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CHOCTAW NATION

The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

August 2015 Issue

Tribal Council holds regular session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session July 11 at Tvshka Homma. The following council bills were unanimously approved:

- Authorize Chief to place property in LeFlore County in trust status with the United States of America
 - Application for a NAGPRA Repatriation Grant
 - Application for the Climate Change Adaptation
 - Application for the Indian Community Development Block Grant
 - Funds and Budget for the Food Distribution Program Nutrition Education
 - Approve cost-of-living adjustment and restoring sequestration funding for Head Start
 - Business lease G09-1867 Tribal Fee land with McCurtain County Solid Waste Management Authority in McCurtain County Amendment to CB-110-15
 - Participation in the U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice (NIJ) Violence Against Indian Women (VAIW) National Baseline Study
 - To approve the Joint Stipulation of Settlement of All Claims
- For detailed meeting information on these resolutions and council bills, go to <http://www.choctawnation.com/government/tribal-council-bills/2015-council-bills>. Tribal Council meets at 10 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month in the Council Chambers at Tvshka Homma.

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The Mission of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

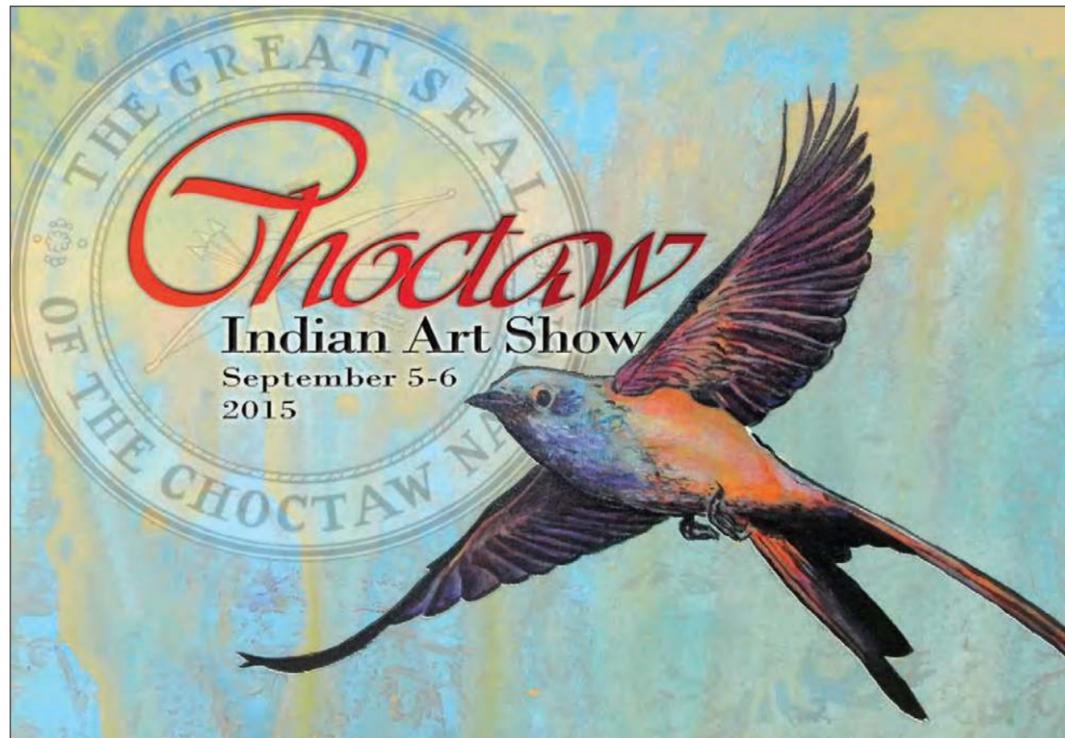
To enhance the lives of all members through opportunities designed to develop healthy, successful and productive lifestyles.

