



By Kendra Germany-Wall and Shelia Kirven

Camping

Safety Tips

There are air conditioned areas at the festival where you can escape the heat, including the Capitol Museum, Cafeteria, Council House, Arts and Crafts Building, Healthy Living Expo, Information Tent and Chapel.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to stop by the children's wristband stations to register children (ages 12 and under) for safety wristbands containing emergency contact information. Lost children will be taken to the Lost Child Station, open from 8 a.m. to midnight. Each day, children who are registered and receive a wristband will be entered to win a \$100 Visa gift card.

Special Events

Chief Gary Batton will welcome festival goers at 5:00 p.m. Friday at the amphitheater, with the swearing-in ceremony for Council members immediately following.

After the ceremony, the 2025 Choctaw Princess Pageant will take place starting at 6:00 p.m. Find more information about this year's pageant and candidates on page 11.

This year, the Capitol Museum celebrates its 50th anniversary. The museum always has something new to see, whether it is new exhibits or handcrafted items for sale in the gift shop.

As part of the museum's 50th anniversary celebration, three bronze busts created by Choctaw Artist Jane Semple-Umsted will be unveiled at 2:00 p.m. on Friday.

These busts honor Chief Gregory E. Pyle, Tribal Chaplain Bertram Bobb, and former District 4 Council Member Delton Cox.

Culture

Sports

Carnival and Dining

A visit to the festival would not be complete without savoring the delicious food offered throughout the grounds. The cafeteria will be open daily for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, providing plenty of dining space and air conditioning. There will also be many great food trucks on site, ensuring a variety of options.

For thrill-seekers and carnival game enthusiasts, the carnival will be open from noon to midnight on Friday and Saturday, and from noon until 10:30 p.m. on Sunday.

Entertainment

On Saturday, entertainment for this year's festival is a Red Dirt/Texas Country music fan's dream. Stoney LaRue will take the stage at 7:30 p.m., followed by the Josh Abbott Band at 9:00 p.m. Choctaw Artist, The Close, will open the evening with their genre-bending harmonies at 6:00 p.m.

Faith

Faith is important in the Choctaw Nation, especially during Labor Day celebrations.

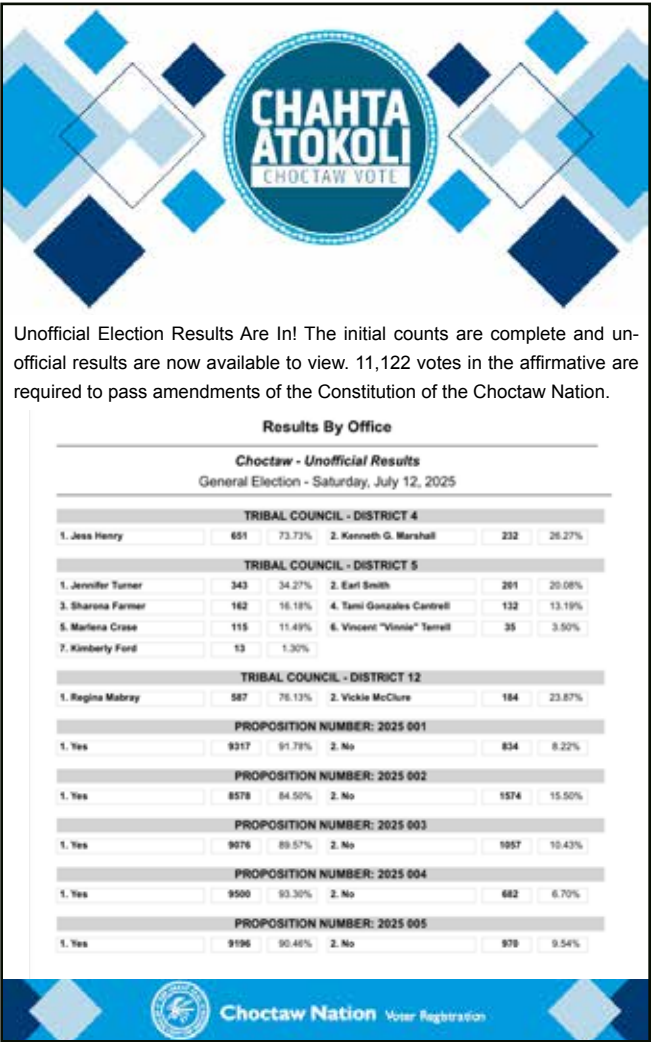
Join us for traditional Choctaw hymns at the Choctaw Village on Saturday at 10:30 a.m. On Sunday, the Children's Service at the Chapel starts at 10:00 a.m., followed by the regular worship service at 11:00 a.m.

The annual gospel singing at the amphitheater is at noon. In the evening, the main stage will feature performances from Gold City at 6:00 p.m., Katy Nichole at 7:00 p.m., and Cain at 8:30 p.m..

Information

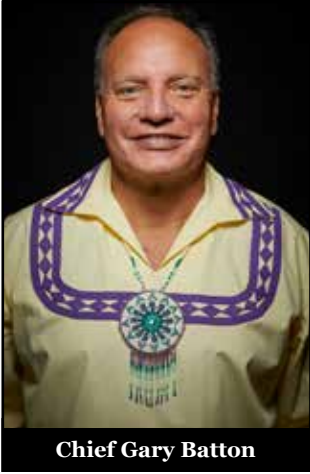
The information tent, located near the cafeteria, will be open daily to assist visitors in locating various events and information about the festival, as well as tribal programs and services.

Events, times and locations are always subject to change. For updates, visit <https://laborday.choctawnation.com/> or follow the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma on social media, including the official Choctaw Nation Labor Day Festival Facebook page.



Faith, Family, Culture

Na Yimmi, Chukka Achvffa, Im Aivlhpesa



Chief Gary Batton

Reflecting on the Impact of McGirt Ruling, Five Years Later

Five Years Later: The McGirt Ruling and Choctaw Nation

It has been five years since the July 9, 2020, ruling that the U.S. Supreme Court handed down in the case of McGirt v. Oklahoma – a generational win for Native American rights.

This ruling, handed down by the highest Court in the U.S., reaffirms preexisting treaties between tribes and the federal government with firm wording that leaves no doubt as to our continuing sovereignty over our people and our lands.

“On the far end of the trail was a promise.” That’s what the highest Court declared and upheld in McGirt. It has been a long time coming since the U.S. Supreme Court

handed down a ruling that we can point to that so eloquently affirms our tribal sovereignty. This was a big win for all tribal nations,

in that, it recognizes the sovereignty of our ancestors walked the Trail of Tears to preserve, was memorialized in treaties which remain in force to this day.

Key Legal Aspects of McGirt

The U.S. Supreme Court found that the state of Oklahoma has no jurisdiction over Muscogee (Creek) tribal citizens who commit major crimes within their tribal nation. The federal courts have exclusive jurisdiction over those crimes, and the tribe has authority over other lesser crimes.

In addition, the ruling affirms a lower court’s ruling in a separate but associated case, Carpenter v. Murphy, finding that the Muscogee (Creek) Nation is a reservation and has been one since at least 1866. Contrary to popular misconception, the Muscogee (Creek) reservation did not end with Oklahoma’s statehood in 1907.

For the Choctaw Nation, the McGirt and Sizemore decisions removed limitations to our jurisdiction that resulted in part from those prior misconceptions. It strengthened government-to-government relations, prompted expansion of tribal law enforcement, reinforced treaty obligations, and supported cultural and legal revitalization. You can see for yourself in the included illustration provided along with this blog.

The McGirt ruling reaffirms the rights of tribal nations as sovereign entities. For the Choctaw Nation, this principle was confirmed on April 1, 2021, when the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals issued a ruling in Sizemore v. Oklahoma, declaring that the Choctaw Nation Reservation was never disestablished.

Together, McGirt and Sizemore affirm our rights to make our own laws to govern our people on our reservation lands, and exercise judicial authority in tribal courts, under tribal laws, with tribal prosecutors.

Our treaties with the U.S. government preserved these inherent rights of sovereignty, but as many indigenous people know, the federal and state government often disregarded and broke those treaties, which the Choctaw entered with good faith and at great expense.

Immediately following the ruling, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma announced it was prepared to file more than 125 cases in the District Court of the Choctaw Nation. In a historic move, the Choctaw Nation filed those 125 cases the same day to prevent any criminals from being released from custody.

Between 2020 and 2021, in the wake of the McGirt and Sizemore decisions, cases filed in Choctaw Tribal Courts surged by 569%, directly countering claims that criminals were escaping prosecution. This upward trend has continued steadily; by 2024, the Choctaw Tribal Courts processed 4,284 cases—a staggering 957% increase since 2020.

McGirt’s Impact Continues

Beyond the typical kind of trial work people expect in the tribe’s District Court, the Choctaw Nation has also established two culturally rooted courts: the Peacemakers Court and the Healing to Wellness Court (known as “Atuya,” Choctaw for “Steppingstone”).

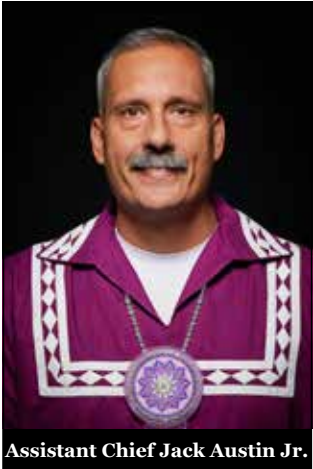
The Peacemakers Court offers a mediation alternative drawing on Choctaw customs, traditions, and, when appropriate, religious teachings to resolve disputes. Peacemakers may consult tribal elders to guide the resolution process.

The Healing to Wellness Court (Atuya) supports individuals and families striving to overcome addiction or break cycles of child abuse and neglect. This court provides a braided-services approach, help in locating free counseling, job training, housing assistance, and cultural education to promote healing and healthy choices.

The 5th Anniversary of this landmark ruling serves as a great reminder of the outstanding work our Choctaw Nation Legal Division has done and continues to do to protect our sovereignty. I also want to express a big “Yakoke” to the Choctaw Lighthouse Police and the Department of Public Safety for the exceptional work they do every day to keep our tribal members and all the communities and towns across our reservation safe and secure.

Tribal ancestors and warriors of today have fought hard for our sovereign rights and the McGirt ruling is a large arrow in our quiver in the fight to make our own future and create a better life for our tribal members.

For more from Chief Batton, visit <https://www.choctawnation.com/news/chiefs-blog/>.



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.

A labor of love: Choctaw Nation Labor Day Festival 2025

It is nearly Labor Day Festival time! The Choctaw Nation’s annual three-day festival will be held from Aug. 29 through Aug. 31, 2025, at the Choctaw Nation’s Tvshka Homma Capitol grounds.

Every year, I am so impressed with the level of participation, attendance and fun we have at this great event that highlights what the Chahta Spirit of Faith, Family and Culture is all about.

The Chief and I enjoy meeting all the tribal members, family and friends at this event each year. The sporting events, carnival rides, quilt show, princess pageant, food and culture that all gets packed into this three-day event is impressive. I would like to give a

Yakoke Fehna to everyone who organizes and participates in this event – without your hard work and dedication our festival would not be as impressive as it is.

Seeing all the smiling faces at the Choctaw Capitol is what our ancestors dreamed of when our new sovereign nation was being rebuilt following the Trail of Tears. The family atmosphere, attention to culture and reverence for our faith are exactly what the Choctaw Nation stands for.

Getting together for fellowship and family is the seed that was planted many years ago when the festival was first dreamed about. Each year the vision gets bigger and better for the festival, and I have no doubt that this year’s festival will certainly be one of our best events yet!

In addition to the annual Choctaw Princess Pageant, arts, crafts, food and cultural events, there will be a line-up of entertainment that includes:

Stoney LaRue will take the stage as the opener on Saturday, Aug. 30 at 7:30 p.m., headlining the concert is the Josh Abbott Band.

On Sunday performances will include some great Gospel artists, the Gold City quartet will open the Sunday performances at 6 p.m. followed by Katy Nichole at 7 p.m. and then Cain will cap the evening with their 8:30 p.m. performance.

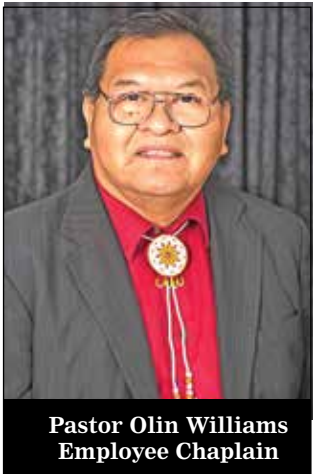
It’s going to be a hot one again this year, so please bring lots of water, wear loose-fitting clothes and comfortable walking shoes. If you feel dizzy or distressed from the heat, please go into an air-conditioned building or find a shady spot to rest until you feel better.

For more information on Choctaw’s Labor Day Festival, please visit the CNO website at www.laborday.choctawnation.com for further updates. This event is one of my favorites of the entire year, and my hope is that everyone has a great Labor Day Festival again this year!



Photo by Christian Toews

A sky-high view of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Labor Day Festival. For a full list of events, see page 12.



Pastor Olin Williams
Employee Chaplain

Going Light

In the Bible, the word “chicken” can refer to a type of Christian (believer).

Matthew 23:37 says, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under wings, and ye would not.”

Christ used the simple, everyday things of life to teach the greatest spiritual truths.

“Going light” is a term used to describe birds that are ill. It is a symptom of an underlying condition. Most chickens have diseases of tuberculosis and worms. These diseases are detected by these symptoms. The chickens would appear listless, have a dejected appearance and lose weight.

