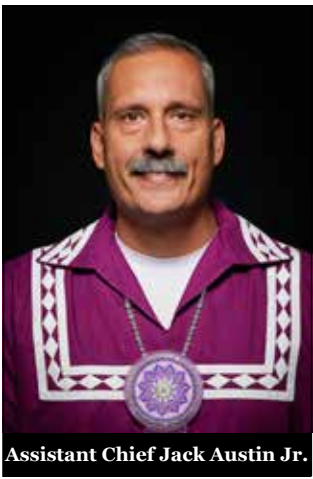


Faith, Family, Culture

Na Yimmi, Chukka Achvffa, Im Aivlhpesa



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.

Choctaw Day honors ancestors, tribal history and culture

On Oct. 13, Choctaw Administrative Offices will be closed in honor of Chahta Nittak or Choctaw Day. The day coincides with the U.S. holiday Indigenous Peoples Day, which takes the place of Columbus Day for tribal members.

Choctaw Day and Indigenous Peoples Day take place on the second Monday of October.

The Choctaw Nation has long highlighted Indigenous Peoples Day as a time to honor the culture and history of Native American People and has formally recognized this day since Oct. 7, 2015, when Chief Batton signed a proclamation declaring the second Monday in October as “Indigenous Peoples Day” at the Choctaw Nation.

Globally, Indigenous Peoples Day honors the Indigenous peoples of the United States—American Indians, Native Alaskans, and Native Hawaiians, most of whom were violently uprooted and exploited beginning with the arrival of Europeans in the Americas. It celebrates the diversity of Indigenous peoples and their contributions to American history and culture. It is also a day to reflect on the historical mistreatment of Indigenous peoples during European colonization and to recognize their rights and sovereignty.

Choctaw Day also gives Chahta tribal members time to reflect on our faith, family and culture. It is a time, hopefully, to remember all the accomplishments of the Chahta tribe – where we have been, where we are and where we are going in our determination to remain a strong, sovereign nation.

Our history deserves to be honored and remembered for generations to come. We have a duty to our ancestors to help push our tribe to its full potential. Our tribe’s history is one of great accomplishments, great tragedy, legendary perseverance and the hopeful spirit of always keeping our eyes to the horizon to strive for better opportunities for our tribal members. We owe it to those who came before us to take our tribe to new heights every day and fulfill the dreams of our ancestors who pushed for our rights, sovereignty and a strong tribal nation.

This Chahta Nittak, take time for fellowship with family and remember what this day is for and why it is recognized as an official Tribal holiday on the Choctaw Nation Holiday Calendar.

The Chahta people rely on each other, and we rely on our tribal members to guide the Choctaw Nation into the future. I wish you a wonderful “Choctaw Day” and urge Chahta everywhere to be a part of our tribal family and celebrate our great Choctaw Nation on this day of remembrance and reflection of our past forged with an optimistic future that embodies the spirit of Faith, Family and Culture.



Pastor Olin Williams
Employee Chaplain

Causes of Marital Problems

God instituted marriage between a man and a woman. He planned a process of development to mature the union.

In Genesis 2: 24, we read, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall become one flesh.”

Three verbs in this verse indicate the three purposes of marriage. They are leaving, cleaving, and becoming one flesh. Leaving involves a departure from parental dependence and implies a dependence on the union of the marriage. Cleaving is the clinging together of the couple, like two pieces of paper glued together.

Becoming one flesh means the sharing of all things. Not just physical, but their thinking and their feelings, their joy and their sufferings, their hopes and their fears, their successes and their failures. This is the biblical standard outlined for a lasting marriage. However, this is not easily acquired.

There are challenges to overcome. Problems arise to deviate the process. Faulty communications, religion, attitudes, roles, and money are a few of the hurdles that confront the couple in their endeavor to complete the marriage. We will deal with the first one, which is miscommunication. Miscommunication within a marriage occurs when the message sent is not the message received.

For instance, there are different ways people express the three words, “I love you.” If a husband says, “I love you” by buying presents, but the wife wants to hear it said, then there is miscommunication. Messages are sent verbally and nonverbally. Verbally is with words. Nonverbally is with gestures, tone of voice, facial expressions, and the list goes on.

When verbal and nonverbal contradict, there is a “double message” which leads to miscommunication. For example, the wife says verbally to the husband, “I don’t mind you going on this business trip,” but with a resigned tone of voice and lack of enthusiasm. She is really saying, “I don’t really want you to go.”

When the message sent verbally is consistent with the message sent nonverbally, the message sent is message received. Even in spiritual communications, the Bible warns of a believer and unbeliever united in marriage.

II Corinthians 6:14 reads, “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness and what communion hath light with darkness?”

Tensions develop over differences of degrees of interest and commitment.

Te preferences of denominational doctrine and practices can as well create miscommunications in a relationship.

Celebration marks 50 years for Tvshkahomma Capitol Museum

TVSHKAHOMMA, Okla. (August, 29, 2025) – The 50th anniversary of the Tvshkahomma Capitol Museum was celebrated at the 2025 Choctaw Labor Day Festival to-day with traditional singing and speakers.

The two-story, red-brick structure was built in 1884 and served as the Capitol Building for the tribe until Sept. 1, 1975, when it was dedicated as a museum.

The 141-year-old Capitol building was completed the same year as Pushmataha Hall at Wheelock Academy.

Three bronze busts crafted by Choctaw artist Jane Semple-Umsted were also unveiled, honoring Choctaw leaders from different eras, each of whom played a vital role in shaping the Choctaw Nation.

At the unveiling, Chief of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Gary Batton said, “It’s an emotional day for me because I think about Chief Pyle, Bertram Bobb and Delton Cox. They have set the tone for me as Chief, and I appreciate them so very much for all that they’ve done for us.”

The sculptures are of:

Gregory Pyle was Chief of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma from 1997 until his retirement in 2014. One of Chief Pyle’s first initiatives was to build a new hospital, which opened in 1999. During his time in office, he negotiated millions of dollars of contracts for the Choctaw Nation and instituted many positive changes, particularly in education, healthcare, and housing. He established the annual Veterans Day ceremony and instituted other services for Choctaws in the military and veterans, resulting in the Choctaw Nation being awarded the 2008 Freedom Award, which

had never been given to a Native American tribe. Chief Pyle was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame in 2007.