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Choctaw artists big part of Labor Day fest



The 2015 Choctaw Indian Art Show poster, featuring a Scissortail Flycatcher, is the work of a previous competition artist, Dylan Cavin.

Labor Day Festival Sept. 3 - 7, 2015

Since 1948 the Choctaw Nation has been holding Labor Day celebrations in Tvshka Homma. And each year the festival gets bigger and better. This year Reba McEntire leads the entertainment lineup on Saturday night. From a princess pageant to a pow wow, carnival rides, arts and crafts, and more.

For Festival details, a map, and a complete schedule, see pages 15, 18, 19, and 20.

More than 200 artists expected to enter art show competition

By CHARLES CLARK
Choctaw Nation

Choctaw artists have options for participation over the four days of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's 2015 Labor Day Festival. A juried competition, booth sales and traditional demonstrations are all part of this event which draws thousands of visitors to the heart of the Choctaw Nation.

This year's Choctaw Indian Art Show runs Sept. 5-6 on the Capitol grounds of Tvshka Homma. Those chosen for the annual juried show will have their works hanging in the historic Choctaw Museum for two days of the festival.

Many of the artists will have their works available for purchase by festival-goers.

"Based on past years, we expect more than 200 entries to be submitted," said Shelley Garner, of Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's Cultural Services office. Artists may enter up to three pieces for consideration in any of the seven categories.

Artist Entry Information

The categories include painting, graphics (pen, pencil, photography and mixed media), sculpture, pottery, jewelry, basketry, and cultural (Choctaw specific, which may not fit



Photo by Vonna Shults

Janie Umsted, pictured with Chief Gary Batton and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., takes home a blue ribbon during the 2014 Labor Day Festival Art Show.

in any of the other categories).

Artists must be age 18 or over and CDIB members of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

Contest packets with fee information and entry forms are available by contacting Garner at (580) 924-8280, extension 2377, or writing her at: CNO Cultural Services, P.O. Box 1210, Durant, OK 74702. Entries will be accepted through Aug. 31. Selected artists will be required to deliver their art to the Tvshka Homma museum.

Three winners will be chosen for each category with prizes ranging from \$400 to \$100 each. A \$500 award will be presented in the Heritage category (a work that tells the Choctaw story); \$200 for the People's Choice (chosen by popular vote); and \$1,200 for Best of Show.

More Artists

Artist vendors will also set up booths with arts and crafts for sale in designated areas on the festival grounds. For vendor requirements, contact Debbie Damron in the Cultural Events office, (580) 924-8280, extension 2309.

Traditional arts and crafts people will demonstrate early Chahta lifestyles in the Village site. For information about this part of the festival, contact Theresa Billy, Language Department, (580) 924-8280, extension 2102.

Results from District 2 runoff

By RONNI PIERCE
Choctaw Nation

Unofficial results after the District 2 runoff on Saturday, July 8, show Jonathan Anthony Ward ahead of Mike Amos.

Ward took a majority of the district at 57.1% with a total of 651 votes, 323 from Broken Bow and 46 from Bethel plus 237 absentee and 45 hand count votes.

With 42.9% of the vote, Amos' total was 474 with 203 from Broken Bow and 44 from Bethel. He also had 178 absentee votes and 49 votes from the hand count.

The District 2 seat was previously held by Tony Mes-

senger who chose not to seek reelection.

In the July 11th general election, results are official for Chief and Districts 1, 3, 5, 8, and 11.

Chief Gary Batton won the office of Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Chief with 86.52% or 18,798 total votes. His opponent, Deborah Jan Battiest-Tomasi had 13.48% or 2,929 votes.

Chief Batton originally took office after Chief Gregory E. Pyle announced his retirement 16 months ago. Chief Batton took the oath of office on the steps of the headquarters complex on April 28, 2014.

The general election also saw the reelection of incum-

bent Bobby Pate in Pittsburg County's District 11 Council seat. Pate received 718 votes. His opponents Nellie Marie Sam Meashintubby had 274 votes; Henry Phillip Byington, 208 votes; and William Jennings Frye, 71 votes.

