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\* "Fear Of Missing Out"; Promo FOMO, specifically, is the fear of investing in boring, ineffective promotional products and missing out on amazing products and effective marketing opportunities.

# Thank you to our sponsors for supporting our inaugural Pride!



"Join the party!"



<a href="#"><u>D's Down Home Bar-B-Que</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Ponca City High School GSA</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Dear Britt Boutique</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Pride Gone Wild</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Doni's Banging Bling</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Resting Beauty Face - SeneGence</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Diversity Center of Oklahoma</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>State Rep. Trish Ranson, District 34</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Enid LGBT Coalition</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Sage &amp; Elm Apothecary</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Freedom Oklahoma</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Sarah's Stylish Bling Slingers</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Friends of Sanborn Nature Camp</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Shake Rattle &amp; Roll Events</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>I Don't Know and I Don't Care Food Truck</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Sprouts</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Lady West Creations</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Starbucks of Stillwater</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>McDonalds of Payne County</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Stillwater GSA</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>The Metallic Sheep</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Stillwater Public Library</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Midnight Maille Jewelry</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Sisters of the Sacred Heartland</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>OKDHS Foster Care and Adoptions Recruitment</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Therapeutic Massage &amp; Personal Training</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Olive Garden</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Trimble Sales</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>OSU Counseling &amp; Counseling Psychology Clinic</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Trina's Tastee Treats</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Payne County Health Department</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>UCO Women's Research Center and BGLTQ+ Student Center</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Payne County Youth Services</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>WorkIT Coworking Center</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>PFLAG of Stillwater</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Youth Services of Tulsa</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Pink Gypsy Nails</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Zannotti's Wine Bar</u></a>

## Payne County Pride Association Committee

<b>André Durham (Director)</b>	<b>OSU Graduate Student</b>
<b>Angela Simon</b>	<b>Retail Worker</b>
<b>Bradley Kinder</b>	<b>Administrative Assistant</b>
<b>Bryan Langford-Loftis</b>	<b>Insurance Agent</b>
<b>Cassie Herndon</b>	<b>OSU Graduate Student</b>
<b>Chris Rinke</b>	<b>Deli Manager</b>
<b>David Rose</b>	<b>Deputy</b>
<b>Erin Langford-Loftis</b>	<b>Administrative Coordinator</b>
<b>Heather Rose</b>	<b>OSU Graduate Student</b>
<b>Kristy Self</b>	<b>High School Teacher</b>
<b>Mikaela Taylor</b>	<b>Public Relations Specialist</b>
<b>Sami Simon</b>	<b>OSU Undergraduate Student</b>
<b>Tanner Smoley</b>	<b>OSU Undergraduate Student</b>
<b>Zeke Simon</b>	<b>High School Student</b>

The committee would like to thank each and every attendee! Your presence makes this event special and impactful. For all those who can't attend due to circumstance or fear, we are thinking about you and want you to know that you are not alone.

*Am I allowed to say \_\_\_\_\_?*

*What does that word mean?*

*Have a question about an LGBTQ+ topic but are too afraid to ask? Or just have never had the chance to?*

*Come to our “No Dumb Questions” booth during the pride picnic. This is an opportunity to ask your questions, in earnest, without worrying about saying the “wrong” thing.*

*How do I tell my best friend I am trans?*

*But, you can't be gay and Christian, right?*

*So, what's the point of this “pride festival” thing?*



# Meet our Models





# LGBTQIA+ HISTORIES UNCOVERED

**50 States:**  
Oklahoma, Colorado,  
Texas, and Wyoming  
*on view until June 29, 2019*



OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

**MUSEUM of ART**



Stillwater location:  
Land Run Centennial Monument



## **How do you identify within the LGBTQ+ community?**

I identify as gay.

## **What do you do?**

I currently am a full time student at OSU, graduating in May!

## **What made you want to get involved with Payne County Pride as a committee member?**

I wanted to get involved with Payne County Pride because I thought it would be a great way to get involved with the community, and to help raise awareness and educate others on the issues we as members of the LGBTQ+ community face on a daily basis.