Delton Cox was elected Tribal Councilman of the Fourth District of the Choctaw Nation in 2001. Councilman Cox held the position until his retirement in 2021. He was elected Speaker of the Choctaw Nation Tribal Council by his peers 10 of the 20 years he was on the Council. During his tenure, over 70 new Affordable Rental and LEAP homes were added to his district. He supported the Choctaw Nation Historical Society for many years and was chosen as its president. He later helped with the incorporation of the Chahta Foundation. A longtime educator, he taught and held administrative positions in public schools and Indian schools. He also served as the Bureau of Indian Affairs Education Specialist at the Muskogee Area Office.

Bertram Bobb, “Brother Bobb,” served as the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Chaplain for two decades, where he was the only appointee for life. He was also the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes Chaplain for 27 years. He gave the welcoming address during the Tvshkahomma Capitol Museum’s dedication ceremony in 1975 and remained an avid supporter of the museum. A Navy veteran of World War II, he attended the Dallas Theological Seminary and was ordained in ministry at Scofield Memorial Church, Dallas. He was the founder and director of Christian Indian Ministries in Antlers, Bertram Bobb Bible Camp and the Native American Bible Academy in Ringold.



Photos by Christian Toews
Sculptures of former Chief Gregory Pyle, former Councilman Delton Cox and former Tribal Chaplain Bertram Bobb were unveiled during the 50th Anniversary of the Tvshkahomma Capitol Museum. Choctaw artist Jane Semple-Umstead created the sculptures.



LET’S LEARN
SOME COMMON
CHAHTA
PHRASES

SCAN THE QR CODE TO
CHECK OUT THE NEW SITE!

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

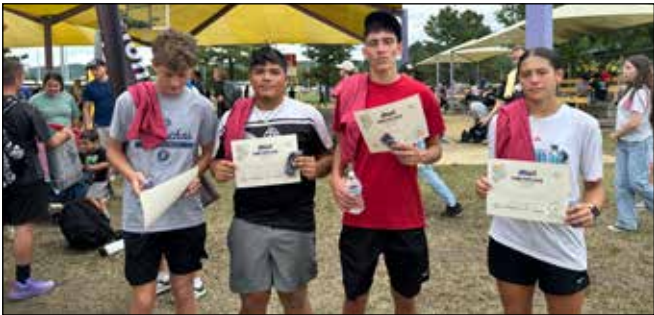
Basketball



Mini Ballers Division
First Place: We Got Next



Tween Division
First Place: Heat



Teen 15-18 Division
First Place: Goon Squad



Young Guns Division
First Place: Running Skins



Women's All-Stars Division
First Place: S Town



Old Timers Division
First Place: RS



Photos by Christian Chaney-Sackett



Labor Day 5K



5K Men's Division
First Place: Hector Ochoa Whitebird



5K Women's Division
First Place: Jenny Chitwood



Runners show of their unique style during the Labor Day 5K.

Softball



Photo by Mallory Jackson
The softball tournament is one of the longest standing competitions at the annual Labor Day festival.

Volleyball



First Place: Okla Sippi Natives



Third Place: Headhunters



Photos by Christian Toews
Matt Bohannon and his dog, Daisy, finish the Labor Day 5K.



Ayden James uses an interesting technique to carry his water cup during the Labor Day 5K.



Thorn Christie makes his way through the 5k course during the Labor Day 5K.



Choctaw Nation Photos
Women's Softball Champions: Texoma Indians



Men's Softball Champions: Sixers



Second Place: Just for Fun



Photos by Christian Chaney-Sackett



District 3

Halito, District 3! Chim achukma? I hope you all are doing well. These past few months have once again been busy for us here in District 3 and the Choctaw Nation.

During the month of July, we kicked off the month with a block party held for the elders and the community. We enjoyed a time of fellowship, activities like chair volleyball, a cookout, and making hamburgers and hot dogs. We look forward to doing this event again!

The Choctaw Nation also took its very first youth stickball team to compete in the World Series of Stickball in Choctaw, Mississippi. Tvshka Homma Himitta was comprised of youth players from the Choctaw Nation and the Chickasaw Nation. They did very well for their first time in the tournament, and everyone, including myself, is very proud of them for their hard work, dedication, and determination!

Lastly, I would like to recognize the recipients of the District 3 scholarship. The first recipient is James Conley, who is continuing his education at the University of Oklahoma, majoring in Human Health and Biology to become a doctor. The second recipient is Katelyn Bridges, who is continuing her education at Oklahoma State University, where she will be majoring in Elementary Education to become a teacher. Congratulations to you both!

It was a slow one during the month of August. However, I would like to recognize and say “Yakoke” to the Talihina YAB chapter. They came in and decorated the tables at the Talihina Community Center for the elders before they had their lunch. Yakoke for all you do for the community and Choctaw Nation!

At the end of August, we wrapped up the much anticipated Choctaw Nation Labor Day Festival at the Tvshka Homma Capitol Grounds. It was a weekend packed with fun and many activities like the stickball and softball tournaments, arts and crafts, concerts, carnival, and most importantly, time spent with family and friends. One important highlight of the weekend was the swearing-in ceremony for the Tribal Councilmembers beginning their new terms in office.

Another was our newly crowned 2025-2026 Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Royalty- Little Miss Leigha Scott, Junior Miss Akeiley Willis, and Senior Miss Candis Battiest.

Lastly, our Tvshka Homma stickball teams competed in the Labor Day Stickball Tournament. Our women’s team fell to Rogue in the Championship and came out as runners-up. Our men’s team lost to Bok Cito in a sudden-death overtime. I am very proud of both teams!

In September we kicked off our community Choctaw language classes held by local first language speakers. We will have these classes now until the beginning of summer on the first Thursday of every month unless otherwise noted. There is no better way to learn the language than to learn from those who are first-language speakers. Come out and join us!

We are about to enter our busy months for District 3 and the Choctaw Nation. Listed below are some important dates for you all to know about. I hope to see you at some of these events. Chi Pisa La Chike!

(Please note that these dates and times are subject to change)

- Traditional Meal | October 16, 2025, 6:00 p.m. | Talihina Community Center
- Thanksgiving Dinner | Nov. 6, 2025, 6:00 p.m. | Heavener High School Cafeteria
- Thanksgiving Dinner | Nov. 13, 2025, 6:00 p.m. | Talihina Community Center
- Thanksgiving Dinner | Nov. 20,2025, 6:00 p.m. | Smithville Community Center
- Kids Christmas | Dec. 2, 2025, 5:00 p.m. | Smithville Community Center
- Kids Christmas | Dec. 4,2025, 5:00 p.m. | Heavener High School Cafeteria
- Kids Christmas | Dec.16, 2025, 5:00 p.m. | Talihina Community Center
- Christmas Dinner | Dec.18, 2025, 6:00 p.m. | Talihina Community Center
- Christmas Lunch | Dec. 17, 2025, 12:00 p.m. | Smithville Community Center



District 4

Halito from District 4 and welcome fall! I hope you are enjoying the cooler weather, football season, and time outdoors. The past few months in District 4 have been full of exciting events, and I’d like to share some highlights with you.