The general election also saw Thomas Williston (District 1), Kenneth Bryant, (District 3), Ronald Perry (District 5), and Perry Thompson (District 8), who all ran unopposed, retain their Council seats.

The newly elected Chief and the Councilmembers will take the oath of office at the Labor Day ceremonies in Tvshka Homma on Monday, Sept. 7, 2015.

Council approves matching donations

Looking to make a difference by donating to a charity? You can now double your donation by giving to the Chahta Foundation. The Tribal Council of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has approved an unprecedented commitment to match every donation made to the Chahta Foundation. "The Choctaw Nation is setting a major precedent with the matching initiative. This is an incredible opportunity for donors and for the Foundation," said Seth Fairchild, assistant director of the Chahta Foundation. "I'm not aware of another non-profit that offers matching funds to this level."

Anyone wishing to make a donation of artifacts or a monetary gift to the Chahta Foundation can contact staff members at 800-522-6170 ext. 2639 or access its website (www.chahtafoundation.com) to make online contributions. "We have donors from all across the Nation, people who want to help tribal members in some way and support our mission," says Fairchild. "It's very humbling to see how people want to be connected and help us in honoring our legacy, and in turn, secure our future as Choctaws."

FAITH, FAMILY AND CULTURE



Summer 2015 — A season to remember in the Choctaw Nation

Summer is nearing an end and it's been an action-packed three months with several Choctaw Nation activities for the kids.

Youth camps began soon after school was out and continued through most of the summer. Approximately 1,800 kids attended the summer camps hosted by our Cultural Services department—even though we were having record rain and flooding. They focused on teaching Choctaw culture

and improving skills in basketball, softball, baseball, football, golf and stickball. Yakoke to the staff who devoted many long hours to preparing for the camps and working with the youth!

The Choctaw Nation sponsored 100 boys and girls who were either part of the Youth Outreach program or the youth stickball league to travel to Mississippi in July to play in an exhibition game during the World Series of Stickball. It was their first and they returned home as champions! It was an awesome group of kids and they represented the Oklahoma Choctaws very well.

History was also made in Durant in July—President Obama traveled to the Choctaw Nation to announce the tribe is one of only 28 communities across the United States to be selected for the Digital Opportunity Grant. The grant will bring low-cost, high-speed broadband Internet services for continuing education and learning opportunities. The Choctaw Nation is currently the only Tribal Nation selected. President Obama made the announcement during his visit July 15 at Durant High School. I was very honored to be included in a discussion with President Obama and youth from the Choctaw, Cherokee, Muscogee-Creek and Chickasaw Nations prior to his speech. The young men and women were an amazing group who showed exceptional perception.

Our children are the future of our tribe, and as such, we are fostering a desire to accomplish academic and lifelong goals. The coming school year holds many opportunities including the Success Through Academic Recognition (STAR) program for Choctaw students.

This fall begins the STAR program's ninth year of providing incentives to our students. There are currently 17,000 enrolled in STAR in 47 states and in Canada, Thailand, Germany, the United Arab Emirates, and Japan. Results of a recent survey of STAR high school seniors show 80 percent are planning to pursue higher education after graduation. That is very good news! The STAR students are rewarded for making straight A's, A's and B's, and having perfect attendance. The program motivates the students and they are learning good habits that will stay with them.

The Choctaw Nation's Higher Education Program can assist Choctaw students who have graduated and are working toward a degree. High school students who are taking college courses can also receive a book allowance to help while they are focusing on both.

It's important for our children and grandchildren to plan a future that includes continuing their education beyond high school. The deadline to apply for higher education assistance is October 1 for this fall and March 1 for the spring semester. And, it's online! Choctaw College Connect will be Saturday, November 7, this year at the Choctaw Event Center in Durant. Choctaw students will be able to visit with college and university representatives from across the United States. Students may go online to www.choctawcollegeconnect.com to register for this information-packed day.