## **Having grown up in Middle America, what do you think the rest of the country needs to know about your experience being gay here?**

Growing up in Middle America has helped instill in me a sense of pride in where I grew up, and has also helped me value those who are most important in my life, like my close friends and family. I think that I have been incredibly lucky to grow up where I did because I had such a wonderful support system when I needed it. Growing up in rural America isn't as bad as many think. Oklahoma may be a red state, but there are still a lot of really supportive people here! And there are many fun things to do for us here as well! The same can be said for my home state of Iowa where I grew up until I moved here for school.

## **How do you “Ignite Your Flame”?**

I ignite my flame by living my life to the fullest as much as I can, be that by traveling and going on adventures, or by spending time with my friends, or even by relaxing and reading a good book when I'm not busy doing schoolwork. What I enjoy most about traveling is getting to see and experience so many new places and things. I really enjoy immersing myself in different cultures and seeing things through different perspectives! My next adventure will be taking me to Sweden to visit a good family friend in June, and one day I hope to make it to Australia!

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Yale location:  
Jim Thorpe Home

# Luis

## **How do you identify within the LGBTQ+ community?**

I identify as a gay Latino.

## **What do you do?**

I am a full time student at Oklahoma State University, balancing two jobs, and managing in life with family, friends, and others.

## **What do you think people need to know about your experience as a gay person of color (POC) in Oklahoma?**

At first it was frightening because I didn't know where I belonged and I didn't have a foundation of others like me; especially in a conservative state. After a while of gaining confidence and accepting who I am, I have been surrounded by great people just like me and I've become strong enough to stand up to those who don't accept me. It ain't easy because there is more hate than love in Oklahoma but being a gay POC here has taught me to push and fight for what I believe in. There will always be more hardships than happy stories but sometimes the good outweighs the bad.

## **How do you hope to make an impact on the LGBTQ+ community moving forward?**

Being apart of great movements like pride, is a starting point but I also take initiative to better my community by attending other prides, volunteering for other LGBTQIA organizations, offering my services to others and trying to voice out issues that need to be shared within my community. I hope that my networking and the connections I make leave an everlasting impact on those individuals and they spread positivity wherever they go because it is an on-going chain of love and acceptance. That is how I hope to make an impact within my community.

## **How do you “Ignite Your Flame”?**

I am passionate about many things: art, dance, people, life filled with fun, and living true to myself; how I pursue that is to keep the end goal focused in my mind and realizing at the end of the good and bad times it will all be worth it and it will be a story to tell the next generation. I pursue my passion by being me and never letting anyone dampen or turning off my flame.



Cushing location:  
Cushing City Hall

## How do you identify within the LGBTQ+ community?

**Alissa:** I identify as a bisexual cisgender woman

**Christine:** I identify as a lesbian cisgender woman

## What do each of you do?

**Alissa:** I am currently in school at Wichita State University working on my doctorate in Community Psychology

**Christine:** I am in a Counseling Psychology Ph.D program at Oklahoma State. I've also been a medic in the Army Reserve for the past 4 years

Christine  
& Alissa

## How did you two meet?

We originally met in Spanish class and had known each other for a few years. I (Alissa) didn't know Christine was gay until I saw Christine give a Ted Talk, and that's when I asked her on a date.

## What has your experience as an interracial, woman-loving-woman (WLW) couple been like here in Oklahoma?

We are actually in a long distance relationship so we get to compare our experiences in Oklahoma and Kansas. Surprisingly, we have never experienced blatant discrimination in either state from anyone but our families. Oklahoma has more openly supportive politics, community organizations, and businesses than in Kansas, but generally people smile at us in both states when they see us holding hands. It's cool to get to learn about each others' cultures. I think for people looking at us as a couple, the gay aspect definitely trumps the interracial aspect of our relationship as far as shock-factor.

## How do each of you “Ignite Your Flame”?

**Alissa:** I ignite my flame by advocating for mental health. I am passionate about advocating for the mental health of minority groups like the LGBTQ+ community. It is such an important aspect of people's lives and we need to start looking at how to tailor mental health efforts to marginalized communities.