We celebrated Ms. Stella Thornburg’s milestone birthday—99 wonderful years! She is truly an inspiration, and we look forward to celebrating her 100th next year.

At the Dale Cox Community Center, construction is moving right along.

We are excited to see this incredible space come to life and begin serving our community soon.

Congratulations to District 4’s Shelby Featherston, owner of Pretty Paws Mobile Pet Spa LLC, for being named District 4 Business of the Year at the Chahtapreneur Awards Banquet!

The Rubin White Medical Clinic celebrated 30 years of service, providing outstanding health care to our tribal members. Yakoke to all past and present staff for your commitment to our community’s health.

We are proud of our Chahta Foundation Scholarship recipients: Miriam Luce, Aiden Parks, Brody Clark, Kiah King, and Mackenzie Heflin. Congratulations to each of you—we look forward to seeing all that you accomplish!

Our senior chair volleyball team made it to the playoffs and advanced to the championship game at the Labor Day Festival. You represented District 4 with pride!

The Youth Outreach program recently took a group of young men to a Texas Rangers baseball game, where they had a great time and made memories that will last a lifetime.

We also celebrated the opening of a newly paved street and parking lot at Wister School with a ribbon cutting. This project will have a lasting, positive impact on students, families, and the entire community. Yakoke to the town of Wister, Wister School, the Choctaw Nation, and Robinson Construction for working together to make this project a reality.

The Superintendent Luncheon, hosted by the Choctaw Nation Student Services team, was another great success. It was wonderful to see District 4 well represented. Yakoke to all our educators for supporting, guiding, and empowering our students.

It is truly an honor to serve District 4. If I can ever be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yakoke and God Bless.



Darion and Miriam Luce pose with District 4’s Jess Henry.



District 4 commemorates the newly paved street and parking lot at Wister Public Schools with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.



Stella Thornburg, 99, celebrates her birthday with Councilmember Henry.

Battles is September Veteran of the Month

David Lee Battles of District 12 was born in Mixon, Okla., and attended school in Coalgate, graduating in 1966. Following graduation, he attended diesel mechanic school in Okmulgee. While there, he was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1968.

He completed basic training at Fort Polk, Louisiana and was assigned to Fort Carson, Colorado, as a heavy equipment operator.

He served a one-year tour of duty in Vietnam, stationed north of Saigon. He earned the National Defense Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, and Vietnam Campaign Medal. His duties included conducting patrols, night patrols and minesweeping operations.

Upon returning to Coalgate in 1970, he worked alongside his father operating heavy equipment and undertaking various construction projects, including building roads, flood control dams, and other infrastructure. He worked for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation until retirement in 2010, at which time he dedicated himself to caring for his wife of more than 40 years, Sharon Kay. Together, they had two sons, James David and Joe Dale. Mrs. Battles passed away in 2012.

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.

COUNCIL MINUTES		
CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA TRIBAL COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION AGENDA		
September 13, 2025		
1. CALL TO ORDER		tion Cooperative Agreement Program (TIPCAP)
2. OPENING PRAYER/ FLAG SALUTES		d. Approve a Service Line Agreement in Favor of Oklahoma Natural Gas Company, A Division of One Gas, Inc., on Land Held by the USA in Trust for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma in Bryan County, Oklahoma
3. ROLL CALL		e. Approve Demolition of 3915 South 9th Avenue in Durant, Oklahoma
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES		f. Approve the FY2026 Annual Tribal Budget of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
a. Regular Session August 9, 2025		g. Approve the Application for Head Start One-Time Nutrition and Healthy Eating Funds for FY2025-2026
b. Special Session August 22, 2025		h. Resolution Naming Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Delegates to the National Congress of American Indians
5. WELCOME GUESTS/SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS		i. Resolution for Nomination of Dr. Evan Whitley to serve on the U.S. Department of Agriculture Tribal Advisory Committee
a. Veteran of the Month, District #12 – David Lee Battles		
b. Choctaw Language Speaker, District #12 – Marsha Burgess		
6. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None		
7. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES AND SEO’S		
8. ELECTION OF SPEAKER, SPEAKER PRO TEM, SECRETARY, AND CHAPLAIN		
9. APPOINTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARIAN, RECORDING SECRETARY, AND SERGEANT-AT-ARMS		
10. NEW BUSINESS		
a. Presentation of Certificates to Choctaw School of Language Teachers	11. OTHER NEW BUSINESS	
b. Approval to Dispose of Surplus Assets	12. OLD BUSINESS	
c. Approve Application for the FY2026 Tribal Injury Prevention	13. ADJOURNMENT	
	14. CLOSING PRAYER	
	All votes pass unanimously	

Burgess is September First language Speaker



Marcia Burgess is the September First Language Speaker. She is currently a resident of Coalgate, Oklahoma, in district 12. Burgess was born and raised in Coalgate over 60 years ago. She’s the mother of three children: a son, Adam Cole and two daughters, Maya Hensley and Mariah Hammons.

Burgess also has three grandchildren, Molly, Maverick and Parker. Her family consists of 13 siblings, of which she is the only one living. She also has several nieces and nephews.

She’s very active with the elderly activities, such as chair volleyball and exercising, and enjoys the weekly dinners at her community center in Coalgate.

In a statement, Burgess said, “I am very proud to be a Choctaw and want to thank my new council woman, Regina Mabray, for choosing me for this prestigious award.”