These symptoms are practically the same as those of Christians who are spiritually diseased.

First, they appear listless. They feel indifferent to what’s going on about them. They have no interest in spiritual things. Jeremiah 12:11 says, “They have made it desolate. It mourneth unto me; the whole land is made desolate, because no man layeth it to heart.”

The second symptom is they are dejected in appearance. The appearance is that of depression, discouragement, cast down in spirit, and unconcern.

The third symptom of a Christian affected by the disease of “Going Light” is the same as that of the common chicken...they lose weight. Christians today are spiritually anemic and undernourished, so that they weigh low on God’s scales.

In Daniel 5:27-30, we find Belshazzar dying with this disease. “TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES: Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians. Then commanded Belshazzar; and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom. In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.”

The same treatment for “Going Light” in birds is the same for Christians with this same spiritual disease. It has to be wormed out. To worm means to kill out. This is the office work of the Holy Spirit. Preaching the Word of God under the anointing of the Holy Spirit will drive out the worms (sins) and bring back the health Christians need.

Malachi 4:2 encourages the Christian. “But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.”

LET’S LEARN
SOME COMMON
CHAHTA
PHRASES

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Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

BRINGING FABLES TO
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Available at Choctaw Travel Plazas, Country
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INSPIRED BY TRADITION. BUILT FOR GAME NIGHT FUN.

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Apply at Careers.ChoctawNation.com

Choctaw tribal member signs with the Indianapolis Colts

By Christian Chaney

Coleman Owen, a proud member of the Choctaw Nation, is taking his talents to the NFL. The Gilbert, Arizona, native recently signed with the Indianapolis Colts as an undrafted free agent following the 2024 NFL Draft, fulfilling his lifelong dream.

“It was a dream come true,” said Owen. “It was something I’ve always dreamed about since I was a little kid. I never knew if it was really going to happen or not; I just worked as hard as I could to get there.”

Owen’s path to the NFL began with no scholarships out of high school. He decided to bet on himself and trust his abilities, so he walked on at Northern Arizona University, where he earned a scholarship after just one year.

Over the next five seasons, he climbed into the program’s top ten in all-time receiving categories.

Owen transferred to Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, for his final year of eligibility. There, he broke the school’s all-time receiving record and helped lead the team to its first Mid-American Conference Championship in 65 years.

While at Ohio University, Owen gained social media attention for his touchdown celebrations, which he calls the “leg dab” that he borrowed from some of his college roommates at NAU.

After the 2024 NFL Draft, Owen received multiple offers from teams looking to sign him as a free agent.

The draft is a three-day process, and he says he spent those three days hanging out with family and friends, waiting for a call.

When he started receiving calls, he said things started moving very quickly.

“Me and my agent had to kind of decipher really quickly and make a decision on what was the best team for me to go to,” said Owen. “That ended up being the Colts.”

One week later, Owen was on a flight to Indianapolis, Indiana.

He joined 14 other rookies for five weeks of summer minicamp and organized team activities (OTAs).

He is currently on a short break and will resume team camp with the rest of the team at the end of July.

Representing the Choctaw Nation at such a high level means a lot to Owen.

“I’m very thankful to be a member of this tribe, and it’s something my dad has instilled in me since I was a kid,” said Owen. “I have pride in that.”

Faith and family keep Owen grounded and are his biggest motivators going into the upcoming season.

“One of my biggest motivators is to glorify God every day through my actions and through my work,” he said. “Another one is my family... I also just got married a couple weeks ago, so being able to provide for my family and my wife motivates me.”

Now, his primary focus is making the Colts’ final game-day roster and contributing wherever he is needed, whether as a wide receiver or a return specialist.

Going into his first NFL season, his advice to young Native athletes looking to compete at the same level is this:

“Put your head down and work hard every day. You might be counted out by some people... but hard work is going to outweigh all those things at the end of the day,” said Owen. “Trust God in his timing and have fun with whatever you’re doing.”



Above: Coleman Owen signs his free agent deal with the Indianapolis Colts.
Below, Left: Owen runs drills at the Colts’ rookie camp.
Below, Right: Owen scores a touchdown during his time at Ohio University.



Four doctors recognized by Family Medicine Residency Program

DURANT, Okla. – The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma recognized four graduates from the Family Medicine Residency Program this summer: Doctors Caitlyn Bowman, Talayna Leonard, Christian Matthew Meeks, and Mason Two Crow finished their three-year residency with Choctaw Nation and began careers across the United States.

“The commitment, compassion, and perseverance demonstrated by these residents clearly show they are prepared to make a meaningful impact in the lives of many patients,” said Dr. Eric Gillette, residency program director. “We are incredibly proud of their achievements and look forward to the promising careers that lie ahead.”

Caitlyn Bowman, D.O. is from Ozark, Ark. She received her Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from Arkansas Tech University in Russellville, Ark. She received her Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine in 2022 from the Arkansas College of Osteopathic Medicine in Fort Smith, Ark. Bowman will begin her career in rural primary care at Mercy Clinic in Roland, Okla.

Talayna Leonard, D.O., grew up in Gillette, Wyo. She graduated with her Bachelor of Science in both physiology and microbiology from the University of Wyoming in Laramie, Wyo. She graduated with her Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine from A.T. Still University, College of Osteopathic Medicine in Kirksville, Mo. Dr. Leonard plans to focus on rural, procedural pain management and emergency room coverage in her future career.

Christian Matthew Meeks, D.O. is from Sallisaw, Okla. He

graduated in 2015 from Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford, Okla., with a degree in biology with a biomedical emphasis. He continued his education at Southwestern Oklahoma State University and in 2017 graduated with a master’s in microbiology and biomedical sciences. With those degrees in hand, he continued with the Arkansas College of Osteopathic Medicine where he graduated in 2022. He will continue his career at the Choctaw Nation Stigler Health Clinic in September, providing rural outpatient medical care.

Dr. Mason Two Crow is from Sachse, Texas. In 2017, he graduated from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Okla. with a degree in biochemistry and molecular biology and a minor in American Indian studies. He continued his studies at the Oklahoma State University College of Osteopathic Medicine and graduated in 2022. Dr. Two Crow will be the family practice physician at the Choctaw Nation Ruby Choate Health Clinic in Broken Bow, OK starting in August 2025.

The residents completed the program on June 30, 2025, and are board certified in family medicine. They gathered with family and friends for a recent graduation ceremony to celebrate.

Dr. Gillette added, “They’ve not only mastered the clinical knowledge and skills required for excellence but have also displayed a steadfast dedication to patient care, public health, and lifelong learning. Their deep passion for medicine and sincere concern for their patients will no doubt bring lasting, positive change to the communities they will serve.



Choctaw Nation Photo
Doctors. Bowman, Leonard, Two Crow and Meeks pause for a photo during their graduation ceremony.

The ceremony included recognition for the faculty that give their time to teach the residents throughout their three years of the program. This year’s Attending (Physician) of the Year is Henry Gutierrez, D.O. “Since I recently graduated from the residency program myself, I have an appreciation of all of our attendings,” said Gutierrez. “It’s not just the advising of the residents, but the mentoring during all hours of the night when they have a question or giving personal advice that I enjoy.”

WILDLIFE & OUTDOORS

Field Notes from the 2025 Spring and Summer Survey Season

By Jordan Grotts

The spring and summer seasons in the Choctaw Nation Reservation are full of energy and activity that can only be rivaled by deer season. From March through October, the Choctaw Nation Wildlife Department conducts many seasonal surveys that help us keep our thumb on population trends of everything from turkeys and deer, to bats and bears. Keeping track of long-term trends is greatly beneficial to our department so that we are better able to manage our rich natural resources in the reservation.

Kicking off in March, our crew surveys large tracts of land using “gobble surveys.” The surveys take advantage of the tom turkey’s instinct to mate with as many hens as possible to guarantee success in passing on their genetics to the local population. To accomplish this, we stop at points along a route to listen closely for gobbles and tally those results to compare across years. This often peaks during mid-March, and this year we were pleased to see an increase in activity from previous years and are hopeful that the upward trend will continue.

Our survey season for bat monitoring runs the length of spring and summer. This is because bats are present in the reservation year-round and emerge on warm nights to forage for insects in preparation for the pup season, which is the time of year when adult females give birth (May-July). We have two methods for this; ultrasonic recording, which records individual bat sounds through echolocation, and are often outside of the range of human hearing. Using software, we identify which species are present and can determine behavior and habitat use. Our second method, mist netting, allows us to capture individuals to document and confirm species and condition of individuals. This is a much more intense sampling effort and requires long nights in the field.

As for July and August, we are looking forward to our annual bear surveys and deer surveys to close out the season. We survey bear populations by baiting a predetermined route with sardines on a Monday and returning that Friday to note evidence of bears. This allows us to document range expansions year after year. Lastly, deer surveys on tribal properties include counting deer observed at night using spotlights and thermal technology to estimate the population to make management decisions.

We hope you have a great and safe summer. As always, we appreciate your support and wish us luck in continuing our survey efforts to provide accurate and reliable scientific information to conserve our natural heritage.

Choctaw Nation Wildlife Conservation

Southeastern announces 2025 Distinguished Alumni

DURANT, Okla. – Southeastern Oklahoma State University will honor a class of four Distinguished Alumni during Homecoming festivities in the week leading up to November 1, 2025.

The 2025 Distinguished Alumni class includes:

- James Dry (’93), who serves District 9 on the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma’s Tribal Council, where he has been instrumental in advancing initiatives supporting economic development, cultural preservation, and quality of life improvements throughout the Nation. Prior to his time as a councilman, Dry rose through the ranks of the Choctaw Nation’s many operations, wrapping up as the Director of Sales and Events for the Choctaw Casino Resort. The Dry family has one of the longest legacies at Southeastern, as James is the fourth

generation of five who have earned a Southeastern degree. He was a two-year tennis letterman at Southeastern and since his graduation has continually been a community advocate, also serving on the board of the Durant Area Chamber of Commerce, as well as Chairman of the Magnolia Festival.

SEE AND SHARE OUR STORIES AT TogetherWereMore.com

Choctaw Nation



SCAN CODE TO VIEW STORIES



Jennifer Woods

District 6

Halito from District 6-The Heart of the Nation!
The past month has been heartbreaking for so many, and we would like to express our deepest sympathy for the families of the victims of the devastating Texas flooding and across the Nation, also, of the young men who were injured in the Tvshka Homma fireworks accident and of the one who passed away due to his injuries.
Our prayers for healing, peace and comfort are with the families as they go through these hard times. We ask that you continue to pray for all the families who were involved as people begin to rebuild their lives.

I would like to thank our EVS and Maintenance departments for their hard work at getting our own community center dried out after we received water damage from the storms that we experienced this spring. We truly appreciate all of your hard work and dedication.

District 6 is thankful for the families who have been receiving the kids’ summer snack/meals that are being provided through the Tribe. These meals are provided so that our community children can have healthy meals during the summer months when they are out of school. We also would like to say a big Yakoke to Veteran Harold “Buzz” Weaver for his \$1,000 donation to our community children’s feeding program. Mr. Weaver believes that no child should go hungry, and his generous gift will help us continue to provide nutritious meals for the children of Latimer County, and we are so grateful. Yakoke Buzz! Your generosity is touching many lives.

The District 6 Princess Pageant was held in June. The princesses for the upcoming year are: Junior Miss Isabella Muncy and Little Miss Lillyanne Muncy. We look forward to working with these young ladies. We also have two new Outstanding Elders, Mark Underwood and Joanne Baker, who will represent District 6 for the upcoming year. We know that all of these people will represent our district well.

We also held our Veteran Appreciation lunch in June, and we honored them with a gift and a wonderful meal. We are very grateful for the sacrifices that our veterans have made. We want to encourage our veterans to come be a part of the Tvshka Coffee Club, which is a Warrior Wellness Veteran Support group where you can join other veterans for a cup of coffee and good conversation. The group meets on the third Thursday of the month at 11:00 a.m. Our Veterans’ department is available to assist you with your questions and needs.

The District 6 seniors have been very busy as usual with Indian Taco sales, shopping and Casino trips, day trips and playing chair volleyball. We are very proud of our chair volleyball team who attended the Eufaula Indian Community chair volleyball game recently and brought home the 2nd place trophy. They attended this game last year also and brought home a 2nd place trophy then as well. We’re hoping that next year they will bring home first place.

We had a great time celebrating the 249th year of our Nations independence with a wonderful BBQ ribs lunch and lots of red, white and blue. Happy Birthday America!

I would like to say Yakoke (thanks) you for supporting me as your Councilwoman, as I have been reelected for the next four years. I will continue striving to work for our district, bringing more homes, businesses, child and elder care, and other things that will benefit our tribal members. It is an honor to be your Councilwoman, and I pray that I will have God’s strength and wisdom to better serve our communities.

Yakoke!



COUNCIL MINUTES	
CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA TRIBAL COUNCIL	
REGULAR SESSION AGENDA	
July 12, 2025	
1. CALL TO ORDER	
2. OPENING PRAYER/FLAG SALUTES	
3. ROLL CALL	
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES	
a. Regular Session June 14, 2025	
5. WELCOME GUESTS/SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS	
a. Veteran of the Month, District #10 Choctaw Language Speaker, District #10	
6. PUBLIC COMMENTS	
a. SE Oklahoma Sportsmen – Group Speaker – Road Closures in LeFlore County	
7. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES	
8. NEW BUSINESS	
a. Letter of Appointment for Judge Wayne Gotcher as District Court Appellate Judge	
b. Approve the Disposal of Surplus Capital Assets – Equipment	
	c. Approve the Disposal of Surplus Capital Assets – Vehicles
	d. Approve the Choctaw Nation’s Participation in the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Tribal Self-Governance Program
	e. Approve the Application for the Head Start Continuation Funds for FY 2025-2026
	f. Approve One-Time Funding Grant for the Head Start Program
	g. Council Bill to Amend the Choctaw Nation Fish, Game, and Animals Code and Approve Certain Youth Draw Hunts in 2025
	h. Authorize Cross-Deputization Agreements between the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and Law Enforcement Agencies
	9. OTHER NEW BUSINESS
	10. OLD BUSINESS
	11. ADJOURNMENT
	12. CLOSING PRAYER
	All votes passed unanimously.