**Christine:** For me, igniting my flame means building community in the places I care about most. Right now, that means using counseling psychology as a tool to help me be an advocate for LGBTQ+ people who might not have the best resources. In the future, I plan on becoming a professor. I think it's important to have more queer representation in schools – and that's something I can do!



OSU location:  
Spirit Rider Statue

# Mikaela

## **How do you identify within the LGBTQ+ community?**

I have always identified as a lesbian, but as of late I have found it more comfortable to identify as queer. It leaves more room for growth and feels less confining. However, that doesn't mean I will stay with that label as I am always growing and discovering more things about myself.

## **What do you do?**

I work in Human Resources at a local nursing home.

## **What made you want to get involved with Payne County Pride as a committee member?**

I was very active in college and wanted to continue my activism after I graduated. So I reached out to the Director to see what sort of involvement I could have.

## **You have a history of activism, how do you hope to continue forward with that?**

When I get the chance I try to work with community organizations to better my community. My goal is to work for an organization that holds similar values as my own that intersects things I am passionate such as the Trevor Project.

## **How do you “Ignite Your Flame”?**

I am passionate about using my experience and voice to shine light on issues that people don't always think about. And working to be my most authentic self to show those growing up without support to have the confidence to do so as well.



Ripley location:  
Washington Irving Museum & Trail



### **How do you identify within the LGBTQ+ community?**

I identify as pansexual. I've found community by telling my close friends and supportive family members and by hanging out with like-minded friends.

### **What do you do?**

I am a high school student.

### **What do you say to folks who think you are too young to know your identity?**

I know what I feel and who I am.

### **You come from a supportive family, what has the impact of that support been like for you?**

It helps make me more comfortable with who I am knowing that my family supports me.

### **How do you “Ignite Your Flame”?**

I'm passionate about art, volleyball, and drama, and I pursue those by practicing them and not giving up on them.

**Chloe**



Perkins location:  
Perkins City Hall

### **How do you identify within the LGBTQ+ community?**

I identify as a transgender female. I knew I was trans since I was eight years old. I came out as gay in 2000 and finally officially transgender in 2010. Being a trans female and also being attracted to men, all of the sudden I became labeled as straight. I wasn't having that, so I say that I'm trans and gay. I was always so proud being gay and nothing was going to change that in my eyes. I am just as proud also being transgender.

### **What do you do?**

I am a former United States Marine and a retired detective sergeant from the Boston area. I am currently an unlimited, state licensed, heating and air conditioning contractor in Oklahoma City. As of this year all of my customers are LGBTQ+ or allies.

### **How was it moving to Oklahoma around the same time you transitioned?**

The thought of transitioning outwardly as a female was initially not an option for me. I never thought I could do it. As with many other transgender persons, I got to a point where transitioning was no longer a choice but instead was an absolute necessity which was now beyond my control. I had to finally live my truth! I certainly never ever anticipated my transition taking place in my birth state of Oklahoma!! It was only after my transition that I realized what a monumental challenge living out and proud in Oklahoma would become. I have been told that God hates me and that I'm going to hell so many times I've lost count. I get stared at so often that I'm numb to it. I lost half my customers due to coming out and living as a transgender female. I could go on and on with war stories but instead I'll say this: I will say that I am so extremely proud to be part of the LGBTQ community in Oklahoma. The forces that push in against our people is immense and it's that pressure that has made us a very tight knit community. I have now completely dedicated myself to our LGBTQ+ people in this state and in my eyes, nothing could be more challenging than being gay, lesbian or transgender in Oklahoma. To be out and proud in this state gives our people real bragging rights across our country. I just couldn't imagine it being anymore difficult than what it is here. Yet we thrive, we're happy, and we've become an integral part of the fabric of Oklahoma. We're here, we're queer, get used to it !!!

