



# Then and Now

## Decades of History at the Community Center

As a native of Stillwater, my first memory of the building, now known as the Stillwater Community Center, was as a 6th grade middle school student.

Later, while attending Oklahoma State University, then Stillwater Middle School Principal John Mills hired me as an office aid. Today, as manager of the Stillwater Community Center, I have the pleasure of working with John who is as a member of the Stillwater Sister Cities Council headquartered here.

I often joke that my current office desk location is in the same spot as when I was an office aid and refer to many of the rooms as I knew them while a student here.

My career began at the City of Stillwater as an office assistant for the Community Center in December 1998 under the direction of Michael Varnum. Nineteen years ago, the center averaged approximately 30 events per month. Then, many of our responsibilities included maintenance and operation of the Community Center and City Hall.

Fast forward a few years and under the direction of former City Manager Carl Weinaug, the community center was a leading presenter in the performing arts, including Grammy-winning artist Asleep at the Wheel, Off-Broadway show "Footloose," the Glen Miller Orchestra, and numerous acts and performances, including magic, contemporary dance, hip hop, bluegrass, theater, comedy, international ballets and musicals to name a few.

While leading these projects, we also hosted large festivals and other special events and facility management.

Working with the SCC Advisory Board, SCC Foundation, dedicated citizens and user groups through the years, major milestones have been accomplished and expansion of resources realized.

Today, the center continues to provide accessible, affordable multi-use public space not otherwise available in this community.

As the "SCC Friends" list grows, we hope for a steady expansion in facility utilization. The Friends of Stillwater Community Center, Inc. and Stillwater Community Center Foundation, continue to be hardworking, dedicated citizens and true community center champions.

Their first project was to contract with the City of Stillwater to provide necessary upgrades to the dining room where Project Heart Elderly Nutrition Services serves lunch five days a week.

The construction is complete. With beautiful new lighting, tables and chairs that will provide flexible seating options, interior and exterior paint and audio/visual, these groups plan to host an open house on Aug. 25 from 5-7pm.

And, NOW is a great time to start planning your next family reunion, business gathering, wedding reception or birthday party in this great space.

It has been a pleasure to watch Stillwater Community Center continue to be the hub of community involvement as a warm, friendly and fun place to be. It's where things are happening and people are gathering.



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**Stephanie Kinder** is the Stillwater Community Center manager for the City of Stillwater and a Stillwater native who attended 6th – 8th grades at the Stillwater Middle School, which is now the Stillwater Community Center.

The Stillwater Community Center Foundation and the Friends of Stillwater Community Center strive to provide supplemental resources for the Stillwater Community Center to ensure its accessibility, affordability and sustainability for its use by residents and visitors of Stillwater and surrounding area. Visit [www.sccfriends.com](http://www.sccfriends.com) for more information.

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