THE TIME HAS COME TO GATHER, CELEBRATE AND GIVE THANKS.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE ANNUAL THANKSGIVING MEALS FOR OUR ELDERS

November 5, 2025		
Battiest Elder Lunch	11:30 AM	Battiest Community Center
Coalgate Elder Lunch	12:00 PM	Coalgate Community Center

November 6, 2025		
Durant Community Dinner	6:00 PM	Durant Event Center

November 10, 2025		
Battiest Community Dinner	6:00 PM	Battiest Community Center

November 12, 2025		
Atoka Community Lunch	11:00 AM	Atoka Community Center
Crowder Elder Lunch	11:30 AM	Crowder Community Center
McAlester Elder Lunch	11:30 AM	McAlester Community Center
Stigler Community Lunch	11:30 AM	Stigler Community Center
Poteau Elder Lunch	12:00 PM	Poteau Community Center
Wright City Community Lunch	12:00 PM	Wright City Community Center

November 13, 2025		
Antlers Elder Lunch	12:00 PM	Antlers Community Center
Broken Bow Community Dinner	6:00 PM	Broken Bow Community Center
Talihina Community Dinner	6:00 PM	Talihina Community Center

November 14, 2025		
Tuskahoma Elder Lunch	11:30 AM	Tuskahoma Cafeteria/Capitol Grounds

November 19, 2025		
Wilburton Community Lunch	11:00 AM	Wilburton Community Center
Spiro Community Lunch	11:00 AM	Spiro Community Center
Hugo Elder Lunch	11:30 AM	Hugo Community Center

November 20, 2025		
Idabel Community Dinner	6:00 PM	Idabel Community Center
McAlester Community Dinner	6:00 PM	McAlester Community Center
Smithville Community Dinner	6:00 PM	Smithville Community Center

November 25, 2025		
Talihina Elder Lunch	11:00 AM	Talihina Community Center

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Upcoming Events

- Tvshka Trials** | Now - Oct. 24 | 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. | Choctaw Wellness Centers & Online | The Tvshka Trials is an online fitness competition for Choctaw Nation Wellness Center and tribal members. Proceeds benefit the Foster Care & Adoption program. Tickets available until Oct. 17, donations until Oct. 24.

Cinema at the Center | Oct. 11 | 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 "The Nightmare Before Christmas." We'd love to see you there!

2025 Indigenous Archaeology Day | Oct. 11 | 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. | Choctaw Cultural Center | 1919 Hina Hanta Wy, Calera, OK 74730 | Don't miss an opportunity to dive deep into Choctaw artforms and lifeways and be part of an all-day educational and fun, free event. All ages are welcome.

Choctaw Cultural Center Fall Festival | Oct. 17 - 18 | 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. | Choctaw Cultural Center | 1919 Hina Hanta Wy, Calera, OK 74730 | How do Choctaws celebrate fall? Come find out at the Choctaw Cultural Center's Fall Festival! There will be a corn-eating contest, cultural demonstrations, and we will be mudding the chukkas in the Living Village! It will be a great day out for the whole family.

Tuesday Talks | Oct. 14, Oct. 21 | 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. | Wheelock Academy Historic Site | 1377 Wheelock Road, Unit C, Garvin, OK 74736 | Please join us on Tuesday evenings for a series of presentations covering valuable community information and different aspects of the Choctaw Nation and local history. Please RSVP to reserve your spot by phoning 580-746-2139 or emailing dstandridge@choctawnation.com.

Car Seat Checks and Safety Information Event | Oct. 24 | 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. | Coalgate Choctaw Community Center | 103 E California Ave. Coalgate, OK 74538 | It's important to make sure car seats are properly installed.

12th Annual Domestic Violence Awareness Walk | Oct. 21 | 1 p.m. | Choctaw Wellness Center Walking Trail | 304 Chahta Circle Hugo, OK 74743 | Please join in our effort to raise awareness and end domestic violence. For more information, please call Choctaw Nation's Family Violence Prevention Project EMPOWER's Tasha Mitchell at 580.642.6042 or Vicki Perez at 580-642-6038.

Choctaw Cultural Center Heritage Festival | Oct. 31 - Nov. 2 | 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. | Choctaw Cultural Center | 1919 Hina Hanta Wy, Calera, OK 74730 | Kick off the 2025 Choctaw Powwow and Native American Heritage Month! Join us at the Choctaw Cultural Center as we celebrate with cultural events, dancing, singing, and many other events.

2025 Wellness Canned Food Drive | Oct. 20 - Nov. 21 | All CNO Wellness Centers | Members who bring five canned food and/or non-perishable items will be entered into a prize drawing. Prizes vary at each facility, and every five items donated earns an additional entry. For more information, please visit your local Wellness Center.

2025 Wellness Center Toy Drive | Nov. 3 - Nov. 21 | All CNO Wellness Centers | Members who bring in a new, in-package toy with a minimum value of \$5 will be entered into a prize drawing. Prizes vary at each facility, and every toy donated earns an additional entry. For more information, please visit your local Wellness Center.

Veterans Day Ceremony | Nov. 11 | 10 a.m. | Tushkahoma | Council House Rd, Tuskahoma, OK 74574 | Join us as we honor the brave men and women who have served our country.

Programs & Services

Choctaw Country Market Double Up Oklahoma – When shopping with a SNAP-EBT card at a participating Choctaw Country Market, every \$1 spent on SNAP-eligible items will earn you \$1 in Double Up Bucks, up to \$20 per day, for buying eligible fruits and vegetables. Simply use your EBT card, keep the Double Up voucher that prints with your receipt, and bring it on your next visit to redeem for fresh produce. Hand the voucher to the cashier at checkout. No sign-up needed!

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

OBITUARIES

Kevin Renee Scott

Kevin Renee Scott, 68, passed away Aug. 12, 2024. Kevin was born Dec. 4, 1956, in Talihina, Okla., to Charles Eugene and Magdalene Scott.

He was preceded in death by his parents; sister Madonna Tadlock; uncles E.B. Hudson, Von Hudson and Thurman Hudson; and aunts Corrine Hudson, Lita Baxter and Kathleen Hudson.

Kevin is survived by uncles Dean Hudson, Cordell Hudson, Greg Hudson and R.E. Hudson; aunts Verdella Hudson and Loretta Richardson; nieces Stella Bagley and Brandon Tadlock; two great-nieces; and a host of other relatives and friends.



Jimmy Allen Lehew

Jimmy Allen Lehew, 82, passed away July 31, 2025.

Jimmy was born Oct. 6, 1942, in Buffalo, Okla., to Mary (Tovar) and Lewis Lehew.

He was preceded in death by his parents; sister Rosemary Wallace; and brothers Wayne and Dean Lehew.

Jimmy is survived by his sister Judy Miles; soulmate Kay Clopton; and many nieces, nephews, cousins, and their families.



Allen David Greenwood

Allen David Greenwood, 67, passed away July 17, 2025.

Allen was born June 27, 1958, in Talihina, Okla., to Allen David Greenwood Sr. and Edith (Sexton) Greenwood.

He was preceded by his parents; and brother Virgil "Cubby" Greenwood.

Allen is survived by his great-aunt Evangeline Wilson; and numerous cousins and other relatives.



Theodore Dillworth

Theodore Dillworth, 71, passed away Aug. 5, 2025.

Theodore was born Feb. 20, 1954, in Detroit, Mich., to Lois and David Dillworth.