### **How has your experience as a veteran and a cop impacted your experience as a transwoman?**

First and foremost, being a former United States Marine and a retired police officer, I had the confidence to venture into public areas without worrying about my personal safety. At 6'3" tall and over 200 lbs, I always considered myself more than capable of protecting myself. I did however witness numerous incidents of crimes against transgender people while on the job as a street cop. I also witnessed horrible discrimination that my fellow officers committed against transgender people. I have first hand knowledge of the hate that exists in this world, not only against trans people but against any LGBTQ person. These experiences have formed me into a transgender/gay individual that has a very low tolerance for such hatred. I will rarely let a disparaging comment be hurled in my direction without a sharp reply. I am the polar opposite of bashful and never hesitate to meet such haters face to face. I firmly believe that love does win, however, no minority group has ever won their civil rights or place in this society by ignoring hatred. They won by fighting back! I believe that the peaceful doctrines of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., in conjunction with the fighting spirit of our brothers and sisters at the Stonewall Riots in 1969, are diligently needed to win the horrible war that has been waged against transgender human beings. It is my dream that all LGBTQ+ individuals be guaranteed the same rights and protections as anyone else in this country. No more, no less.

### **How do you "Ignite Your Flame"?**

To say I'm passionate about my beloved LGBTQ+ family is an understatement! I am crazy about our people and I am absolutely overflowing with pride to be part of such an amazing group of individuals. I have immersed myself in our community and have now dedicated my life to our cause. I have joined several organizations so that I might contribute and pay tribute to all the wonderful LGBTQ+ family members who have made it possible for us to be here today. I am a board member for our Oklahoma City PFLAG chapter, I have served as a volunteer for Oklahoma City Pride and am now a committee member for the 39th Street Pride organization, I am a Guard and member of Sisters of the Sacred Heartland, I faithfully attend the Oklahoma City Veterans Hospital group meetings for LGBTQ+ members, I'm attending transgender group meetings through Freedom Oklahoma and now the Oklahoma City Diversity Center. I've served on transgender discussion panels for the Oklahoma City Veterans Hospital Post Doctoral program and more recently at the Oklahoma City Community College. I am also proud to be the only transgender member to have ever served on the Eastern Oklahoma County Technology Center Advisory Board. Most recently I am trying to assemble a contingent of LGBTQ+ individuals to walk the half-marathon at this years Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon. After participating in the marathon last year, I saw no LGBTQ+ representation and I'm excited because we already have a few family members and Allies ready to go for this year. So to answer the question, all of the above is how I pursue my passion and my passion is all LGBTQ+ people and our allies. Last but not least I am extremely proud to participate in the first ever Payne County Pride celebration. It is truly an honor to be here and I am amazed at each and every individual who worked so hard to make this happen. This is how we win!!!!



Glencoe location:  
Fred Clark Lake

## How do each of you identify within the LGBTQ+ community?

**Carrie:** Queer/Femme

**Angie:** Queer/Butch

## What do you do?

**Carrie:** Curator of education & public programming at the Oklahoma State University Museum of Art

**Angie:** Painting and drawing professor at Oklahoma State University

## How did you meet? And when did you know you wanted to be life partners?

We met in Chicago at an arts conference in 2007. We met in Chicago at a conference in 2007, and were instantly smitten with one another. There was an immediate ease between us, we had a blast and belly laughed non-stop that weekend. We stayed in touch and continued to get to know one another and quickly realized that our lives aligned in many aspects, including our world views, love of family, and creative passions. We just made sense. Our long distance love affair lasted almost seven years before Carrie moved to Stillwater.

While marriage is something we may do someday, it's important to note that there are many ways to have fabulous, healthy, and valid relationships outside of the mainstream institution.