Education is a way to open doors to better opportunities and improve quality of life. It can turn dreams into reality.



Make A Change Camp participants look over authentic Choctaw weapons during a summer camp demonstration at Jones Academy. This was one of several camps and events held for youths in recent months.



From the classroom to the workplace

My first grandchild was born this month. As I look at him, I think of all the future may hold and thank God for His blessings on our family. I pray my grandson has every chance to grow, thrive, and excel at whatever he wants to do.

I am so proud to be a member of the Choctaw Nation and know the significance Chief Patton and the Tribal Council place on developing sustainability for generations. They realize starting early in life increases the possibilities.

The Partnership of Summer School Education (POSSE) is one of Choctaw Nation's fastest-expanding programs. The

summer school for kindergarten through third-graders began in 2013 in Durant only. In 2014, it had expanded to schools in Bryan County and this year it grew to 14 sites that included 23 school districts. POSSE's 2015 enrollment quadrupled to 1,827 students.

The students made significant progress in reading and math and they thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon enrichment classes, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) activities, and field trips. The children participating in the program have received a boost for the formative years ahead.



Summer 2015 IT interns pictured with (far left) David Ledford, Executive Director of IT, and (far right) Tricia Keyes, Executive Administrator.

The Choctaw Nation also created a new Internship Program in 2015. Fourteen Choctaw college students spent their summer working in the Human Resources, Information Technology and Safety departments. The interns represented students throughout the United States including Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, Florida, Missouri, and Georgia. We expect the program to grow significantly next year.

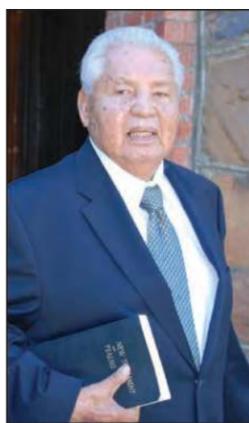
Another example of helping develop our next generation of leaders is the agreement between the Choctaw Nation, Choctaw Defense, and OSU's Institute of Technology. Two OSU-IT students signed an agreement to intern at the manufacturing plant and work there for a year following their graduation.

The Choctaw Nation considers opportunities to develop a student from the first classroom experience through his or her choice of career. These positive paths can lead to successfully breaking cycles of poverty. The Choctaw people will be better equipped with skill-sets that lead to higher-quality jobs and improved lifestyles.

POSSE partnered with Oklahoma State University's College of Education and Center for Sovereign Nations to bring seven OSU elementary education majors to assist the summer school teachers this year. "Educate and Collaborate" brought the student teachers into our schools for a summer, and could also attract more teachers to establish careers in the schools within the Choctaw Nation. It's a win-win for teachers and students because it encourages the kids' interest in learning.

Chaplain's Corner

It is possible to know what God is like



**Rev. Bertram Bobb
Tribal Chaplain**

May you have a good summer. I look forward to seeing you at the 2015 Labor Day Festival at Tvshka Homma. I am thankful for the privilege of sharing with you a portion of God's word now. May God bless you.

Did you ever hear, think or ask a question like, "What is God really like?"

I believe it is possible to know what God is like.

In the Bible, we have a full revelation of what God is like. If we believe that, then we can be completely satisfied as to the correct answer. We can say much about what is revealed in the Bible about God, but we are going to look at only four today.

First, the Bible says God is a Spirit in John 4:24. Jesus is talking to the woman at the well of Sychar. He says in verse 24, "God is a Spirit." What do you imagine? A cloudy vapor? But that is not a picture of God.

He is not limited to body, shape, boundaries. Because God has no limitations, He can be everywhere at the same time.

We read the words of Jesus after His resurrection in Luke 24:39: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a Spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me have."

So we know that a spirit has no body. Spirit is something that is not limited by a body.

There is no limit to God. There is no limit to His Wisdom, His Power, His Love, His Mercy. Everything fits into place once you under-

stand Who God really is, and when you really get acquainted with Him.