Jacob is July First Language Speaker

Elsie Moreland Jacob is the July First Language Speaker of the Month. She is the daughter of Daniel Eastman and Evelyn Roberts Jacob. Jacob graduated from Tushka High School. She attended the Choctaw Nation workforce program where upon completion began working at Kennedy’s Nursing Home. Then, after completing medication aid classes went to work for MedCore Plus, where in June, 2025 she celebrated 26 years. Jacob is also a licensed beautician.

Jacob says she loves volunteering and helping out where she’s needed most whether that’s at her church, Can Hill Methodist Church or with the District 10 Senior Citizens Committee.



Crowley is July Veteran of the Month

Robert John Crowley, District #10, is Choctaw Nation’s Veteran of the Month.

Crowley was born in Atoka, Okla., and graduated from high school there. He attended the University of Oklahoma, pursuing a degree in Architecture, before enlisting in the Navy in September 1989.

After completing basic training in Orlando, Florida, his duty stations were in Great Lakes, Illinois, and San Diego, California. He was deployed during Desert Storm aboard the non-combat ship *USS McKee*, a floating repair and supply ship for submarines, and served as an electronics technician performing mainframe and computer repair and operating IFF (Identify Friend or Foe) systems.

He was returned to the submarine base in San Diego, where he specialized in repairing antenna systems, periscope, and radar for Los Angeles-class submarines. Crowley also served as a member of the Security Reaction Force, firefighting, and base shooting teams.

ET-3 Crowley was honorably discharged in September 1994. His commendations include the National Defense Service Medal, Expert Rifle (.45 Caliber) and Expert (.38 Caliber) awards, the Navy “E” Ribbon, and Good Conduct Medal.

He recalls his time aboard the *USS McKee* as a pivotal time when he gained extensive knowledge in pneumatics and mechanical systems. Repairing submarines was a significant aspect of his duties. He fondly remembers the camaraderie shared with fellow service members. He expresses immense pride in having served his country and remains grateful for the opportunity to do so.

After returning from military service, he worked in technical support roles with peripheral equipment providers. He later became a contractor for the EPA in Ada, Oklahoma. Through technological initiatives with the Chickasaw and Choctaw Nations, he delivered services and opportunities to Native Americans. He is semi-retired and operates his own business, Crowley’s Market, in Ada, Oklahoma.

He and his wife, Cyndie, of 22 years, have three daughters, Carleigh, Maci, and Charlee. The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma holds our Veterans in the highest esteem and appreciates their sacrifices and contributions to preserve our freedoms and the way of life we hold dear.



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION SERVICE PRESENTS

CHAHTA KIDS’ CORNER

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO LUKSIS.

Don’t forget to look for Luksi at the Going Green tent at the Labor Day Festival.

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

CHOCTAW
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SAVE THE DATE

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Upcoming Events

Second Chance Resource | Aug. 7 | 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. | Wright City Old Head Start | 105 W 10th St. Wright City, OK 74766 | This is an opportunity to connect with free legal aid services, re-entry programs, and career and educational opportunities. You will leave empowered with knowledge and kickstart your next steps in life! Open to CDIB cardholders from any federally recognized tribe.

Blood Drive – Durant - Aug. 7 & Aug. 8 | 8 a.m. & 3 p.m. | Choctaw Nation Headquarters | 1802 Chukka Hina Durant, OK 74701 | Choctaw Nation Tribal Headquarters will be hosting two blood drives. The drive will start at 8 a.m. on Aug. 7 and 3 p.m. on Aug. 8. Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments can be made at <https://www.yourbloodinstitute.org/donor/schedules/name>. Search “Choctaw” or search by city.

Cinema at the Center | Aug. 9 | 1 p.m. | Choctaw Cultural Center | 1919 Hina Hanta Wy, Calera, OK 74730 | This monthly series features a wide range of films designed around a fun, family-friendly theme. This month, check out Disney’s “Finding Nemo.” We’d love to see you there!

PACT ACT: Bringing VA Benefits | Aug. 14 | 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. | McAlester Community Center | 13274 Afullota Hina McAlester, OK 74501 | Sign up for benefits, speak with representatives, get answers to your VA Benefits and claims questions and receive VHA toxic health screenings. This event is sponsored by Choctaw Nation Veterans Advocacy in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs as part of the Pact Act (Bringing VA Benefits Home.) You do not have to be Native American to attend this event.

Blood Drive – Durant Community Center - Aug. 15 | 10:15 a.m. | Durant Community Center | 1802 Chukka Hina Durant, OK 74701 | Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments can be made at <https://www.yourbloodinstitute.org/donor/schedules/name>. Search “Choctaw” or search by city.

Car Seat Checks and Safety Information Event | Aug. 22 | 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. | Wright City Community Center | 6544 OK-98, Wright City, OK 74766 | It’s important to make sure car seats are properly installed.

Circus City 5k | Sept. 6 | 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. | Choctaw Wellness Center-Hugo | 304 Chahta Circle Hugo, OK 74743 | Join us for the Circus City 5k 2025, “Race for Education.” Your participation in this run supports Hugo Public Schools. For more information and to register today, scan the QR code.

FALL SEMESTER APPLICATION NOW OPEN

The Fall Cycle Opens on August 1 - October 1, 2025.

Start Your Journey Today at choctawnation.com/services/higher-education

Choctaw Nation Higher Education Program

INDULGE AND NOURISH

Traditional or modern we have a dish for you.

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CHAMPULI CAFE

ChoctawCulturalCenter.com

SSAF APPLICATION NOW OPEN

Parents and students can now apply for the Student School and Activity Fund (SSAF), which provides a \$100 annual grant to purchase school supplies and clothing for eligible Choctaw students.

Submit your application today!
CHOCTAWNATION.COM/SERVICES/SSAF

Choctaw Nation Student School & Activity Fund

KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING!

SCAN QR CODE FOR MORE INFO

NOTES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Youth Photo Contest

The Education Committee of the District 9 Choctaw Seniors is hosting a Native American Youth Photo contest from now until Sept. 5. Contest is open to Native American Youth (ages 10-13 and 14-17) who reside in District 9.

The subject of the photo should be a “beloved elder” – friend or family member who is important or special to the youth taking the photograph. Winners will receive a gift card, and all the photos will be displayed at the District 9 Choctaw Seniors Film Festival on October 25 at the Choctaw Cultural Center. For more information, see the flyer and rules details on the information table at the District 9 Community Center or call Chris Cotton at 405-659-1230.

Choctaw Feast of the Dead

The Feast of the Dead is a time of celebration for families and the community to give remembrance to those who have passed on. Join us in this traditional Choctaw burial custom to honor and remember our loved ones.

Saturday November 8, 2025, 5 p.m.-9 p.m., Choctaw RV Park, 3650 Enterprise Dr, Durant, OK 74701

Potluck Style Meal: 5:30 p.m.-6: 30 p.m. (Bring a dish to share

Family Heritage Crafts: 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. (Rope Braiding & Family History Activity)

Memorial Reflection & Ceremony: 7:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m. (Share stories about loved ones)

Gardner Family Reunion

The descendants of Jeremiah Gardner and Clarrisa (Leflore) all gathered at Old Church in Bennington, Oklahoma, on Sunday, June 15, 2025. The Gardner family and friends' reunion has taken place on Father's Day for 72 years. In attendance were 55 people, including children. Mary Perkins received an award for being the oldest living family member. She is 99 years old and the daughter of the late Nora Lee Pettey (Gardner), who was an original enrollee on the Dawes Commission rolls for the Choctaw Nation. Hudson Ingram was awarded youngest family member. Hudson was 7 weeks old at the time of the reunion. He is the son of Kristen and Bryce Ingram. Vickie and Terri Gardner received an award for being the farthest traveled. Vickie and Terri drove from Lubbock, Texas. They are the descendants of Martin Luther Gardner. Harold Gardner was awarded largest family. He is the son of the late Roscoe Gardner. The present slated officers were re-elected: David Gardner, President; Tyler Gardner, Vice President; Pearl Seaboy (Gardner), Secretary. To sign up for the Gardner family newsletter, email gardnerfamilyandfriendsreunion@gmail.com. The Gardner family would like to invite family and friends to next year's reunion on June 21, 2026, at Old Bennington Presbyterian Church. The church started out as a Presbyterian Indian Mission Church. The Gardner family has had strong ties to the church grounds for decades and is part of the reason they host the reunion at the church.



Biskinik Announcement Guidelines

We accept milestone birthday greetings for ages 1, 5, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, 30, 40, 50, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80 and above.

Couples may send announcements of silver wedding anniversary at 25 years of marriage, golden anniversary at 50 years, or 60+ anniversaries. We do not post wedding announcements.

News from graduates of higher education only and sports submissions will be accepted as space allows.

We welcome all letters from Choctaw tribal members. However, because of the volume of mail, it isn't possible to publish all letters our readers send. Letters chosen for publication must be under 150 words. We require full contact information. Only the writer's full name and city will be published.

All events sent to the Biskinik will run the month of the event or the month prior to the event if the event falls on the first of the month.

Mail to: Biskinik
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702
or email: biskinik@choctawnation.com

Gary Batton
Chief

Jack Austin Jr.
Assistant Chief

The Official
Monthly Publication of the
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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The BISKINIK is printed each month as a service to Tribal members. The BISKINIK reserves the right to determine whether material submitted for publication shall be printed and reserves the right to edit submitted material which it finds inaccurate, profane, offensive or morally unacceptable. Copy may be edited for space, proper grammar and punctuation. Copy will be accepted in any readable form, but where possible, it is requested that material be typewritten and double-spaced. You must include an address and phone number where

you may be reached. Due to space limitations and the quantity of article submissions, we are unable to include everything we receive. Items are printed in the order received. Faxed photos will not be accepted.

The BISKINIK is a nonprofit publication of the Choctaw Nation. Circulation is monthly. Deadline for articles and photographs to be submitted is the first day of each month to run in the following month.

Editor's Note: Views and opinions in reader-submitted articles are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the Choctaw Nation.

Chahta Anumpa Aiikhvna Akus Language Lesson

Kvt and Ka

Kvt and ka link two sentences together but these markers act more like the English words “to”, “for”, and “that” when you are using them to link two English sentences together. They usually go right in the middle of the two sentences.

- ‘kvt’ is used to link two sentences with the same subject
- ‘ka’ is used to link two sentences with different subjects. They usually go right in the middle of the two sentences.

Chi pisa li kvt sv nayukpa.	I am happy to see you.
Talowa li kvt chi shalichi la hinla.	I can sing better than you.
Nan annoa anoli kvt chi ponna.	You are very good at telling stories.
Ohoyo mvt na champuli vpa kvt atampa.	That woman eats too many sweets.
A tibvli kvt ak ik ahno tuk.	I didn't know/I think I made a mistake.
Okla ilhkola chi ka ak ikhano tuk.	I didn't know they were going.
Ik sv peso ka ikhana li tuk.	I knew he didn't see me.
Iskvli vma chi ka ikhana li tuk.	I knew he was going to give me money.
Ish ia chi ka ak ikhano tuk.	I didn't know you were going.
Ish vla chi ka sv na yukpa.	I am glad/happy you are coming

www.choctawschool.com

JUROR SUMMONS

Choctaw Nation tribal members, spouses of tribal members, and any Choctaw Nation associate residing within Choctaw Nation territory may be summoned to jury duty with the Choctaw Nation court system.

GRAZING LAND LEASE AUCTION

All prospective bidders are encouraged to inspect property before the lease event. Sealed bids will be accepted, but each tract of land will be offered to the highest responsible bidder at public auction, so bidders are encouraged to be present.

BID AWARDING - AUGUST 7, 2025 | 3PM-5PM
Choctaw Nation Headquarters (Big Conference Rooms 2-3)
1802 Chukka Hina Drive, Durant, OK

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 580.642.8988
OR EMAIL MMCCANN@CHOCTAWNATION.COM

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

CHOCTAW NATION CREDIT AND LOAN DEPARTMENT

The Credit & Loan Department provides three types of loans:

- The Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association
- The Revolving Loan
- The Employee Loan

A representative will be available at the following locations to answer any questions:

Talihina Community Center:
August 5, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Bethel Community Center:
August 12, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SCAN THE QR CODE, OR CONTACT THE CHOCTAW NATION CREDIT AND LOAN DEPARTMENT AT 580.924.8280

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

ITI FABVSSA

The Labor Day Festival and the Annual Iksa Meeting, Part IV

Iti Fabvssa is currently running a series on the 1938 reconstruction of the Choctaw Capitol Building and the yearly celebration connected to it called the “Annual Iksa Meeting.” This series examines the detailed and complex history of the Annual Iksa Meeting and its relation to today’s Labor Day Festival. This month, we will cover how Principal Chief Harry Belvin’s “Choctaw-Chickasaw Labor Day Meet” slowly evolved into our modern festival.