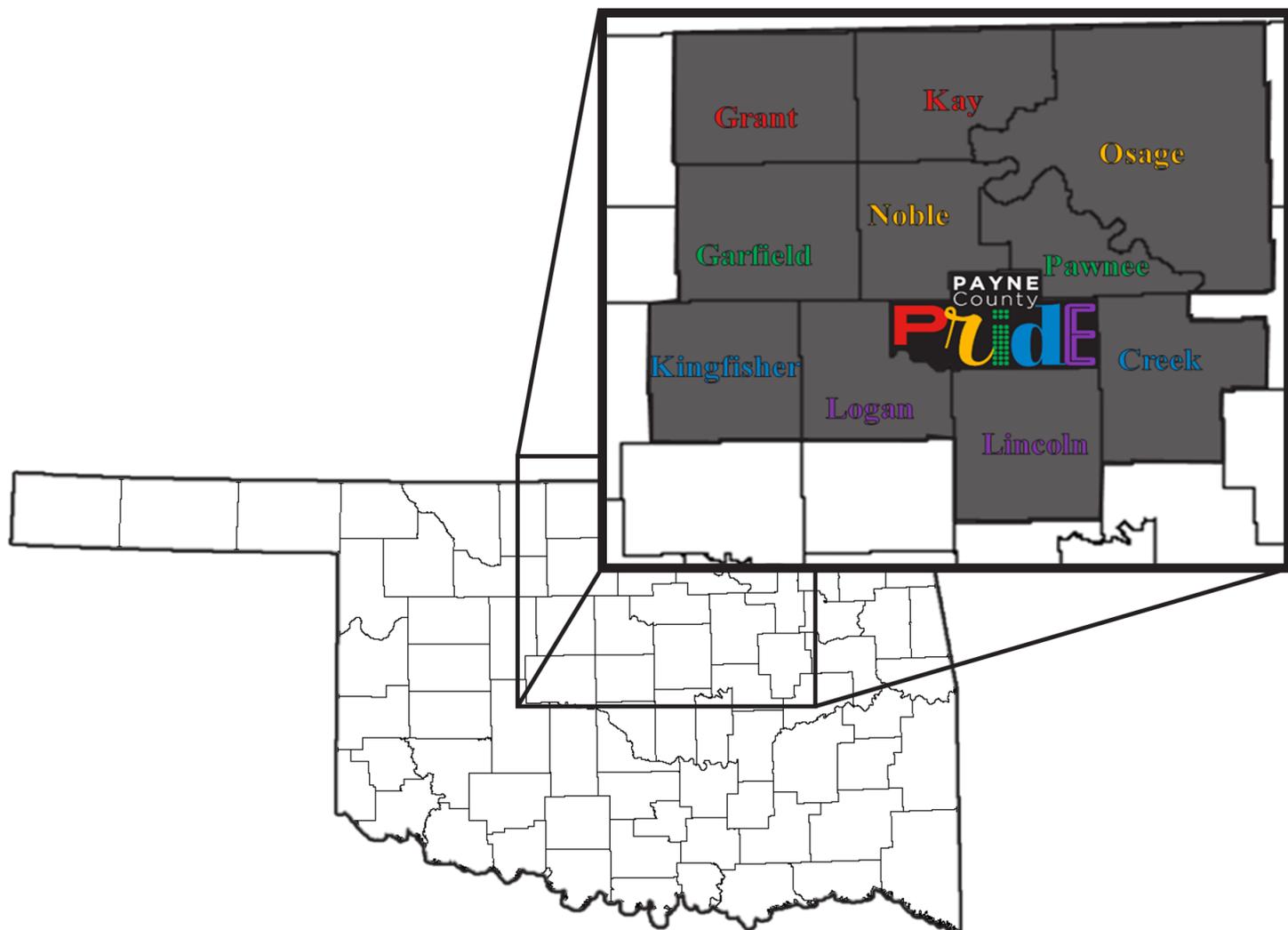
## Any relationship advice for same-sex couples in long term relationships?

It's important to maintain and grow your own interests and friendships outside of your relationship. Having a growth mindset keeps life fresh, fancy, and exciting! It also takes the pressure off of your partner to be all things.

**Angie &  
Carrie**

## How do each of you “**Ignite Your Flame**”?

Our passions are the arts and social justice – the arts provide a platform for exploration, connection, and empowerment. We make art, organize events, read, listen, and watch all that we can & make an effort to visit galleries, lectures, and workshops as often as possible.



### ***Why Payne County?***

We want to be inclusive of the entirety of Payne County because we want to bring the entire county together in supporting the LGBTQ+ community regardless of where someone may live. Each of our towns, Yale, Glencoe, Cushing, Ripley, Perkins, and Stillwater, have LGBTQ+ persons. By choosing the name "Payne County Pride" we highlight this fact and celebrate all persons across this beautiful county of ours, regardless of which town they call home.