Second, the Bible not only reveals God as Spirit, but the Bible also reveals God as a person. Everywhere in the Bible we read: "God loves," "God says," "God does." Everything that we attribute to a person is attributed to God.

A person is one who feels, thinks, wishes, desires and has all the expressions of a personality. And here on this earth, our personalities are limited to our bodies. And you are an immortal soul. Someday, your personality will leave your body. Your Soul, created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26, 2:7), will live forever.

God is not bound by a body, but He is a Person. He Feels, He Thinks, He Loves, He Forgives. He sympathizes with the things that make up our lives.

Third, the Bible declares not only that God is a Spirit and God is a Person, but that God is a Holy and Righteous Being.

From Genesis to Revelation, God reveals Himself as a Holy God. He is perfect and absolute in every detail. He is too holy to endure sinful living. He is a Holy and Perfect God.

If our people could get a vision of His Perfect Righteousness, what a difference it would make in the way we live. If we could see the difference that separates man's unrighteousness from God's Righteousness, it would change our way of living.

The Apostle John declares "that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all." (1 John 1:5). It is impossible to understand the Bible unless you have a clear understanding of the Holiness of God. Because God is Holy, there is separation between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

Not only is the sinner separated from God, but God is separated from the sinner. Because God is Holy, He can have nothing to do with sin. Before SIN came, man and God had fellowship with each

other. Now that fellowship is broken, it is impossible for a sinner to have any contact with God unless it be through Jesus Christ.

Man does not or cannot acquire sinless ness that is necessary to come into the presence of God the Father. We read in John 14:6: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

In God's Holiness lies the reason for the death of Christ. What His Holiness demanded – the penalty for sin. "... The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezekiel 18:4). His Love paid the penalty in His Only Begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ. He was beaten, nailed, suffered and died on the cross for you and me.

We are dealing with a Holy, Righteous and Pure God. He will not tolerate our evils and sins. How long is this Pure God going to endure our divorce rate, our breakdown of morals, our immorality, our drunkenness, our swearing. Were it not for the mercy and long-suffering of God, we would be judged and chastened.

Fourth, God is Love. Many have misunderstood that part of God's nature. The fact that God is love does not mean that everything is sweet, beautiful and happy and that God's love could not possibly allow punishment for sin.

God's holiness demands that all sin be punished, but God's love provided a plan of redemption and salvation for sinful man. God's love provided the Cross of Jesus Christ by which man can have forgiveness and cleansing. It was the love of God that sent Jesus Christ to the cross. No matter what sin you have committed, no matter how dirty, shameful or terrible it may be, God loves you. Because of His Love there is a way of salvation, a way back to God through Jesus Christ, His Son. (Romans 5:8)

Will you trust Jesus Christ as your personal Savior today? Confess you are a sinner, Believe Him and Accept Him.

Continue to pray for America.

Choctaw Nation Farmer's Market



The Choctaw Nation Farmer's Market begins in the spring on May 1 and runs until fall on Oct. 21. The Choctaw community centers in Durant, McAlester, Hugo, Atoka, Broken Bow, Idabel, Antlers, and Stigler all hold farmer's markets every Wednesday beginning at 8:30 a.m. and running until 12 p.m. or when the produce sells out.

Fresh | Local | Organic

All are welcome to come peruse and purchase

Selections of fruits and vegetables, including: okra, tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, green beans, purple peas, zucchini, cucumbers, garlic, potatoes, peppers, corn, peaches, pears, and more.

Assistance Available

WIC Farmer's Market checks are distributed first-come, first-served. McAlester and Poteau WIC participants can still pick up checks from the WIC clinic sites and do not have to wait until WIC appointments to receive them.

Seniors' checks are mailed out at the end of April to those who have completed applications. However, checks are still available and applications are still being accepted for the 2015 season. Citizens aged 60 or more meeting income requirements are welcome.