As discussed in the previous articles in this series, the Choctaw Capitol Building served as the anchor-point of many iterations of an annual gathering of the Choctaw people. The Annual Iksa Meeting, and later the Choctaw Indian Fair were important cultural events throughout the late-1930s to mid-1940s. It’s important to clarify that these prior events were not set to coincide with Labor Day, as our annual event does now.

During the summer of 1948, the Chiefship passed from William Durant to Harry Belvin. Famously, Chief Harry Belvin was a supporter of the Choctaw-Chickasaw Confederation, an inter-tribal alliance with a focus on discussing tribal needs outside of the official BIA structure. Although Chief Belvin had many initiatives during his first year, resuming the annual festival at the Choctaw capitol was one of the first that he acted on. He partnered with Chickasaw Governor Floyd Maytubby to reignite the annual festival as the “Choctaw-Chickasaw Labor Day Meet.”

The 1948 gathering took place on Monday, September 6. The morning of the event held a musical program that involved several prominent Choctaw vocalists, including Pete Noah, President of the Indian Singing Convention and Choctaw Code Talker Jim Edwards. As had taken place at earlier gatherings, attendees were encouraged to bring their own food and eat on the Capitol lawn when lunch was called for.

The afternoon was dedicated to addresses by Chief Belvin and W. O. Roberts, the Superintendent of the Five Civilized Tribes Agency, who would help to update attendees on the present status of tribal affairs. Initially, the annual gathering was explicitly tied to the status

of the coal and asphalt lands.

During this era, the Federal Government was still invested in “closing out” tribal organizations permanently. Settling claims regarding the status of the coal and asphalt lands required input from the Choctaw and Chickasaw governments together as they both had claim to those lands through previous legal agreements. By including the Chickasaws in the annual gathering, Chief Belvin created a location and time for these vital questions impacting land sovereignty to take place in unison.

Chief Belvin publicly advertised that although the event was a success, he wished to gather more people and extend it from a single day to the entire week-end. At the next meeting, the festival started on Saturday and ended on Monday. In 1950, during the third meeting, Saturday was advertised as a recreational day, advising tribal members to bring fishing tackle to utilize the stocked ponds on the grounds. Sunday was set aside as a day with religious services, including Choctaw singing quartets, trios and solos. Monday was reserved for addresses from tribal officials and featured a barbecue lunch. At that time, the barbecue was cooked in the brick kilns that were used during the creation of the Capitol Building in 1883.

For most of the early years of the festival, festivities would occur on Sunday and Monday, with early meetings having an attendance range of a few thousand at most. At the time, transportation was a concern, so the grounds were prepared for many participants to camp out the entire duration of the festival. A two-day celebration was standard with religious services and singings occurring in both English and Choctaw. Political events and discussions generally occurred on Mondays and often featured both federal and tribal leadership discussing affairs directly with tribal members. Eventually, the combination name Choctaw-Chickasaw Labor Day Meet was shortened to only reference the Choctaw Nation. This is likely due to the Chickasaws creating their own annual Labor Day festival at Tishomingo throughout the late forties and early fifties.

As the Labor Day Festival became



Gathering during the 1975 Labor Day Festival. (Courtesy Tvshkahomma Capitol Museum Photograph Collection)

an important meeting place to discuss tribal business, several historic decisions were made during the festival over the years. At the 1952 Labor Day Meeting, the 11 Choctaw Area Council Presidents passed a resolution to affirm the election of Principal Chief Harry Belvin. At the meeting in 1965, the tribal organization approved the creation of the Public Housing Authority, a landmark housing assistance program that is now known as the Choctaw Nation Housing Authority. At the time, Chief Belvin stated that he believed the Choctaw Nation would be able to ignite the first tribal corporation amongst the Five Civilized Tribes.

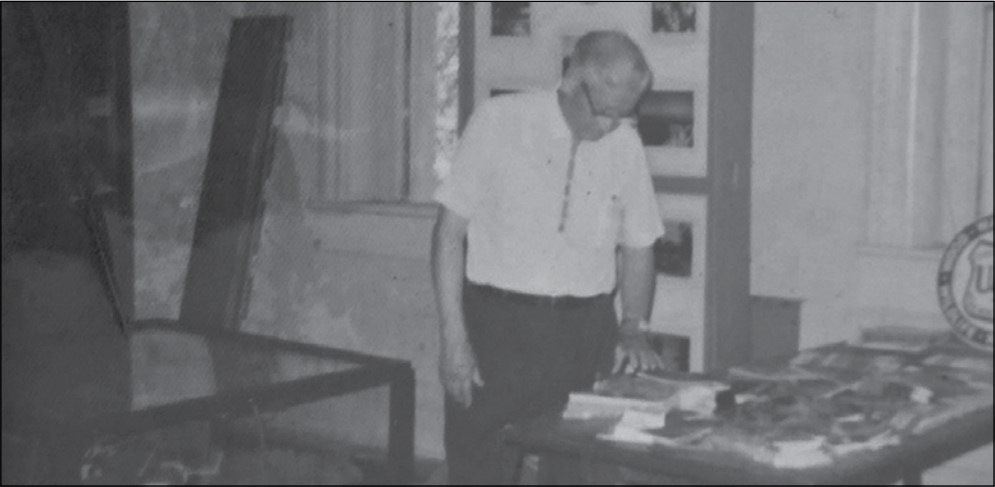
Attendance and services slowly evolved over the next several years, with a significant event being the creation of the Choctaw Capitol Museum. On April 8, 1970, the Choctaw Nation Historical Society was officially organized. A primary initiative of this group was to solicit and oversee the renovation of the Tuskahoma Capitol Building and convert it into a museum.

When the Museum was finally finished, it was dedicated during the 1975 Labor Day Festival, which took place over Sunday and Monday of that year. During this Labor Day, the Tvshkahomma Capitol Museum will celebrate 50 years since this dedication.

Significantly, the 1975 Choctaw Labor Day Festival also marked the ceremonial transition from the Belvin Administration to the Gardner Administration. Chief Gardner and his successors continued to utilize the Choctaw Labor Day Festival as a meeting place for the preservation of tribal culture. Each successive Chief used the rapidly expanding tribal business as a powerhouse to further increase the impact and amenities of the Labor Day Festival.

The grounds themselves were also radically improved upon in the following decades, with the brush arbor being converted into a tabernacle and later being replaced by an amphitheater. Many acres of the grounds have also been converted specifically for public use during events and year-round activities, such as walkways, monuments and improved sporting facilities.

Festivities were expanded from the only two days in the early years to three throughout the late 1970s, and eventually, in the 1980s, it was expanded again to open on Fridays. By the mid-1980s, advertisements boasted many of the mainstays that we all associate with the Labor Day Festival, including carnival rides, headlining singers, the annual princess pageant, inter-tribal stickball games and a powwow.



Principal Chief Harry Belvin viewing a Forestry exhibit inside of the Capitol Museum. (Courtesy Tvshkahomma Capitol Museum Photograph Collection)



Brick kilns utilized for barbecues during early Labor Day Festivals. (Courtesy Tvshkahomma Capitol Museum Photograph Collection)

Housing Headlines

By Bobby Yandell


How is your HVAC system holding up?

With temperatures as hot as we are experiencing, it's best to set your thermostat a little higher during the day to allow your system to not work as hard in cooling your home. HVAC technicians will tell you to set the thermostat 20 degrees cooler than the outside temperature. Most of us are not going to set our thermostats above 80 degrees but when heat indices are over 105, 75-78 degrees is as low as you should set your system to prevent it from freezing up. If a system is not cooling to the temperature set, setting the temperature colder will not help. It's best to set the temperature higher to allow the system to rest and then maintain that temperature.

Other things you can do to keep your system in top working order is ensure you change your filter regularly. Most calls we send technicians to about a system not working properly involves a clogged filter. Changing your filter monthly is a good rule of thumb, but it should be changed no less than every three months.

Keep your outside unit free of weeds and grass that prevent air flow. It's also best to keep shrubs away as well.

Lastly, it's never a bad idea to get your system looked at by a licensed HVAC technician annually, just to make sure it is working properly.




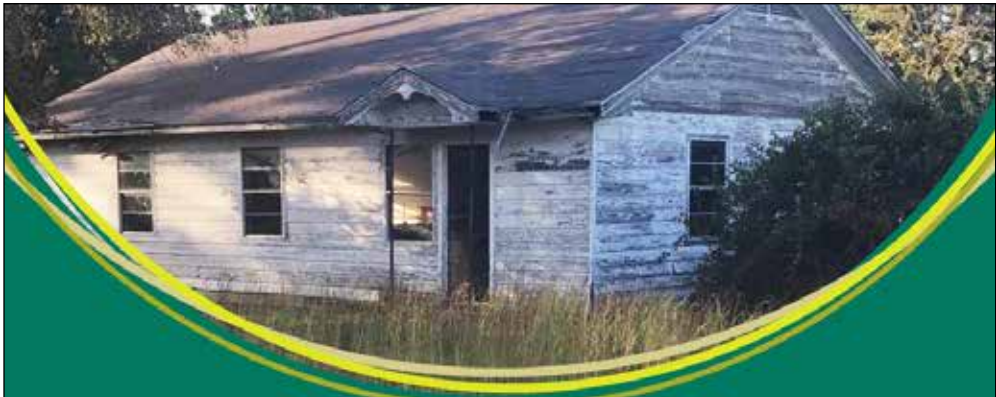
Choctaw Nation

Housing Authority

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COMMUNITY MEETING

BROWNFIELDS

DISCUSSING HOMER CHAPEL

SEPTEMBER 2 | 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM


CHOCTAW COMMUNITY CENTER | DURANT, OK

SEPTEMBER 3 | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM

BOSWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS CAFETERIA | BOSWELL, OK

Learn about past uses, environmental assessments, and cleanup plans. Share your ideas for potential redevelopment and help shape the site's next chapter. Submit a survey for a chance to win a tote! Must be present to win.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
CHOCTAWNATION.COM/ABOUT/EPS/BROWNFIELDS
580.924.8280



Scan to learn more

Choctaw Nation

Environmental Protection Service

Ward graduates from Nevada, Reno

Donovan Ward graduated from the University of Nevada, Reno with a bachelor's degree in cellular and microbiology. He plans to move on to obtain his master's degree in biotechnology.



Johnson graduates from OU

Congratulations to Audrie Johnson on graduating with honors from the University of Oklahoma with a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing.

She will begin her career at the OU Medical Center in the pediatric emergency department. Audrie is grateful for the support she received from the Choctaw Nation and is proud of her Native heritage.



Angel turns 18

Casey Doyle Angel turned 18 on October 10, 2024, and graduated from Achilles High School on May 16, 2025. He is the son of Jeff Angel of Bokchito and Kelly Isenburg of Utica. The grandson of Juanita Angel and the late Ellis Angel of Buffalo Valley. The great-great-grandson of Eli Potts, an original enrollee of the Choctaw Nation.



Casey participated in FFA, baseball, Votech and Fellowship of Christian Athletes for four years. He was also FFA treasurer for three years and Sentinel for one year. During his four years at Votech, he received MIG and TIG welding certifications. Casey was awarded the National Technical Honor Society Award and his FFA State Degree. After graduation, he plans on attending Haz-Co Emergency Response Training Center to become a firefighter.

The Berteros celebrate 50 years

Cheryl and Charlie Bertero celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on June 7, 2025. The couple was married in Austin, Texas, in 1975, and have called it home ever since. Together, they raised four children and are the proud grandparents of 11 grandchildren. Their life has been defined by loyalty, honesty, hard work, laughter, and unconditional love. They have taught us the importance of loving others, supporting our community, and staying true to who we are. They are always there for those around them, offering a helping hand, an open heart, and a warm home. Cheryl, retired from a fulfilling teaching career, now spends her time traveling, staying connected with friends, and enjoying meaningful time with family. Charlie, grandson of William D. Welch and Louisa "Polly" Crowder of Crowder Prairie, keeps busy with a variety of work and home projects, always staying active and engaged. Their loved ones are proud to celebrate this milestone and wish them many more wonderful years together! "Yakoke, Mom and Dad, for the love you've shared and the life you've built." – With love, David, Angela, Lisa and Adora



Simpson inducted into Hugo Hall of Legends

Alan Simpson was inducted into the inaugural Hugo Alumni Hall of Legends on May 31 at the Hugo Homecoming luncheon. The Hall of Legends celebrates and honors individuals who have demonstrated remarkable legacies and carried the values of Hugo High School. Simpson, Lyndol Fry and Charles Pierce were honored in the first-ever Hugo Hall of Legends. "Hugo is where I ran the streets as a child," said Simpson. "It's where I returned in 1977-78 to lead Hugo to its first ever basketball state tournament where we lost in the semi-finals to state champion OKC Millwood." This was Simpson's first head coaching position. Two years later, in 1980, Hugo returned to the state tournament after beating the number-one-ranked Byng twice. A Choctaw tribal member from Hugo, Simpson is the only person inducted into the Oklahoma Coaches Association, Oklahoma Basketball Coaches Association, and Oklahoma Tennis Coaches Association Hall of Fames. "I would like to see more Native Americans in the coaching profession," said Simpson. "If my success could make a difference, that would immeasurably please me." Pictured with Alan is Kim, his wife of 47 years.