He was preceded in death by his parents; sister Sue Dillworth; and brother Steve Dillworth.

Theodore is survived by son Theodore Dillworth, Jr. and spouse Lynn N. Lewis Dillworth; granddaughters Evonne N. Dillworth, Taelor E Dillworth, and Imani West; brothers Charles Dillworth, Dave Dillworth and spouse Sue Ann, Gerald Dillworth, Clifford Dillworth and spouse Sharon, Kenneth Dillworth and Craig Dillworth; a host of nieces and nephews; and many loving relatives and friends.



Dena Rosene Cantrell

Dena Rosene Cantrell, 75, passed Aug. 10, 2025.

Dena was born Dec. 4, 1949, to Laura Lucille (Hancock) Jameson and Carl Jameson.

She was preceded in death by her husband Dennis Cantrell; grandchildren Cherish Gomez and Juan Rolland; her parents; and brother Jeff Jameson.

She is survived by son Wade Cantrell; daughter Christy Cantrell; grandchildren DaNetta Morre and spouse Britt, Anna Rolland, and Olivia Rolland; five great-grandchildren; sisters Jo Collier, Concetta Gragg and spouse Ronald, and Serena Little; along with numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and other family and friends.



NOTES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Viking Festival at Heavener Runestone Park

On Saturday, October 25 and Sunday, October 26, step back in time for the Annual Viking Festival at Heavener Runestone Park! Enjoy two days of Viking-themed vendors, food trucks, artisan crafts, live entertainment, and spirited contests. Dress in your best Viking Warrior or Shield Maiden attire, sip mead in the festival tent, shop blacksmith wares, and join in the fun.

Experience historical reenactments, immerse yourself in Norse culture, and tour the legendary Heavener Runestone. Gather your crew for a weekend you won't forget!

For more information, visit www.heavenerunestonepark.com or www.facebook.com/heavenerunestonepark.

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

Pottluck 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)

Growing Hope Survey

The Choctaw Nation Growing Hope program invites past participants to share their feedback through a brief survey, helping us improve the program and make future experiences even more impactful. Scan the QR code to take the Growing Hope survey.



SUPPORT CHOCTAW CULTURE

SILENT AUCTION

October 27 - November 1

The Choctaw Cultural Center is dedicated to exploring, preserving, and showcasing the culture and history of the Choctaw people.



For more information or to donate, scan the QR code!



2025 REMNANT PRAIRIE BIOBLITZ!

Take guided walks and learn more about our prairie species' cultural and ecological importance.

OCTOBER 11, 2025 | 12PM – 4PM

Choctaw Cultural Center, 1919 Hina Hanta Way, Calera, OK

WWW.CHOCTAWNATION.COM/EVENTS

Choctaw Nation Cultural Services

Davin Lynn Bond

Davin Lynn Bond, 52, passed away March 6, 2025.

Davin was born June 24, 1972, in Talihina, Okla., to Dwight Leonard Bond and Betsy Mae (Nehka) Bond.

He was preceded in death by his father.

Davin is survived by his mother; children Kayden Bond, Lane Morris, Ashlyn Bond, and Joshua Steve; sisters Marsha Griffith and spouse Frank, Melissa Bond, and Loretta Hardy and spouse Bradley; grandson Levi Martin; special friends Curtis Coley and Roger Fulfer; other relatives, and friends.



Jerry Edward Gregory

Jerry Edward Gregory, 86, passed away July 3, 2025.

Jerry was born June 27, 1939, in Pocola, Okla., to Curtis and Tilda (Pipkins) Gregory.

He is survived by his wife Lavern (Collett) Gregory; daughters Dorothy Little and spouse Geoff, and Jeanne Novak and spouse Kent; sons Keith Moore and spouse Martha, Kent Moore, and Kendall Moore and spouse Pam; and siblings Joe Gregory and spouse Sadie, Carol Ray, Sherry Timm and Susie Gregory.



Marvin Morris Sam

Marvin "Uncle Marv" Morris Sam, 90, passed away Aug. 13, 2025.

Marvin was born Jan. 27, 1935, in Summerfield, Okla., to James Sam and Nellie (Ripley) Sam.

Marvin was preceded in death by his parents; brothers Clifford, Cornelius, Louie, Jimmy, and Mario Sam; nieces Pamela Sam, Theresa Sam, and Esther Gill; and nephews Sonny Sam, and Carlos Sam.

He is survived by brother Virgil Sam; and a host of nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, cousins, other family members and friends.



John Franklin Jameson

John "Jay" Franklin Jameson, 63, passed away July 28, 2025.

Jay was born June 30, 1962, in McAlester, Okla., to Jimmie Wayne and Carolyn June Jameson.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Jay is survived by his wife Aracelly "Marina" (Diaz Moreno) Jameson; siblings Vicki Jameson, Dennis Jameson, Kimberly Young, Trudy Simank, and Pamela Silverthorn; and nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, and cousins.



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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.

2025 Art Show Winners



Category Winners

Basketry

First Place: Double Weave Basket by Colton James
Second Place: Small Bullnose Basket by Lizabeth Mitchell
Third Place: Choctaw Double Wall Pocket Basket by Susan Locke Charlesworth
Honorable Mention: Unique Choctaw Elbow Basket by Susan Locke Charlesworth

Beadwork

First Place: God is Your Father by Deana Ward
Second Place: Faces of the Choctaw: Wak Apesvchi (Cowboy) by Cheyenne Sparks
Third Place: Full Circle by Meridith Cantrell
Honorable Mention: New Beginnings by Meridith Cantrell

Drawing/Painting

First Place: Sunday Drive, Circa 1958 by Paul King
Second Place: Tvpushik Ikbi (Basket Maker) by James Martin
Third Place: Twenty Dances by Vivian Howerton
Honorable Mention: Crow Brings Corn by Candace Shanholtzer

Graphics/Photography

First Place: Tvshka Chula by Tatiana Stephens
Second Place: Sweet Treat by Edmund Gene Blackwell
Third Place: Next Generation by Bobby Martin
Honorable Mention: Stealth Flight by Edmund Gene Blackwell

Jewelry

First Place: Gorget by Clifford Wilson
Second Place: Bracelet by Clifford Wilson
Third Place: Bolo Tie by Clifford Wilson
Honorable Mention: Break in the Storm by Stacy Ayers Pierce

Textile Art

First Place: Sinti (Snake) by Margaret Riley Santhanam

Second Place: Yakni (Land) by Margaret Riley Santhanam
Third Place: Memories of Yesterday by Teri Scroggins
Honorable Mention: Choctaw Diamond Shirt by Brent Cherry