Contact: 1 (800) 522-6170 or (580) 924-8280 Ext: 2303

BUSINESS



Photo by Brandon Frye

Darrell and Angela Mayo stand at the foot of the staircase in the second home they built together, just outside of Durant. The two directly worked with every aspect of building the home, from laying out floor plans, to material selection, construction, painting, and decorating the space. With their enjoyment of home building, the Mayos founded a business which they hope to grow with the help of the Choctaw Nation.

Mayos lay strong foundation for home building business

By **BRANDON FRYE**
Choctaw Nation

Stonehenge Homes—the Choctaw-led custom house construction and design business based in Durant and servicing southeastern Oklahoma—laid a strong foundation back when husband and wife Darrell and Angela Mayo met in church as teens.

The Mayos developed a life together over time, raising three children, building two homes from the ground up, and launching two family businesses.

With the experience Darrell received working at his father's painting business, and Angela's natural eye for style and design, homemaking and home building just seemed natural for the couple.

It started when the two decided to build a home for their family just north of Durant, at Sandstone Place.

"At the first house, we enjoyed building it," Darrell said.

"Everybody went on about it so much, we had several people in a row say we really ought to do that (for a living)," Angela said, finishing his thought.

Speaking on the choice to name the business Stonehenge Homes, Angela said, "We chose the name because we are all about making sure the foundation is right, and everything is structurally sound. It is a solid name, it is built to last."

For the past six months, the Mayos have received assistance and guidance from the Choctaw Nation's Preferred Supplier Program and Business Development.

The Preferred Supplier Program, led by Boyd Miller, works to bring business owners like the Mayos in contact with anyone needing their services. Business Development works to help them grow their business the best way possible.

Environmentally friendly cleaner draws from family history



Michael Roberts, left, proprietor of MotherEarth Eco-Solutions, visits with Boyd Miller from the Choctaw Nation Preferred Supplier Program, after a presentation about Roberts' product (shown in foreground).

By **ZACH MAXWELL**
Choctaw Nation

Imagine a product that combines common sense, chemistry and culture as a solution to a very out-of-sight, out-of-mind problem.

Michael Roberts has done so, taking a gift from a biochemist and turning it into MotherEarth Eco-Remediations. The microbes gifted to Roberts are a unique and, according to the developers, much safer way to combat commercial kitchen grease clogging drain pipes.

That's the out-of-sight part. While MotherEarth does have more visible products such as a kitchen cleaner, the main attraction is a safe, non-abrasive liquid that eats up grease and clears expensive plumbing systems of potentially costly clogs.

Cue the common sense: Roberts presented his product to the Choctaw Nation Preferred Supplier program in April. Choctaw Casinos, as well as others in the region, have been using MotherEarth for a few years since it is a native-owned company (Roberts and his business part-

ner and wife, Rebecca, are both Native Americans).

"There is a lot of stuff that goes down the drain" at commercial kitchens, Roberts said. "One problem kitchens will have is buildup and back-up from so much grease going down the lines."

The problem with popular brands is dependence upon caustic chemicals to break down grease. These chemicals create as many problems as they solve: They get into the wastewater chain (a gateway to the environment and downstream water supplies), and the toxic compounds can eat away at pipes.

The contrast is easier illustrated like this: The warnings on a bottle of big-name pipe degreaser are numerous, and shocking. There are no such warnings on a bottle of MotherEarth. "If you were to drink it, it wouldn't kill you," Roberts said.

Now, the chemistry: Roberts met a biochemist who had developed bacterial microbes that consume greasy build-ups, rather than chemically breaking them down with the help of enzymes. The enzyme process is so invasive that many

places simply foot the bill for expensive pumping services. City and state regulators place limits on restaurants' release of bio-oxygen demands and "total suspended solids" on either end of the process.

"Our product actually takes care of those things," Roberts said. "We're trying to eliminate pump-outs. We're trying to save the environment and save facilities a huge amount in fines and surcharges."