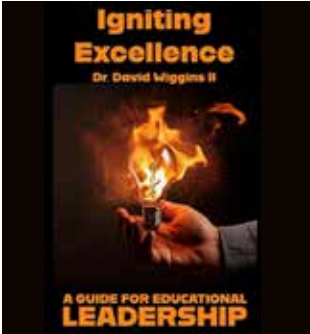
Prim turns 18

Christina Prim turns 18 on August 13. Prim also graduated from Moore High School as part of the class of 2025. She lettered in golf and was on the varsity team. She was involved in various clubs including Student Council, More Maniacs, Athletics, NHSS and received graduation stoles from NHSS and JOM. Prim will be attending Southern Nazarene University and will be majoring in criminal justice and forensic. "We are so proud of you Christina. You have done amazing things throughout your high school years. Dad, Mom and Brother love you. Good luck in the coming years and reaching all the goals you have set out for." – The Prim Family



Wiggins releases new book

Choctaw tribal member David Wiggins II, has released a new book, "Igniting Excellence: A Guide for Educational Leadership." The book is a newly released pocket-sized resource offering practical strategies and real-world insights for school leaders. Designed to support both new and experienced educators, this guide encourages effective, purpose-driven leadership in today's schools. "Special thanks to the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma for their support in my educational journey to make this book possible," said Wiggins. "Igniting Excellence" is available now on Amazon.



District 11 hosts book signing

Choctaw District 11 Seniors hosted a book signing for Author Ashley Turney's book Forgive Us Our Debts. The book is a historical Christian novel set in 1927 Choctaw Nation Oklahoma, in the Talihiina area. Turney grew up in Talihiina and used family stories/histories from her own and her husband's family to build the world for her story. Turney's mother-in-law, Lisa Turney, is an active member of the District 11 seniors' group and helped bring this story of faith, family, and culture to her community. Readers will recognize family names from the McAlester and Talihiina areas as well as towns/communities in the area. Turney's research for the history of the area and language was aided by Choctaw culture, history, and language experts, including Archie Meashintubby, Ryan L. Spring, Olin Williams, and information from the Choctaw Nation Cultural Center. Forgive Us Our Debts is the story of a young woman in a marriage of necessity following an attack. She must learn the true meaning of forgiveness to build a life with her husband. But the past does not always stay behind us. When secrets come to light, will the truth heal or shatter everything they've built? Forgive Us Our Debts is a story of triumph over tragedy and Ashley's love letter to God's grace, to her home, and to the generations that came before. Forgive Us Our Debts is available on Amazon and Kindle.



Wilkerson earns Gold Award

Evan June Wilkerson, a 16-year-old Choctaw tribal member, earned the Girl Scout Gold Award. This award is the most prestigious award a Girl Scout can earn, and she was honored at the Texas State Capitol in June. According to the Girl Scouts of America website, Seniors and Ambassadors earn the Gold Award—the highest award in Girl Scouting—by developing and carrying out lasting solutions to issues in their neighborhoods and beyond. Gold Award Girl Scouts truly are the world changers, rock stars, role models, and real-life heroes we all look up to. Plus, they're amazing candidates for colleges, scholarships, competitive internship programs, and exciting careers.



Phelps turns 18

Jaxon Trey Phelps will turn 18 on August 13 and graduated as Valedictorian from Calera High School in May 2025. He earned several awards, including being on the Superintendent's Honor Roll from 2021 to 2025, and placing second with the Greenhand Quiz Bowl Team in 2021. He was inducted into both the National Honor Society in 2022 and the Technical Honor Society in 2023. Jaxon achieved third place in Biology II at the Southeastern Curriculum Contest in 2024 and was named Student of the Year at Kiamichi High School that same year. He plans to attend East Central University's nursing program to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and become a nurse practitioner. Congratulations, Jaxon!



Pettigrew graduates from OSU

After 40 years of professional development and learning, Kelly Pettigrew received a Bachelor of Science in Professional Studies from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma. Kelly completed the degree requirements while also continuing to work full-time supporting US Veterans as an Ophthalmology Health Technician at the VA Clinic in Oxford, Alabama. Kelly plans to continue her education at SALUS University, pursuing a Master's in Blindness and Low Vision Studies.



Krebs graduates from TEXWES

Doryn Lee NaPakali Krebs, daughter of Sean and Stacey Ludlow, granddaughter of Bobby and Ruby Ludlow of Ludlow, Oklahoma, graduated from Texas Wesleyan University in Ft Worth, Texas, with her Master's in Marriage and Family Counseling in May 2025. "We are so very proud of her inspiring accomplishments." - The Ludlow family



Tarbert Rue graduates from Bryn Mawr College

Elenora Tarbert Rue graduated in May from Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania with a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy. She is the daughter of tribal member Jesse Tarbert and his wife, Jamie Rue, of Washington, DC. Elenora would like to say "yakoke" to the Choctaw Nation for the support she has received through the Choctaw Nation Higher Education program.



Wafford wins State

Miley Wafford was a part of the Fort Gibson Girls Golf Team that captured the title of State Champions in 4 A Girls Golf in May. Congratulations to Miley and her teammates.



Wafford graduates from OU

Emma Wafford graduated from the University of Oklahoma Health Science Center with a Master of Arts in Speech Language Pathology in May. She would like to thank the Choctaw Nation for their continued support in helping her achieve this degree.



Young graduates from SCU

Choctaw tribal member and SCU Eagles baseball player Luke Young graduated this spring from Southwestern Christian University in Bethany, Oklahoma, with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree, proudly wearing his Choctaw graduation stole and Magna Cum Laude honor cords. After the NCCAA Baseball World Series in Kansas City, Missouri, Luke returned to the Oklahoma City area to work with The Gospel Station Network, where he hosts "The Game Plan" every weekday at 4:00 p.m. He is grateful to the Choctaw Nation for the support he received during his time at the university and takes pride in saying, "Chahta Sia Hoke!"



Walker helps UCA win Gold

Maverick Walker, a University of Central Arkansas freshman, helped his Track Team win Gold at the Division 1 ASUN Collegiate Conference Championship in Jacksonville, Florida. He placed second in the Triple Jump with a jump of 47'9". Maverick is attending the University of Central Arkansas on a track scholarship and also gets the Higher Education academic scholarship from Choctaw Nation. His performance at the ASUN Championship more than doubled his track scholarship for his upcoming sophomore year. Maverick competes in both the Triple Jump and Long Jump. Maverick is a member of the Choctaw Nation, and his parents, Rodney and Tara Walker, reside in Smithville, Oklahoma.



Choctaws play in OK Native All State Game

The 2025 Oklahoma Native All State Association Football Game took place on June 6, in El Reno. Among the names on the roster were five Choctaw tribal members, all of which competed on team East: Jaxon Armstrong, Heavener; Logan Hicks Sapulpa; Benjamin E Mattioda Jr., Hartshorne; Toby Stedman, Plainview; Tristin Trevathan, Coalgate. The East took home the win with a final score of 7 to 6.



Bible graduates from William Jewell

The family of Reagan Bible proudly announces her graduation from William Jewell College in May 2025. Reagan graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, with an emphasis in healthcare. While at William Jewell, Reagan was a dedicated member of the collegiate powerlifting team for three years, qualifying for national competition in two consecutive seasons. She will continue her education this fall, pursuing a Master of Science in Education. Reagan is a 2021 graduate of Bishop Seabury Academy, a college preparatory high school in Lawrence, Kansas. The Bible family wishes to express their sincere gratitude to the Choctaw Nation for its continued support and encouragement throughout Reagan's academic journey.





APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN UNTIL AUGUST 31

SSAF APPLICATION NOW OPEN

Parents and students can now apply for the Student School and Activity Fund (SSAF), which provides a \$100 annual grant to purchase school supplies and clothing for eligible Choctaw students.

Submit your application today!
CHOCTAWNATION.COM/SERVICES/SSAF

Choctaw Nation Student School & Activity Fund

Ruthie Jane Fleming

Ruthie Jane (Sampson) Fleming, 68, passed away May 19, 2025, in Paris, Texas. She was born on April 5, 1957, in Paris, Texas, the daughter of Jacob and Marie Sampson.

Ruthie was preceded in death by her parents; brothers, Albert Lee Sampson and Eldon “Red” Sampson; sisters, Willie Mae “Sara” Sampson and Pearlie May Deatley.

She is survived by her husband, Charles Fleming of the home; sons, Walter McClyde Sampson and wife, Amanda of Paris, Texas and Kevin Anthony Sampson and wife, Tina of Paris, Texas; grandchildren, Cara Marie Sampson, Kayla May Sampson, Walter Edwin Sampson, Aiden Alexander Sampson, Montana Payne, Dakoata Payne and Edward Payne; great grandson, Joseph Walter Fitts; brother, Johnny Lee Sampson of Paris, Texas; nephews, Charles Jacob Sampson and wife, Libby and Joseph Sampson; nieces, Mary Battist and husband, Charles; great nephews, Eric Sampson and C.J. Sampson; great nieces, Sierra Sampson, Brittany Fleming, Chasity Butler, Chana Michael and Silvia Simon; along with a host of other friends, family and loved ones.



Emery Davis Spears

Emery Davis Spears, 75, of Hartshorne, passed away on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at his home. He was born September 6, 1949, to Bert Emery and Dorothy Marie (Patterson) Spears, in McAlester, Okla.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Bert and Dorothy Spears; sister, Pat and her husband, Charles Curliss.

Emery is survived by his wife, Belinda Louise Spears; son, Scott Christopher Spears, his wife, Stacey, granddaughter, Shaylin Lemons, her husband, Preston and their son, Steele Wayne; son, George Emery Spears, his wife, Misty, and their children, Justice Emery and Hope Smiles.



Patricia Jo Tennyson

Patricia Jo (Luce) Tennyson, 88, passed away May 11, 2025.

Patricia was born Sept. 16, 1936, in Pawnee, Okla., to Flossie and Lester Luce.

She was preceded in death by her parents; and husband Lawrence “Tuffy” Tennyson.

Patricia is survived by her sons Shawn Tennyson and spouse Wendy, and Tim Tennyson and spouse Alda; grandchildren Amber Tennyson, Marina Bolm and spouse Taylor, Brooke King and spouse Justin, Hallie Tennyson, and Emma Tennyson; great-grandchild Marilyn Grace King; sister-in-law Marlene Andrew; and many close cousins, nieces, nephews, and friends.



Rachel Ann Minor

Rachel Ann Minor, 79, passed away June 21, 2025.

Rachel was born June 20, 1946, in Coalgate, Okla., to Frank and Udell Williams.

She was preceded in death by her parents; and brothers Gerald, Floyd, Chuckie, and Danny.

Rachel is survived by her husband Douglas Minor; son Brian Grant and spouse Heather; stepson Brandon Minor and spouse; grandchildren Zoe and Zander Grant, and Wyatt and Cooper Minor; and sisters Ruby, Norma, and Sandra.



Ray “Rocky” Junior Billy

Ray “Rocky” Junior Billey, 73, passed away June 7, 2025.

Rocky was born Aug. 5, 1951, in Okmulgee, Okla., to Rayson and Betty (Francis) Billey.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Rocky is survived by his children Samantha Billey and Clay King, Shawna Lopez and spouse Brandon, Sabrina Billey and Daniel Conyers, and Scot Billey; former spouse Judy Billey; and grandchildren Everett, Sophia, and Hazel Lopez.



Tully Samson Choate

Tully Samson Choate, 90, passed away May 25, 2025. He was born June 10, 1934, to Albert Samson Choate & Helen Lorene James in Tulsa, Okla.

Tully was preceded in death by He was predeceased by his parents; siblings, Anna Jo Bridges and Tonnie Carolyn Pahsetopah.

He is survived by his wife, Lucina Choate; nephew, Terry Ray Bridges; brother-in-law, Jim Hill (and wife Margaret).



Harry Linnell Deupree Jr.

Harry Linnell Deupree Jr., 87, passed away June 14, 2025.

Harry was born May 25, 1938, in Okla. City, Okla., to Dr. Harry and Dorothy Deupree.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Harry is survived by wife Debbie Wedman Deupree; children Trey Deupree and spouse Cheryl, Chisholm Deupree and spouse Terra, Cheyenne Deupree, and Cody Deupree and spouse Stefane; grandchildren Trevor, Mackenzie and Whitney Deupree, Caden Rowe, Kylie Rowe, Jesse Deupree, Rylan Deupree, and Taylor and Greyson Deupree; sister Dina Lynn Deupree; and brothers Bill Deupree and spouse Janie, Bob Deupree and Dick Deupree.



Noel Henry Baker

Noel Henry “Hank” Baker passed away June 5, 2025.

Hank was born Jan. 10, 1943, in Talihina, Okla., to Suzette (Dukes) Smith and Isom Baker.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife Crickette; and son-in-law: Jack Hutson.

Hank is survived by his sister Ola Mae Harjo; sons Dale Lee Smith and spouse Sheila, Eddie Goodnight and spouse Delores, Jerry Baker and spouse Jeff, and Danny Goodnight and spouse Amy; daughters Debbie Hutson, Ann Marie Musick, and Sherry Masters and spouse Elmer; grandchildren Crickette Saylor, J’Lynn Masters, Tiffany Smith, Joey Smith, Jenny Smith, Becky Ames, Beau Ames, Hank Baker, Nicole Baker, Shalena Baker, Britney Methvin, Levi Methvin, Jamie Goodnight, Sarah Goodnight, Chandra Lucas, Andrew Musick, Daniel Musick, and Simon Gutierrez; 20 great-grandchildren; 10 great-great-grandchildren; best friend Delmer Coffelt; great-niece and home provider Keoma Wisdom; and a host of nephews and nieces.



Wilma Sue Moore

Wilma Sue Moore, 90, passed away June 21, 2025.

Wilma was born Nov. 28, 1934, to Ruth Etta and Edgar E. Woods.