Pottery/Sculptures

First Place: Silent Screams by Ross Ridge
Second Place: Ishtaboli Victory by Ross Ridge
Third Place: Light Horseman by Lyman Choate
Honorable Mention: Tranquility by Kelton Cloud

Diversified Art

First Place: Choctaw Gar Skin Quiver by Edmon Perkins
Second Place: Snake Bow by Michael Smith
Third Place: Tanchi by Jeannette Ozee Custer
Honorable Mention: River Cane Arrows by Michael Smith

Youth

First Place: Dance Rattle by Sinte-ska Roberts
Second Place: The Crown of Fire by Issac Cherry
Third Place: Barbie Choctaw Princess by Ava Jacobsohn
Honorable Mention: Lily Pads by Carmen Hopkins

Individual Winners

Himmak Pila “Future” Award

Snake Bow by Michael Smith

Okla’s Choice (People’s Choice)

Faces of the Choctaw: Wak Apesvchi (Cowboy) by Cheyenne Sparks

Choctaw Heritage Award

Choctaw Gar Skin Quiver by Edmon Perkins

Best of Show

Tvpushik Ikbi (Basket Maker) by James Martin

Worship Service



Photos by Christian Toews



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CHOCTAW
COUNTRY MARKET

Fittest Choctaw



Male Teen Division
First Place: Skyler Beasley
Second Place: Jacin Lauglin
Third Place: Ruckee Jones (not pictured)



Women's Master Division
First Place: Maci Allen
Second Place: Teresa Gardner
Third Place: Tina Jeffreys



Female Legend Division
First Place: Leta Abbott
Second Place: Angela Pebsworth
Third Place: Linda Walthall



Men's Open Division
First Place: Jordan Benson
Second Place: Zak Rushton
Third Place: Nathan Jackson



Female Teen Division
First Place: Payzee Flores
Second Place: Emmerson Hamilton
Third Place: Claire Foresee



Male Legend Division
First Place: Anthony Dillard
Second Place: Byron Smith
Third Place: Derek Abbott



Photos by Christian Toews
Women's Open Division
First Place: Tiffanie Burchfield
Second Place: Candy Tiptott
Third Place: Michaela Parrott



Male Masters Division
First Place: Paul Crow
Second Place: Trey Daniel
Third Place: Derek Baker

Chief Baton's Youth Fitness Challenge



Photos by Deidre Elrod



Tough Tough



Women's Fighting Heart
Jenna Gardner



Women's Winners
Second Place: Tiffani Burchfield
First Place: Catie Hamilton



Photos by Kellie Matherly
Men's Fighting Heart
Toby Pyle



Men's Winners
Second Place: Dylab Pingleton
First Place: Justin Boyd



Photos by Christian Toews
Melissa Impson (left) and Devin Letka (right) lift weights over the bar at the Tough Tough competition.

Chair Volleyball



Choctaw Nation Photos
Above, First Place: District 2 Seniors, Elder Chair Volleyball
Below, Second Place: District 4 Seniors, Elder Chair Volleyball



Photos by Chris Jennings
The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma leadership play, and lose to the Chair Volleyball winners from District 2.

Cornhole



Photo by Cale Russell

Beginner's Bracket
First Place: Joe Ludlow and Kirk Tonihka
Second Place: Mike Mings and Joe Terrell
Third Place: Colby Crosby and Archie Crosby



Photo by Cale Russell

Advanced Bracket
First Place: Chase Lester and Jacob Foreman
Second Place: Levi Haddock and Kevin Meza
Third Place: Joseph Factor and Kaiden Cochran




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CHUKFI	IBBART	_____
CHULA	OXF	_____
AKAK CHAHA	UREYTK	_____

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Photo by Mekayla McClure

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Photo by Mekayla McClure

Horseshoes



Youth Singles
First Place: Camber Bird
Second Place: Faith Hilton
Third Place: Caiden Smalley



Women's Singles
First Place: Patricia Bohanan
Second Place: Tiffany Taylor
Third Place: Samantha Sennett



Men's Singles
First Place: Mike Mings
Second Place: Nickey Slaybaugh
Third Place: Albert Jones



Youth Ringer
Champion: Jackie Shoemake



Women's Ringer
Champion: Tiffanie Burchfield



Men's Ringer
Champion: Mike Mings



Women's Doubles
First Place: Nakisha Bohanan and Stephanie Bohanan
Second Place: Kelsie Easton and Patricia Bohanan
Third Place: Anita Ishcomer and Tiffany Taylor



Men's Doubles
First Place: David Davis and Dwight Cubit

Quilt Show

Hand Stitch

First Place: Gwendelyn Settle, "Grandmother Flower Garden"
Second Place: Mary Cates, "Scrappy with ties"
Third Place: Susan Grisham, "Star"

Machine Stitch

First Place: Brandi O'Neal, "Indian Girls"
Second Place: Joy Henry, "Traverse"
Third Place: Amy Ballard, "Purple & Yellow"

Machine & Hand Stitch

First Place: Lois Thomas, "Sunflower"
Second Place: Lois Thomas, "Seven Sisters"
Third Place: Gwendolyn Settle, "8 Point Star"

Peoples Choice

First Place: Lois Thomas, "Sunflower"
Second Place: Lois Thomas, "Deer"
Third Place: Lois Thomas, "Seven Sisters"



Photo by Mallory Jackson



Men's Doubles
Second Place: Adam West and Mitch Jack



Men's Doubles
Third Place: Mike Mings and Nickey Slaybaugh



First Place Hand Stitch: Gwendelyn Settle, "Grandmother Flower Garden"



First Place Machine and Hand Stitch and People's Choice: Lois Thomas, "Sunflowers"



First Place Machine, Brandi O'Neal, "Indian Girls"

Checkers



Photo by Kendra Germany-Wall



First Place: Jason Baker



Second Place: Gavin Noah

Dominoes



First Place: Alfred Crosby



Second Place: Dimitri Perry

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Choctaw Nation

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October 3	Wright City	10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
October 7	Broken Bow	10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
October 8	Talihina	10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
October 10	Atoka	9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
October 10	Coalgate	12:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
October 14	Poteau	11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
October 15	McAlester	10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
October 21	Idabel	10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
October 24	Stigler	By Appointment
October 28	Wilburton	10:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
October 29	Crowder	By Appointment
Durant: Monday, Wednesday and Friday Call 580-640-6007 for an Appointment		

Social Dancing



Photos by Krislan Garside

A new generation of Choctaw dancers take part in social dancing on the capitol lawn.