### ***Why target all of Northern Oklahoma?***

The same reason we choose our name - we celebrate LGBTQ+ folks everywhere, regardless of their hometown. Our region has some amazing towns, but only Enid currently has a pride festival. Together with our friends to the west, we want to inspire our fellow Northern OK communities to hold their own prides.



**ENID PRIDE  
10TH ANNUAL CELEBRATION  
SEPTEMBER 21, 2019  
12PM - 5PM**

**BROUGHT TO YOU BY:**



**WWW.ENIDLGBTCOALITION.ORG**

**(800) 878-5298**



**ENIDPRIDE@YAHOO.COM**

**UPCOMING PRIDES**

• Norman Pride: May 4th

• Tulsa Pride: May 31-June 2

• OKC Pride: June 22

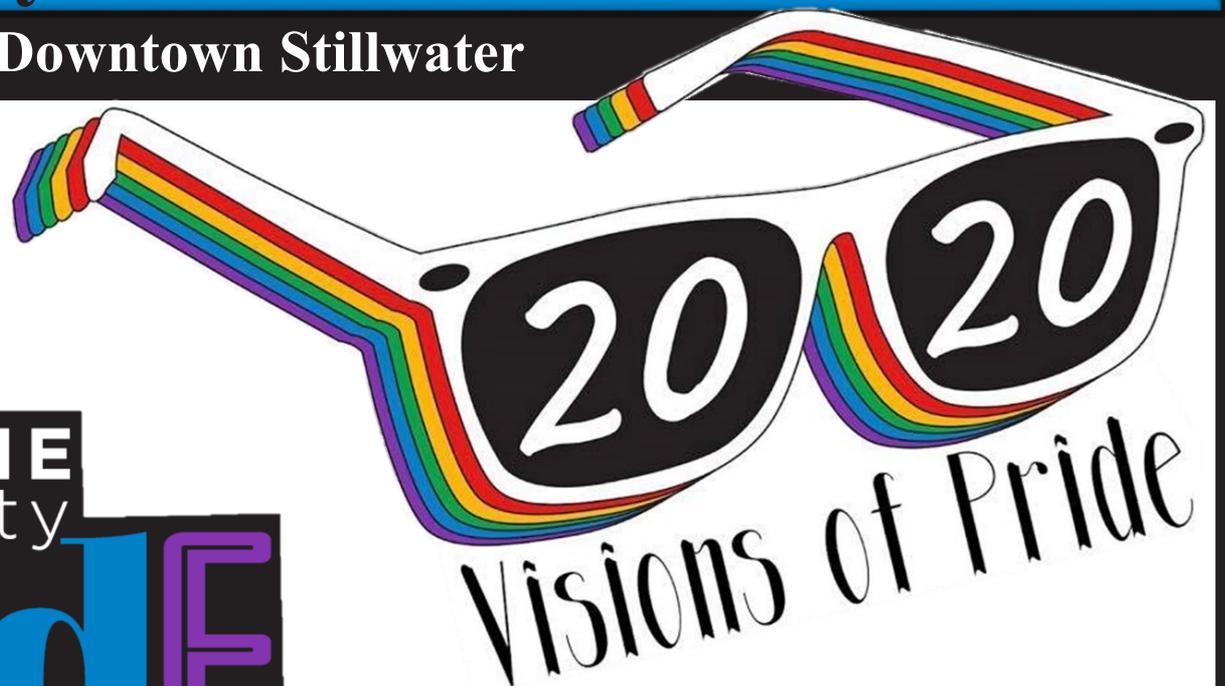
• Inaugural Muskogee Pride: July 20

• Edmond Pride: October 12

TBA: Bartlesville Pride,  
Lawton/Ft. Sill Pride,  
Tahlequah Pride,  
Glitter! Film Festival (McAlester)

# Payne County Pride 2020: Visions of Pride

April 4th, 2020 — Downtown Stillwater



Hey, Payne County Pride,  
we just wanted to say...

**Congratulations, it's  
about time!**

And a very special congratulations to  
**André Durham**  
for his vision and hard work,  
and to  
Payne County  
and  
Payne Country Pride  
on the first of many successful  
Pride Days!



*"join the party!"*