She was preceded in death by her parents; brothers Edgar Earnest Woods Jr. and spouse Joyce, Bobby Lee Woods and spouse Glena, and Gradon Gene Woods and spouse Juanita; sister Billie Ruth Huff and spouse Archie; sister-in-law Betty Woods; and brother-in-law Richard Burton.

Wilma is survived by sons Ricky Moore and spouse Sheila, and Stevie Moore; daughter Lisa Keyser and spouse John; brother James Woods; twin sister Wanda Burton; grandchildren Miesha Anderson, Eli Frizzell, and Micah Frizzell; and great-granddaughter Adelaide Anderson.



Clayton Wilson Anna

Clayton Wilson Anna, 64, passed away June 27, 2025.

Clayton was born June 27, 1962, in Talihina, Okla., to Solomon Anna Sr. and Sarah Jane Lewis.

He was preceded in death by his parents; sons Justin Miko Anna and Roman Gabriel Anna; brother Kenneth Loma; sister Resa Alderete; and pastor and mentor Luther Battiest.

Clayton is survived by daughters Marinda Taylor and son-in-law Damon, and ShyAnn Anna; brothers Edward Loma, Wayne Anna and spouse and Faye, Solomon Anna Jr. and spouse Jackie, Bill Anna, and Jessie Anna; sisters Quannie Austin, Oleda Duckett, Benita Torres and spouse Juan, Sharitha Borjas and spouse Esteban, and Benito Alderete; grandchildren J.C. Anna, Aadin Taylor, Mikaela Willis, Chana Anna, Gage Taylor, Wendy Stafford, and Chase Taylor; great-grandchildren Lea Stafford, Lauren Stafford and Penelope Taylor; former wife Rita Anna; several nieces and nephews; and a host of other relatives and friends.



Laylan Paul Musick Sr.

Laylan Paul Musick Sr., 80, of Eastland, Texas, passed away May 24, 2025. He was born May 30, 1944, to Randolph Wilton (RW) and Frankie Harlee Davis Musick in in Tahoka, Texas.

Laylan was preceded in death by his parents; son, Laylan Paul Musick Jr.; and brother, Richard Musick.

He is survived by his wife, Joyce Genell Musick; sister, Eva Gayle Musick; daughters, Melody Musick Stowe and husband Kenneth of Dallas, Lawanna Briseno and husband Mike; grandchildren, Franchesca, Lance and Trevor Briseno; and great-grandson Atticus Briseno, all of Lakeside, California.



Elena “Dolly” Gaines

Elena “Dolly” Gaines, 98 of Collinsville, Okla. passed away May 21, 2025, in Owasso, Okla. She was born March 11, 1927, to Alphus M Redwine, and Artemissa M Graham in Wilburton, Okla.

Dolly was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Hulen Gaines; great-grandson, Nathan Dulin; and 10 of her siblings.

She is survived by her children, Michael Hulen Gaines and his wife Lana of Colorado City, Texas and Susan Fain and her husband George of Collinsville; grandchildren, Brittne Carson and her husband Jason, Andrea Hines and her husband Randy, Julie Dulin and her husband Jason, Russell Fain and his wife Iris, and Abi Fain; 13 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren; sister, Eva Lee Rich of Horseshoe Bay, Texas; and many nieces and nephews.



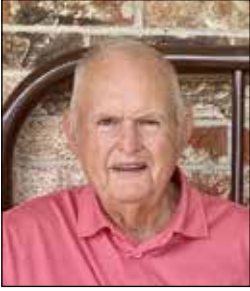
Tommy Nelson Holt

Tommy Nelson Holt, 86, passed away July 4, 2025.

Tommy was born Dec. 3, 1938, in Pauls Valley, Okla., to Nelson Melton and Gertie B. (Guthrie) Holt.

He was preceded in death by his parents; daughter Camilla “Camie” Kay Holt; and sisters Ramona Cooper and Geraldine Stratton.

Tommy is survived by his wife Kay Holt; daughter Martha Graham; son Joe Holt and spouse Kristin; grandchildren Hank Graham and spouse Kalyn, Haylee Graham and spouse Drake, Kaci Gifford and spouse Luke, and Caden Holt; great-grandsons Hawksyn, Bodie, Payte, and Tyler; great-granddaughters Mollie and Kami; sister-in-law Sara Cobb; and those he took in and loved: Jimmy Kilby, and Glennis Ring and family.



Esman Durant

Esman Durant, 63, of Sherwood, Oklahoma, passed away May 22, 2025, at the Paris Regional Health in Paris, Texas. He was born Oct. 15, 1961, to Olen Dixon and Maude Billy Durant in Philadelphia, Mississippi.

Esman was preceded in death by his parents and one sister, Velma Jean Durant.

He is survived by his wife, Connie Durant of Sherwood, Oklahoma; two sons, Joseph Durant of Lawton, Oklahoma and Jason Durant of Yukon, Oklahoma; two daughters, Hailie Durant of Broken Bow, Oklahoma and Emily Durant of Sherwood, Oklahoma; two brothers, Patrick Durant of Sobel, Oklahoma and Darin Durant of Hinton, Oklahoma; two sisters, Marsha McKinney of Idabel, Oklahoma and Melissa Wilkerson of Idabel, Oklahoma; three grandchildren, Zariah Durant, Dominick Durant and Zeplynn Willis; several nieces and nephews and a host of other relatives and friends.



Dennis Sandlin

Dennis Sandlin, 75, passed away June 12, 2025.

Dennis was born May 13, 1950, in Pawhuska, Okla., to his parents Archie and Deloris.

He was preceded in death by his father.

Dennis is survived by his mother; sister Tahona; wife Marilyn; children Susy and spouse Brian, Tom and spouse Tina,, and Andrew and spouse Kara; grandchildren Brayden, Brooklyn, and Arthur; and many nieces, nephews, and countless friends made throughout the years.



Evelyn Mae May

Evelyn Mae May, 102, passed away June 14, 2025.

Evelyn was born Aug. 4, 1922, in Darwin, Okla., to Marvin and Amanda (Owen) German.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband Alvis Dillard; son Donald Ray; daughter-in-law Suzanne May; granddaughter Kelly Smalts; brothers Gordon and Roscoe McKnight; great-granddaughter Corra Hailer; and sister Janita Sipes.

Evelyn is survived by her children Linda Sharp and spouse Gene, Carolyn Anders, Patricia Wyatt and spouse Derryl, and Danny May; sister Lenore Stargel; brother Wallan McKnight; 12 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren, and five great-great-grandchildren.



Cecil William Woolery

Cecil William Woolery, 90, passed away June 18, 2025.

Cecil was born Jan. 21, 1935, to Ruby Willie (Roland) Woolery and James Woolery.

He was preceded in death by his son Keith Woolery; brothers Clyde Woolery and Truman Woolery; and sisters Jackie Steel and Iva Moody.

Cecil is survived by his wife Tammy; son Wayne Woolery; grandchildren James Woolery and Tiffany Woolery; and great-grandchildren Beau Getz, Jackson Richardson, and Emma Richardson; sister Shirley Holder; and a host of extended family and friends.



Kenneth Paul Clay

Kenneth (Keno) Paul Clay, 64, passed away May 9, 2025.

Keno was born Nov. 21, 1960, in Lawton, Okla., to Blue and Mary Clay.

He was preceded in death by his father, Blue; mother, Mary; sister, Gail; brothers Kerry Dale and Kevin; son Clifton; granddaughter Taylor and grandson, Kasius.

Keno is survived by his soulmate, Staci; son, Layman and wife Donna; granddaughter Alexis; son, Kerry and wife Marcella; granddaughters, Arayleah, Nokona and Keilani; grandsons, Kashton, Tristan and Tyler; stepson, Zac Harber and fiancé Bayleigh Choate; granddaughter, Jasmine Diaz and great grandson, Israel; grandson, Titan Clay; Keno was also blessed with bonus grandchildren; Jordan, Brackus, Nakitha, Kaige, Kyeareha and Kinleigh along with numerous bonus great grandchildren; brothers, Dave, Russell, Wendall, Darrel and Leslie; sister, Sharon; stepbrothers, Gary and Raylene Burleson, Terry and Andy Burleson and Allen and Sherry Burleson; stepsister, Diane and Eddie Isom along with a host of nieces and nephews.



Full obituaries can be seen at www.biskinik.com

Obituary Policy

Obituary submissions are for Choctaw Nation tribal members only and are free of charge.

The Biskinik will only accept obituary notices from funeral homes.

Family members/individuals may submit funeral notices as long as the notice is from the funeral home or printed in their local newspaper through a funeral home service.

Full-length handwritten notices will not be accepted. The Biskinik strives to serve all Choctaws. Therefore, any handwritten notices received will be searched online for official funeral home notices. If none are found, efforts will be made to contact the family and make arrangements for an official notice.

Due to space limitations, there is a 150 word limit for obituaries. The online issue of the Biskinik will contain links to the full obituaries.

Send official obituary notices to:

Biskinik
PO Box 1210
Durant OK 74702
or email: biskinik@choctawnation.com

Five Years Later: Exploring the impact of the McGirt Ruling on the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

By Tabatha Keton

It has been 5 years in a post-McGirt world. On July 9, 2020, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in McGirt v. Oklahoma that the Muscogee (Creek) Nation's reservation had never been disestablished when Oklahoma became a state in 1907 and that Jimcy McGirt, a felon convicted by the state, should have been prosecuted in federal court, not state court. This argument is based on the 1885 Major Crimes Act, a federal law dictating that major crimes involving Native Americans in Indian Country be prosecuted in federal or tribal court. The Major Crimes Act grants tribes and the federal government exclusive jurisdiction to prosecute certain enumerated

offenses committed by Indians within Indian Country. The McGirt decision, and the Sizemore decision that followed, reaffirmed the long-standing treaty rights of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO). "The McGirt ruling reaffirmed preexisting treaties between tribes and the federal government and, more importantly, left no doubt as to our continuing sovereignty over our Nation," said CNO Chief Gary Batton. While the Choctaw people have governed their lands and exercised sovereignty since the 1830s, this landmark ruling brought lasting, meaningful change. For more information, check out the graphics below, or visit <https://www.choctawnation.com/search/mcgirt>.



5 WAYS MCGIRT REAFFIRMED AND EXPANDED TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY

- REAFFIRMED TRIBAL JURISDICTION**
McGirt restored tribal governments authority to prosecute crimes committed by and against Native Americans within their territories leading to greater control over criminal justice processes and the ability to enforce its own laws and administer justice according to tribal values.
- STRENGTHENED GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS**
The ruling required the state of Oklahoma and federal agencies to coordinate more directly with tribal governments leading to more collaborative and equitable intergovernmental relationships.
- PROMPTED EXPANSION OF TRIBAL LAW ENFORCEMENT**
To meet increased jurisdictional responsibilities, tribes—including the Choctaw Nation—invested in growing their law enforcement infrastructure creating more tribal police positions and improving public safety on the reservations.
- REENFORCED TREATY OBLIGATIONS**
McGirt reinforced treaty obligations as binding legal commitments, setting a national precedent that was used by other tribes, including the Choctaw Nation, to defend and expand their rights.
- SUPPORTED CULTURAL AND LEGAL REVITALIZATION**
As tribal nations took on more legal responsibility, many—including the Choctaw—incorporated cultural values, language, and traditional justice models into their systems deeply linking sovereignty and justice with identity.

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

JUDICIAL BRANCH COURTS

The Choctaw Nation courts integrate traditional values into the judicial system, offering personalized and culturally grounded solutions to each case. The Judicial Branch provides three distinct methods of resolution, each tailored to address specific types of crimes or disputes while promoting healing within Choctaw families and communities.

The District Court focuses on family issues such as divorce, child custody, child support, parental rights, visitation and adoption, civil matters, juvenile matters, and guardianship. Cases can be appealed to the Court of Appeals and Constitutional Court.

The Peacemaker option offers a mediation alternative to court, using Choctaw customs, traditions, and, when appropriate, religious teachings to help resolve disputes. Peacemakers may also consult tribal elders to support the resolution process.

The Healing to Wellness Court (called "Atuya" which is Choctaw for Steppingstone) is a court that assists individuals and families in making healthy choices and breaking the cycle of addiction or child abuse/neglect. Atuya provides a braided services approach to assist applicants by providing free counseling, job training and housing location assistance, and cultural education.

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

CASES IN CHOCTAW TRIBAL COURT

From 2020 to 2021, in the immediate aftermath of the McGirt decision, cases in the Choctaw Tribal Court surged by 569% — directly countering claims that criminals were going unprosecuted.

Year	Cases
2020	405
2021	2,711
2022	2,913
2023	3,599
2024	4,284

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

World Series of Stickball

By Kendra Germany-Wall

The 75th Annual Mississippi Choctaw Indian Fair took place in Choctaw, Mississippi, July 8-12. The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma sent its Tvshka Homma stickball teams to play in the World Series of Stickball. Tvshka Homma (men), Tvshka Homma Ohoyo (women) and for the first time, Tvshka Homma Himitta (youth). Tvshka Homma Himitta, comprised of Choctaw and Chickasaw Youth (ages 14-17) from southeastern Oklahoma, won their first game against Tiak Hikiya 3-1. They went on to play Beaver Dam in a nail-biting 2-3 game. While Tvshka Homma Himitta may not have won the tournament, they still made history, and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is proud of their accomplishment. Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., and Councilmembers Jennifer Woods, Joey Tom, Tony Ward and James Dry traveled

to Mississippi to cheer on the team. "Congratulations to our first Choctaw Nation Youth Team, Tvshka Homma Himitta," said the Assistant Chief in a social media post. "It was a joy to witness our youth making history and advancing in the tournament." The men's team, Tvshka Homma, fought hard against Koni Hata but was defeated 2-5, eventually losing to the team that would ultimately win the championship game. Tvshka Homma scored the most points against Koni Hata out of all the teams that took on the champions. Tvska Homma Ohoyo had a bye for the first round and took on Koni Hata Ohoyo in the second. Tvska Homma Ohoyo put in their best efforts, but lost to the eventual champions 1-5. All teams put in hard work and made their Tribe proud. For more information and results, visit <https://choctawindianfair.com/stickball/>.