Photos by Kendra Germany-Wall



Photo by Krislan Garside

Gennavie Tom smiles for the camera during social dancing.



Photo by Krislan Garside

Drums are played as dancers participate in the Snake Dance.



Photo by Krislan Garside

Various tribal royalty pose for a photo.

Choctaw Village



Photo by Krislan Garside

The newly crowned Choctaw Royalty pose for a photo in the Choctaw Village.



Photo by Krislan Garside

Blakely Turner, Trista Winnett and Grant Garside pose for a photo using this year's new cutouts in the Choctaw Village.



Photo by Mallory Jackson

Paula Carney leads a Choctaw hymn at the Choctaw Village.



Photos by Krislan Garside

Alexander and Trinity Tisho show off their traditional Choctaw clothing made by their grandmother, Paula Gipson Bean.



Photo by Deidre Eldrod

Les Williston demonstrates traditional Choctaw weaponry at the Choctaw Village.



Photo by Krislan Garside

Yasmine Del Rosario takes part in a pottery demonstration.

Bow Shoot

Adult Tournament

Women's 18-54 Division
First Place: Kaytee Wilson
Second Place: Elizabeth Bohanon
Third Place: Kelbie Kennedy

Women's 55 + Division
First Place: Valerie Underwood
Second Place: Kay Jackson

Men's 18-54 Division
First Place: Mason Breitze
Second Place: Zachary Mathes
Third Place: Scott Spears

Men's 55+ Division
First Place: Chester Cowen
Second Place: Donny Dane
Third Place: Patrick Baker

Youth Tournament

Age 8 and Under Division
First Place: Reeve Davidson
Second Place: Asa Gray
Third Place: Alec Hornbuckle

Age 9-12 Division
Boys First Place: Hiloha Baker
Girls First Place: Kandace Meharg
Girls Second Place: Mariela Bohanan

Boys 13-17 Division
First Place: Brayden Price
Second Place: Tucker Kitchel
Third Place: Tanner Kitchel

Girls 13-17 Division
First Place: Mia Reich
Second Place: Myka Davidson
Third Place: Vera-Marie Bonds



Photos by Christian Toews, Krislan Garside and Kellie Matherly



Photos by Christian Toews



Ishtaboli - Stickball

Little Brother of War



Photo by Christian Toews



Photo by Christian Toews



Photo by Christian Toews

Fallen warriors whom we lost in the past year are honored in a special ceremony during the 2025 Labor Day Stickball Tournament.



Photo by Christian Toews



Photo by Christian Toews



Photo by Christian Toews



Photo by Kendra Germany-Wall



Photo by Christian Toews



Photo by Kendra Germany-Wall

In the Women's Labor Day Stickball Tournament, team Rogue emerged victorious by defeating Tvaska Homma Ohoyos with a score of 7-0, making the team three-time champions.



Photo by Kendra Germany-Wall

In an epic conclusion to the weekend's festivities, Mississippi's KoniShine defeated powerhouse Bok Cito 6-3, securing the championship title.



Photos by Kendra Germany-Wall

Audri Billy from Rogue and Joshua Isaac from KoniShine were named MVPs of the 2025 Labor Day Stickball Tournament.

Stickball Exhibition



Photos by Krislan Garside

Players of all ages and skill levels participate in the Stickball Exhibition on the Capitol Lawn.



ITI FABVSSA

The Choctaw Powwow

By Guest Writer, T'ata (Roberts) Begay

Every fall, the sounds of bells and drums fill the air in Durant, Oklahoma, as thousands gather for one of the Choctaw Nation's most celebrated cultural events—the Choctaw Powwow. Held at the Choctaw Event Center, this vibrant gathering is more than a showcase of dance and song; it is a living expression of Native American heritage and community.

Now in its 20th year, the Choctaw Powwow has grown into one of the largest and most prestigious powwows in the United States. In 1998, the Tvshkahomma Labor Day Powwow was first held on the Capitol Lawn (Willard Polk, personal communication, Sept. 15, 2025). As the popularity of the powwow at the Capitol grounds increased, the need for a larger event space grew. In 2005, the Choctaw Nation started hosting the powwow at the Choctaw Coliseum in Durant, Oklahoma; the event would later move to the newly created Choctaw Event Center in 2008. Today, with over 600 dancers, dozens of drum groups, and more than 13,000 attendees, the powwow draws participants from over 65 tribes across North America (Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, 2023).



Alexaunna Madbull in Traditional Choctaw Dress, Courtesy of T'ata Roberts Begay.

According to Powwows.com, the 2024 live stream reached 1.8 million views, with audiences tuning in from 119 countries. In 2021, the Tvshkahomma Labor Day Powwow was downsized so that the Choctaw Powwow Committee could focus its efforts on the Choctaw Powwow in Durant. The Choctaw Nation Labor Festival still hosts the annual gourd dance at Capitol Lawn on Saturday.

The concept of the powwow originated among the Plains tribes, where gatherings were held to share songs, dances, and ceremonial traditions (Ponca Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma, 2023; Zotigh, 2010). These intertribal events fostered cultural exchange and unity. However, during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, federal policies such as the Religious Crimes Code of 1883 made it illegal for Native people to practice many of their traditional ceremonies.

Indian agents were authorized to use imprisonment, force, and the withholding of rations to suppress these cultural expressions, driving many practices underground (Native Americans in Philanthropy & Candid, 2025). Despite these prohibitions, Native communities preserved and adapted their traditions, and powwows reemerged as powerful symbols of resilience, identity, and cultural survival.

During World War I, Native Americans from historically rival tribes served together in the U.S. military, forging bonds

through shared sacrifice. Upon returning home, many set aside tribal divisions and came together in ceremony—dancing to a common drumbeat. The American flag, once seen by many as a symbol of oppression, began to represent unity and resilience. Tribes revived warrior traditions to honor these veterans as modern-day warriors (Zotigh, 2010), and new powwow protocols emerged, blending traditional customs with contemporary practices.

By the 1950s, powwows had spread to urban areas as Native people relocated for work, creating new opportunities for cultural exchange (Zotigh, 2010). Powwows became a way to connect across tribal lines and foster a shared identity. Today, they take place across the United States and Canada and have even reached Europe. Much like professional sports circuits and like rodeo, the powwow circuit is a year-round lifestyle for many. As Native communities navigate both modern life and traditional values, powwows continue to evolve.