Photos by Christian Toews
The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma sent their youth team Tvshka Homma Himitta to compete in the World Series for the first time, making history. Check out some photos from their first game against Tiak Hikia.



CHOCTAW NATION IS RAISING A FLAG TO SHOW AIR QUALITY IN OUR AREA.

The Air Quality Flag Program uses brightly colored flags based on the U.S. EPA's Air Quality Index to notify communities about outdoor air quality conditions. Choctaw Nation Head Starts will raise a flag each day that corresponds to their local air quality forecast that helps create public awareness of outdoor air quality conditions.

Scan to see your local air quality.

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

DID YOU KNOW?

While stickball gets a lot of attention, Choctaws have many games that have been played for generations.

Hidden Bullet is a game of guessing and wits, where a small object is hidden under a hat, moccasin, handkerchief or sock. The guessing team then scores points based on number of correct guesses.

The corn game uses corn kernels charred or painted black on one side. The kernels are thrown, like dice with points awarded on how many black sides are up.

Choctaw Nation clinics and services continue to celebrate milestones

By Chris Jennings

The Choctaw Nation has long valued the importance of the health and well-being of its tribal members. Programs are available that not only treat illness, but also focus on preventative care, wellness programs and actively address health disparities on the reservation.

Several recent additions to the Choctaw Nation Health Services Authority show that this commitment isn't slowing down. A new 10,600-foot wellness center in Talihina brings the number of wellness centers to 16.

Summer food programs ensure children get the meals they need during summer break.

In April, the Choctaw Nation opened a same-day clinic in Antlers that is open to everybody regardless of tribal affiliation, showing its commitment to the health of not just the tribal members but the community as a whole.

The clinic, a partnership with Oklahoma State University, offers virtual health options to help those who cannot make it into the clinic in person.

Several of the Choctaw Nation clinics also recently celebrated milestone anniversaries.

This May, the Hugo Clinic celebrated its 50th anniversary. In June, the Recovery Center in Talihina marked 20 years in its current building, while the Idabel Clinic also celebrated its 20th anniversary. In July, the Rubin White Health Clinic in Poteau commemorated 30 years of service.

Mathew Akers, the clinic operations director for the Poteau clinic, has a rich family history with the clinic.

"My mom was actually the original charge nurse here," said Akers.

Akers recounts reading some of the original articles from the clinic's opening and remembering many of the names from when he was a kid.

The Poteau clinic, which started in a modular building in 1994 and officially opened in February 1995, underwent expansions in 2008, 2015, and 2019, growing to nearly 70,000 square feet. The clinic sends out over a million prescriptions annually, sees about 45,000 in-person patient visits, and is the only clinic in the Nation with a therapy pool.

Rhonda Inman started at the Poteau clinic when it was still in those modular buildings.

"Over the last 30 years, we grew and grew. They built a new pharmacy, then built on the new addition where the exercise place and Employee Health. And just every time you turned around, they were building and making it bigger and better," said Inman.

Inman said the new clinic was a huge improvement over the one hour each way it used to take her to get to the Talihina clinic.

The Choctaw Nation Recovery Center is a 60-day residential substance use disorder treatment facility for men. Over the years, it has been in several locations in Talihina, from an old rock building to an old white house that's still nearby.

It's been co-ed and male-only. Eventually, it was recog-



Staff from the Idabel clinic pose for a photo during their 20th anniversary celebration.

nized that with more space and better design, it could better treat patients.

Matt Nida, director of the Recovery Center, said, "At that point, it had 20 beds. A few years ago, it was remodeled, and four more rooms were added, creating the potential to serve 28 gentlemen at once."

Over time, staff, therapies, techniques, and treatment modalities have also evolved to better assist gentlemen in having a greater chance of sustainable recovery.

Billy Eagle Road has been at the Recovery Center for much of that time.

According to Eagle Road, there was a big difference in the new, more modern building with improved amenities, including TVs, workout areas and a better living environment.

Nida stressed the differences he's seen the Recovery Center make on the lives of those who've come through.

"I have seen people come in to join the program in different ways and rise over the years, growing into somebody who helps the people in the same fashion," Nida said.

"We've had people who started out as behavioral technicians become counselors, and we've had people who have come in as clients, as participants in the program and join our staff and make that their life's work."

These clinics and services demonstrate that the Choctaw Nation has been and will be here for your family to ensure that no matter where you live, you won't have to travel far to get the care you need.



Staff from the Hugo clinic pose for a photo during the 50th anniversary celebration.



Choctaw Nation Photo



Photo by Chris Jennings

Left: A picture of the ribbon cutting for the Recovery Center from the April 2005 Biskinik.

Right: Josh Wolfe, Joe Jordan and Allen Redden pose for a photograph together at the Recovery Center. The trio have developed a friendship as they support each other during their recovery.

URGENT CARE NOW
OPEN TO EVERYONE
IN YOUR COMMUNITY!

Visit us at Antlers Community Health Clinic today for fast, reliable service!

*Patients must be at least 2 years old to receive care.

Choctaw Nation Health Services

OSU MEDICINE

COMING SOON!
NEW TEMPORARY EXHIBIT
Our Lands, Our Legacy
July 26, 2025 – April 18, 2026

READY TO KICK START YOUR
NEXT STEPS IN LIFE?

SECOND CHANCE
RESOURCE FAIR

Hosted by Adult Re-entry, this event provides access to FREE legal aid services, re-entry programs, and career and educational opportunities. The fair is open to CDB cardholders from any federally recognized tribe.

Thursday, July 10, 2025
11 AM – 1 PM

105 W 10th St.
Wingie City, OK 74766

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
DANIEL LAURENCE | 580.615.2582
DALAURENCE@CNHSA.COM

Choctaw Nation Health Services

RECEIVE \$50 TO
SPEND ON PRODUCE

The Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program offers \$50 in benefits to eligible seniors living in the Choctaw Nation service area. These benefits can be used to buy fresh fruits and vegetables from authorized area farmers.

Choctaw Nation Seniors Farmer's Market Nutrition Program

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

MARKET HOURS
Open 8:30 a.m.- 3:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday
Thursday: 9:30 a.m.- 5:30 p.m.
Markets will be closed the last two days of each month for inventory.

August 2025
All markets open weekdays, August 1-27
Closed: August 28 & 29
Nutrition Ed & Food Programs subject to cancellation
Participants can request a calendar at their location.

ANTLERS 400 S.W. "O" ST., 580-298-6443
FOOD DEMO AUGUST 4

BROKEN BOW 109 Chahta Rd., 580-584-2842
FOOD DEMO AUGUST 13

DURANT 2352 Big Lots Pkwy., 580-924-7773
FOOD DEMO AUGUST 19

MCALESTER 3244 Afullota Hina, 918-420-5716
FOOD DEMO AUGUST 6

POTEAU 106 B St., 918-649-0431
FOOD DEMO AUGUST 15

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation

August 1	Crowder	By Appointment
August 5	Antlers	10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
August 6	Talihina	10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
August 8	Broken Bow	10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
August 12	Idabel	10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
August 13	Poteau	11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
August 15	Atoka	8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
August 15	Coalgate	12:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
August 19	Wilburton	10:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
August 20	McAlester	10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
August 22	Wright City	10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
August 26	Stigler	By Appointment

Durant: Monday, Wednesday and Friday
Call 580-640-6007 for an Appointment

WIC OFFICE LOCATIONS

LOCATION	DAYS	HOURS
Antlers 580.916.5609	Tuesday	8:30 am – 4:00 pm
Atoka 539.316.2050	Daily Monday – Friday	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
Battiest 580.241.5458	1st Tuesday of every month	8:30 am – 4:00 pm
Broken Bow 539.316.3011	Daily Monday – Friday (Except the 1st Tuesday & 2nd Thursday of the Month)	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
Durant 539.316.3517	Daily Monday – Friday	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
Heavener 539.316.4784	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
Hugo 539.316.5089	Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday	8:00 am – 4:00 pm
Idabel 539.316.4313	Daily Monday – Friday	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
McAlester 539.316.2431 539.316.2430	Daily Monday – Friday	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
Poteau 539.316.4606	Daily Monday – Friday	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
Smithville 580.244.3289	1st Thursday of every month	8:30 am – 4:00 pm
Spiro 918.962.5134	Wednesday, Thursday & Friday	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
Stigler 918.967.4211	Monday & Tuesday	8:30 am – 4:00 pm
Talihina 539.316.6792	Daily Monday - Friday	8:00 am – 4:30 pm
Wilburton 580.642.7588	Wednesday	8:30 am – 4:00 pm
Mobile Van 580.380.8193	1st Tuesday – Boswell 3rd Tuesday – Coalgate 4th Tuesday - Clayton	9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Choctaw Nation Health Services

Contestants to vie for Choctaw Royalty titles 2025-2026 Princess Pageant

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Princess Pageant will kick off the annual Labor Day Festival in Tvshka Homma with 26 young ladies taking the stage to vie for the title of Little Miss, Junior Miss or Miss Choctaw Nation 2025-2026. The event will be held Aug. 31 at 6 p.m. in the Tvshka Homma amphitheatre. Below are this year’s contestants.



LITTLE MISS CHOCTAW NATION CONTESTANTS

Oakley Mitchell
Age: 11 Grade: 6 District:1
Town: **Valliant**
Parents: **Colby & Cayla Mitchell**

Quinn Willis
Age: 9 Grade: 4 District: 2
Town: **Broken Bow**
Parents: **Brad & Amber Willis**

Kingsley Clark
Age: 10 Grade: 5 District:5
Town: **Keota**
Parents: **Daniel & Leslie Clark**

Lillyanne Muncy
Age: 12 Grade: 6 District: 6
Town: **Red Oak**
Parents: **Megan Muncy**

Brinley Horn
Age: 8 Grade: 2 District: 7
Town: **Antlers**
Parents: **Tasha and Jerry Horn**

Jayde Ellis
Age: 8 Grade: 3 District:8
Town: **Hugo**
Parents: **Heather and Jerren Ellis**

JUNIOR MISS CHOCTAW NATION CONTESTANTS

Rogan Hudgens
Age: 9 Grade: 3 District: 9
Town: **Bennington**
Parents: **Kody & Morgan Hudgens**

Paisley Tenequer
Age: 10 Grade: 5 District: 10
Town: **Atoka**
Parents: **Dorothy Laney & Chase Tenequer**

Leigha Scott
Age: 9 Grade: 3 District: 11
Town: **McAlester**
Parents: **Jeremy Scott & Honni Bear**

Kristin Jefferson
Age: 15 Grade:9 District:1
Town: **Idabel**
Parents: **Paul & Whitney Jefferson**

Kayedence Young
Age: 14 Grade: 9 District: 2
Town: **Broken Bow**
Parents: **Erik & Cynthia Young**

Emma Battiest
Age: 17 Grade: 12 District: 3
Town: **Talihina**
Parents: **Jimmy Battiest & Heather Ramsey**

Tenley Reece
Age: 14 Grade: 9 District: 4
Town: **Poteau**
Parents: **Brandon and Pati Reece**

Raleigh Watts
Age: 13 Grade: 8 District: 5
Town: **Stigler**
Parents: **Kara Wright & Rodney Watts**

Isabella Muncy
Age: 17 Grade:12 District: 6
Town: **Red Oak**
Parents: **Megan Muncy**

Akeiley Willis
Age:17 Grade:12 District: 7
Town: **Wright City**
Parents: **Kerry & Christina Willis**

Acelee Ellis
Age: 14 Grade: 8 District: 8
Town: **Hugo**
Parents: **Heather & Jerren Ellis**

Audrina Samuels
Age: 14 Grade: 8 District: 9
Town: **Calera**
Parents: **Jared Tom, Kailyn Ward, Erica Samuels and Dohn Bond**

SENIOR MISS CHOCTAW NATION CONTESTANTS

Violet Trent
Age: 13 Grade: 8 District: 10
Town: **Atoka**
Parents: **Kate Trent & Everett Randall**

Alexandria McFarland
Age: 14 Grade: 8 District: 11
Town: **Krebs**
Parents: **Daniel & Crysta McFarland**

Dorothy Rogers
Age: 13 Grade: 8 District: 12
Town: **Coalgate**
Parents: **David & Laura Rogers**

Brooklyn Choate
Age: 21 District: 2 Town: **Broken Bow**
College: **University of Oklahoma**
Parents: **Russel & Annette Choate**

Maggie Smith
Age: 20 District: 3 Town: **Talihina**
College: **University of Oklahoma**
Parents: **Kevin & Melinda Smith**

Kenzie Wilson
Age: 22 District: 9 Town: **Durant**
College: **Southeastern OK University**
Grandparent: **Paula Wilson**

Jenessa Dugger
Age: 20 District: 11 Town: **Hartshome**
College: **Southeastern OK University**
Parents: **Michelle Dugger**
Jerry & Regina Dugger

Candis Battice
Age: 19 District: 12 Town: **Coalgate**
School: **Coalgate High School Grad**
Parents: **Sterling Battice, and JoLee B & Micah Louis**

CNO awards 12 businesses with Chahtapreneur Awards

Regan wins Chahtapreneur of the Year 2025

DURANT, Okla. (July 14, 2025)- The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma recognized 12 small businesses at its annual Chahtapreneur Award Ceremony inside Choctaw Casino & Resort – Durant at the end of June.