During the 20th century, Choctaw people began participating in powwows, leading to family traditions that exist within our communities today. Within the Choctaw Nation, the community has hosted a variety of powwows and cultural gatherings, from smaller community events to large-scale celebrations. Towns like Canadian, Poteau, Durant, and Broken Bow have hosted local powwows and cultural days, often supported by the Tribe, local communities and schools, and programs like Johnson-O'Malley (JOM).

In 1987, Pittsburg County hosted its 2nd Annual Choctaw Arrowhead Powwow at Arrowhead Resort near Canadian, Oklahoma, on Lake Eufaula. The two-day event featured gourd dancing, contest dances, and a community meal, offering a rich celebration of Choctaw tradition and intertribal participation (Okmulgee Daily Times, Aug. 28th, 1987:10).

Poteau's powwow, also supported by JOM and Poteau Public Schools' Indian Education Program, ran for at least a decade into the late 1990s, serving as a vibrant celebration of Native identity and youth involvement (Dewayne Hornbuckle, personal communication, Sept. 15, 2025).

In 1993, the Choctaw intertribal Powwow was started in Durant, Oklahoma.

Hosted at various locations like the Bryan County Fairgrounds and at Southeastern Oklahoma State University, the powwow featured arts and crafts vendors, food concessions, and traditional dance exhibitions like gourd dancing.

This event sparked the idea for what would become the annual Choctaw Powwow in Durant (Monica Blaine, personal communication, Sept. 15, 2025; The Daily Oklahoman, April 19, 2002:18).

One notable example is the American Indian Youth Leaders Council Spring Powwow, held annually at the Broken Bow Sports Complex. Beginning in 1996. Now in its third decade, this event is organized by the American Indian Leaders Youth Council of Broken Bow Public Schools, a student-led club that



Choctaw Women's Traditional, Courtesy of Brad Joe.

takes charge of planning and hosting the powwow (Brenner Billy, personal communication, Sept 15th, 2025).

Powwows are not only a celebration of life but a vital form of education. They serve as gathering spaces to celebrate and maintain tradition while inviting visitors to experience Indigeneity firsthand.

Tribes, families, and individuals come together to feast, hear their languages spoken, exchange Indigenous-made arts and crafts, sing, dance, and uphold tribal customs.

At the heart of every powwow is the drum and its singers who provide the musical accompaniment and set the tempo for the dances. Powwow dancing is the most visible part of the powwow. The first dance typically hosted at a powwow is the gourd dance, which originated with the Kiowa people when a Red Wolf gifted his songs and dances to honor warriors and veterans. Over time, gourd dance became a respected prelude to powwows. At most powwows, Grand Entry follows the gourd dance.

A parade of dancers lined up by dance style and often age, from oldest to youngest enters the arena.

Modern innovations in powwow dance include the men's fancy, men's chicken and women's fancy shawl, which began less than a century ago. Other categories include the northern men's traditional, men's southern straight, men's grass, women's northern and southern traditional, and women's jingle. Unique to the Choctaw powwow are the Choctaw women's traditional and men's woodland, which highlight southeastern tribal customs.

Just across the road from the powwow, the Choctaw Cultural Center deepens the experience with immersive exhibits, traditional cuisine, and engaging programs.

Throughout powwow weekend, they will be hosting the Choctaw Heritage Festival. Guests are invited to take part in Choctaw language singing, join in social dances, and savor Indigenous dishes like frybread and hominy at the on-site Champuli Café (Choctaw Cultural Center, 2025).

The center's living village and interactive classrooms provide a rich window into Choctaw lifeways, turning Durant into a vibrant, multi-sensory cultural journey. Also at the Choctaw Cultural Center on Saturday, Nov. 1, will be the annual stickball tournament and exhibitions, hosted by the Choctaw Nation Cultural Outreach Department.

The Choctaw Powwow is more than a gathering; it is a powerful expression of pride and can be meaningful to everyone involved, whether dancing, singing or simply spectating.

From toddlers not yet walking, to grandparents sharing their stories, it is a space where all can come together and connect. Open and free to the public, the event welcomes both tribal citizens and non-Native visitors to listen, learn, and join in honoring a living culture.

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Scenes from Labor Day



Photo by Christian Toews
Mallory Pollard enjoys riding one of the carnival rides.



Photo by Christian Toews
Festival goers have their eyes on some delicious fried foods.



Photo by Christian Toews
Harper Myers pushes the side-by-side across the field during the Tough Tough competition.



Photo by Krislan Garside
Blakely Turner doesn't let the rain stop her from having fun on the YoYo carnival ride.



Photo by Christian Toews
Choctaw singers perform during the statue unveiling.



Photos by Chris Jennings
Uhla Nelson crosses the finish line at the finish line at the Labor Day 5k. Nelson won the 75-79 category.



Photo by Christian Toews
Runners sprint out of the starting corral at the Labor Day 5K.



Photos by Christian Toews
Above: Nick and Hailey Quinton pose with their daughter, Parker after the 5K.

Below: Donald Mize has the energy to jump for the camera at the end of the Labor Day 5K.



Photo by Christian Toews
Early morning race number pickup is a Labor Day 5K tradition.



Photo by Christian Toews
Anakin Buchanan celebrates his win with his family at the carnival.



Photo by Christian Toews
Kids record their buffalo tour sightings on their cell phones.



Photo by Christian Toews
Emma Roads enjoys a ride while making her way across the Labor Day Festival grounds.



Photo by Chris Jennings
Kevin Meza competes in the cornhole tournament at the Labor Day Festival.



Photo by Chris Jennings
The roller coaster is always a hit at the Labor Day carnival.



Photo by Chris Jennings
Preshize Malone, Dakota and Jadea Leflore work on getting a tent setup on the labor day campgrounds.



Photo by Chris Jennings
Picking out the perfect bow is a critical first step in the Youth Bow Shoot.

Ohoyo Miko Yopisa

Princess Pageant



Photos by Chris Jennings
The 2025-2026 Choctaw Princesses were crowned during the Annual Labor Day Princess Pageant held on August 29, 2025. New royalty include, Little Miss Leigha Scott from District 11, Junior Miss Akeiley Willis from District 7 and Senior Miss Candis Battice from District 12.



During the 2025-2025 Princess Pageant, young women from across the Choctaw Nation competed for the title, representing their tribe and districts with honor and grace.





Check out biskinik.com for more incredible photo coverage from this year's Labor Day Festival.



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Page 1
Chief Batton delivers his annual State of the Nation address for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.



Page 3
Discover the outcomes of various Labor Day Festival events and competitions.



Page 11
Check out some of the stunning highlights from the 2025 Choctaw Labor Day Festival.

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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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