Each year, Choctaw Nation gives Chahtapreneur Awards to a Choctaw business in each of the reservation’s 12 districts, as well as crowning one business Chahtapreneur of the Year.

This year, the highest honor went to Izabella’s Learning Center in McAlester.

Izabella’s Learning Center, which is listed as a 5 Star Level Daycare Program by Oklahoma Human Services, is owned and operated by Jamie Ragan, who’s utilized Choctaw Nation Small Business Development’s programs to help her business thrive. Izabella’s Learning Center provides childcare to up to 60 kids from infants to 5-year-olds.

Award nominations are based on business owners’ participation in the Choctaw Nation Small Business Development program, community involvement and community impact.

Below is a complete list of Chahtapreneur Award winners by district:

- District 1: Sherman’s Shoes (Idabel)
- District 2: Frazier Electric (Broken Bow)
- District 3: New Again Consignment (Talihina)
- District 4: Pretty Paws Mobile Pet Spa (Spiro)
- District 5: Brew & Bliss (Stigler)
- District 6: Humma Fichik Designs (Talihina)
- District 7: The Ranch Restaurant (Tuskahoma)
- District 8: Sweet Meltz (Fort Towson)
- District 9: Three Birds Tax Service (Durant)
- District 10: The BARbershop Atoka Cuts Served Neat (Atoka)
- District 11: Izabella’s Learning Center (McAlester)
- District 12: Cobra Electric Service Inc. (Tupelo)



Choctaw Nation Photos
Above: Jamie Ragan, owner of Izabella’s Learning Center, was awarded the 2025 Chahtapreneur of the Year award.
Above: Assistant Chief Jack Austin, Jr., Jamie Ragan and Robert Karr pose for a photo after Ragan’s big win.

“We work closely with all our small businesses, so we see the hard work and dedication that goes into each new venture,” said Billy Hamilton, director of Choctaw Nation Small Business Development. “Our annual awards ceremony is an opportunity to recognize and celebrate those efforts and hopefully encourage more Choctaw small business owners to utilize the resources we offer.”

Choctaw Nation Small Business Development’s focus is delivering technical assistance, training programs and access to capital for entrepreneurs in an effort to build successful, job-creating, Choctaw-owned companies within the Choctaw Nation.

For more information on Choctaw Nation Small Business, visit <https://choctawsmallbusiness.com/>.

STAR
CHOCTAW STUDENT
STAR PROGRAM
APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN
FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
[HTTPS://WWW.CHOCTAWNATION.COM/
SERVICES/STAR](https://www.choctawnation.com/services/star)
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

**LABOR DAY
2025 FESTIVAL SHIRTS
GET YOUR GEAR HERE!**

**KIDS & ADULT SIZES, PLUS OTHER GREAT ITEMS.
FRIDAY – SUNDAY | 10am-10pm**
CHOCTAW
FESTIVAL



FOR FULL SCHEDULE VISIT:

LABORDAY.CHOCTAWNATION.COM

TIMES AND EVENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Friday, August 29, 2025

8:00 am - 9:00 am ~ Corn Hole Check In, Beginners Bracket Registration, Red Warrior Park

9:00 am - 10:00 am ~ Corn Hole Check In, Advanced Bracket Registration, Red Warrior Park

9:00 am - 11:00 am ~ Elder Chair Volleyball Tournament, Healthy Living Tent

9:00 am - 3:00 pm ~ Youth Crafts, Playground and Mobile Library, Playground

9:00 am - 4:00 pm ~ Corn Hole Tournament, Red Warrior Park

11:00 am - 5:00 pm ~ Chahta Cab

Noon - 5:00 pm ~ Quilt entries, Membership Building

1:00 pm – 1:10 pm ~ Wristband Drawing, Lost Child Station

1:00 pm - 5:00 pm ~ 5K Early Check-In, Capitol Lawn

1:00 pm – 7:00 pm ~ Gourd Dancing, Capitol Lawn

2:00 pm ~ Museum 50th Anniversary Celebration, Capitol Lawn

2:00 pm ~ Bronze Bust Unveiling, Capitol Lawn Walking Path

2:00 pm ~ Youth Physical Fitness Challenge Registration, Red Warrior Park

5:00 pm ~ Welcome by Chief Batton, Amphitheater

5:00 pm ~ Stickball Tournament, Stickball Field

5:00 pm ~ Youth Physical Fitness Challenge, Red Warrior Park

5:15 pm ~ Swearing In Ceremony, Amphitheater

6:00 pm ~ Princess Pageant, Amphitheater

7:00 pm ~ Fast Pitch Tournament Begins, Red Warrior

Saturday, August 30, 2025

7:00 am – 10:00 am ~ 5k Race (begins and ends in front of the Capitol Museum and Council House)

8:00 am ~ Fittest Warrior Registration, Red Warrior Park

8:00 am ~ Fast-Pitch Tournament continues, Red Warrior Park

8:00 am - 8:30 am ~ Co-Ed Volleyball Check-In, Red Warrior Park

8:30 am - 9:30 am ~ War Hoops Check-In, Red Warrior Park

9:00 am ~ Co-Ed Volleyball Tournament, Red Warrior Park

9:00 am ~ Horseshoe Tournament, Red Warrior Park

9:00 am ~ Fittest Warrior, Red Warrior Park

9:00 am - 3:00 pm ~ Mobile Library, Playground

9:00 am - 5:00 pm ~ Quilt Show, Membership Building

9:45 am ~ Terrapin Race Registration, Playground

10:00 am ~ War Hoops, 3-on-3 Tournament, Red Warrior Park

10:00 am – 2:00 pm ~ Buffalo Tours, load bus Capitol Museum

10:00 am - 7:00 pm ~ Healthy Living Expo, Council Lawn

10:30 am ~ Terrapin Races, Playground

11:00 am - 5:00 pm ~ Chahta Cab

1:00 pm – 1:10 pm ~ Wristband Drawing, Lost Child Station

3:00 pm ~ Tough Tough Registration, Red Warrior Park

4:00 pm ~ Tough Tough Contest, Red Warrior Park

5:00 pm ~ Stickball Tournament, Stickball Field

6:00 pm ~ The Close, Choctaw Entertainment, Amphitheater

7:30 pm ~ Stoney LaRue, Entertainment, Amphitheater

9:00 pm ~ Josh Abbott Band, Entertainment, Amphitheater

Sunday, August 3, 2025

8:00 am ~ Fast-Pitch Tournament continues, Red Warrior Park

9:00 am - 3:00 pm ~ Mobile Library, Playground

9:00 am - 5:00 pm ~ Quilt Show (Pick up quilts following show), Membership Building

10:00 am – 11:00 pm ~ Children’s Service, Chapel, (Parent/Guardian must accompany children)

11:00 am - 12:00 pm ~ Worship Service, Chapel

11:00 am - 12:00 pm ~ Domino/Checker Tournament Registration, Healthy Living Tent

Noon ~ Gospel Singing, Amphitheater

1:00 pm ~ Domino/Checker Tournament, Healthy Living Tent

1:00 pm ~ School Supply Pick-up, Education Tent (while supplies last)

1:00 pm ~ Wristband Drawing, Lost Child Station

1:00 pm - 5:00 pm ~ Buffalo Tours, load bus at Capitol Museum

1:30 pm - 3:00 pm ~ Choctaw Code Talker Association Board Meeting, Council House

2:00 pm ~ Choctaw Dancers, Capitol Lawn

2:00 pm – 5:00 pm ~ Stickball Exhibition, Capitol Lawn

6:00 pm ~ Gold City, Entertainment, Amphitheater

6:30 pm ~ Women’s Championship Stickball Game, Stickball Field

7:00 pm ~ Katy Nichole, Entertainment, Amphitheater

7:00 pm ~Traditional Choctaw Hymn Singing, Chapel

7:45 pm ~ Men’s Championship Stickball Game, Stickball Field

8:30 pm ~ Cain, Entertainment, Amphitheater

Choctaw Village Activities

Friday

10:00 am - Village Opens

10:00 am - Cornhusk Dolls Make and Take

11:00 am - Beaded Corn Make and Take

12:00 pm – Beaded Two-loop Earrings

1:30 pm - Stickball Making

2:00 pm - Village Closes

Saturday

8:00 am – Bow Shoot (Youth)Registration

9:00 am – Bow Shoot (Youth)

10:00 am - Village Opens

10:00 am - Choctaw Dancing

10:30 am - Choctaw Hymns

11:00 am – Storytelling

11:00 am- Pony beads stretch bracelet

11:30 am - Rabbit Stick Throw

1:00 pm – Stickball

1:30 pm – Language

2:15 pm - Choctaw Dancing

4:00 pm - Village Closes

Sunday

8:00 am – Bow Shoot (Adult) Registration

9:00 am – Bow Shoot (Adult)

12:00 pm - Village Opens

12:30 pm - Rabbit Stick Throw

1:00 pm – Storytelling

1:30 pm - Corn Game

2:00 pm - Village Closes

Capitol Museum Hours

Friday 9:00 am - 8:00 pm

Saturday 9:00 am - 8:00 pm

Sunday Noon - 6:00 pm

Greenhouse Tours

Friday 7:00 am - 3:30 pm

Saturday 8:00 am - 4:00 pm

Sunday Noon - 4:00 pm

Arts & Craft Building

Friday 10:00 am - 8:00 pm

Saturday 10:00 am - 10:00 pm

Sunday 10:00 am - 8:00 pm

Carnival

Friday Noon - Midnight

Saturday Noon - Midnight

Sunday Noon - 10:30 pm

CDIB/Membership & Voter Registration

Friday Noon - 6:00 pm

Saturday 10:00 am - 6:00 pm

Sunday Noon - 4:00 pm

Program Information Tent

Friday 10:00 am - 6:00 pm

Saturday 10:00 am - 6:00 pm

Sunday Noon - 6:00 pm

Festival Information Booth

Daily - 8:00 am - 10:00 pm

Cafeteria

Daily - 7:30 am - 8:00 pm

Icehouse (New Location @ Amphitheater Concession #3)

Daily - 8:00 am - 11:00 pm

General Store

Daily - 10:00 am - 10:00 pm

Education Tent

Friday & Saturday - 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Going Green Tents

Daily - 10:00 am - 4:30 pm

Lost Child Station

Daily - 8:00 am - 12:00 am

Child Safety Wristband

Daily - 12:00 pm - 6:00 pm

RV/Tent Gate Hours:

Wednesday - Sunday - 9:00 am - 9:00 pm

Check-in for both RVs and tents are at the same gate. (Gate opens for tents Saturday, August 23 at 10:00 am)

FESTIVAL & CAMPGROUND RULES		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Alcohol, drugs (to include medical marijuana), guns, and weapons are not permitted on the Festival grounds.Due to limited space, only one vehicle will be permitted per camp-site. Additional vehicles must park in the General Parking area.All roadways must remain clear for emergency vehicles. Do not park in: No Parking Zones, Vendor parking Zones or Reserved RV/Trailer Parking Zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Vehicles blocking roadways, RV/Trailers, or other vehicles subject to tow at the owner's expense.Pavilions are for public use only.Tent campers are permitted one plug per tent. Campers may not use splitters in electrical outlets. All extension cords must be 12-gauge, less than 100', and not installed across roadways.Unauthorized golf carts and ATVs are not allowed in the festival area. All personal Golf Carts/ATVs must remain in camping areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">ALL drivers must have a valid driving license. Please use extreme caution and watch out for pedestrians.No boats are allowed in the camping area.No pets are allowed in the Festival area.Please be courteous and pick up after your pets.Tvshka Homma Capitol Grounds is a No Drone Zone. Any use of a Drone (UAS) must be requested and authorized by the Choctaw Nation Public Safety Department.



INFORMATION UPDATES

For more information, visit laborday.choctawnation.com. To stay update to on all Labor Day information, text **LABORDAY to 888777.**



Labor Day Games and Tournaments - Pre-registration for Labor Day sporting events ended on August 1, but there is still a chance to compete. Check out the official Labor Day Schedule for events that offer day-of registration. All participants must complete a liability waiver, available on the Labor Day Registration page.


Quilt Show - Quilts can be dropped off on Friday, August 29, from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Tribal Membership Building. Quilt judging will take place on Friday evening with ribbons awarded on Sunday in three categories. People's Choice will be voted on Sunday, August 31. Quilts and ribbons can be picked up at 5 p.m. on Sunday, August 31.

Tent Scramble - Beginning Saturday, August 23 at 10:00 a.m., the gates at Tvshka Homma Capitol Grounds will open for in-person tent campsite marking to begin.

2025 ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE

Saturday, August 31	Sunday, September 1
 <p>The Close 6:00 p.m.</p>	 <p>Gold City 6:00 p.m.</p>
 <p>Stoney LaRue 7:30 p.m.</p>	 <p>Katy Nicole 7:00 p.m.</p>
 <p>Josh Abbott Band 9:00 p.m.</p>	 <p>Cain 8:30 p.m.</p>

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma




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Check out the preview for this year's Choctaw Labor Day Festival.



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Explore the impact of the McGirt ruling.



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See who is competing in this year's Choctaw Nation Royalty Pageant.

Biskinik Mission Statement:
To serve as the source of information for Choctaw Nation tribal members by delivering community news through a variety of communication channels.

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