So how did Roberts come up with this bacteria-based solution? That's where culture comes into play.

Roberts lives in Ada and is a fancy-dancer - a 19-time world champion one at that. He is Choctaw and Chickasaw. His pastime is attending pow wows and festivals throughout the land to show off his moves and regalia. He has assisted in organizing the annual Choctaw Nation Pow Wow set for December this year.

The MotherEarthEco.com website has a quote from Roberts' father, Hiloha Okcheemali (Blue Thunder): "There was a time...I could drink water with the animals." Roberts intends to do his part to restore that level of purity to the world.

In his father's youth, he was part of a traditional deer hunt with the Meskwaki (Sac & Fox) Nation in Iowa. He related to his son that they took a deer but "the blood stunk and the meat stunk. The (deer) were drinking polluted water," he said.

"That's when we realized, something was going on with the environment, and something needs to be done," he said.

Fast-forward several years to one of Roberts' fancy-dance competitions. At one of them, he met the biochemist, who revealed his Irish roots.

"I said, 'Have you ever heard the story about how the Choctaws helped during the Irish potato famine?' After I told him the story, he wanted to do something to show his appreciation. He wanted to give back," Roberts said.

The microbial compound in Mother Earth was that gift. Roberts saw an opportunity to take action to help the environment. Since developing the product line, he has worked with several Oklahoma tribes as well as Fortune 500 companies

like Frito-Lay.

He hopes his example will inspire other big corporations to look at ways they can impact the world positively.

"If they see Native Americans caring for the environment, maybe they too will change," he said. "I'm not looking to be a multi-millionaire. I'm looking to change the environment."

One way, of course, is to use the safer microbial pipe cleanser that Roberts has developed. He says other formulas use a fractional amount of microbes, while his product claims a staggering 1 trillion per gallon. He also offers a hydronium-based product for eliminating rust, lime-scale and calcium build-up.

The product is disseminated through a mechanical system attached beneath three-pot sinks in industrial kitchens. The components come from suppliers on the east and west coasts, while the product itself is crafted in Ada. Roberts has contractors who provide service calls to their growing list of clients.

Roberts and his line of MotherEarth Eco-Remediation products were put through the "shark tank" process of the Preferred Supplier Program, including people from Franchising, Facilities Maintenance and Business Development at Choctaw Nation, as well as Chickasaw Nation Division of Commerce. Panel participants were impressed with the product, but they wanted Roberts to improve his marketing to expand the product's reach.

"This process is not just to create an Indian-owned business," said Boyd Miller, director of the Preferred Supplier Program. "It's to make sure that business can successfully take on its chosen project."

Through the various resources available to small businesses started by Choctaw Nation members, ideas like Roberts' MotherEarth products can reach their full potential. In this case, the potential is not only in financial rewards—but rewarding for us all with a small step toward a better Earth.

For more information about these products, visit www.motherearthecho.com.

OFFICE SITES:

Durant
(580) 924-7773

Antlers
(580) 298-6443

McAlester
(918) 420-5716

Poteau
(918) 649-0431

Broken Bow
(580) 584-3832

Please call to schedule an in-person appointment.



SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD INITIATIVE
Next Step

Mission
To assist Tribal Members reach the next step of self-sustainability through supplemental food vouchers, financial fitness and healthy living.
* Participants are required to complete training set by initiative guidelines.

Eligibility Requirements:
One Choctaw Tribal Member in Household
Reside in Choctaw Nation Service Area
Must be a Working Household (Unless on Social Security or Disability)
Over Income for Food Distribution



CHOCTAW NATION
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Native Affairs Presents

8(a) Business Development Training

August 13, 2015
8:30 am-4:30 pm
Kiamichi Technology Center, McAlester Campus
301 Kiamichi Drive, McAlester, OK

The purpose of this workshop and the follow-on technical assistance we offer is to provide operational and leadership strategies to build capacity, foster growth and expansion, and ensure sustainability of entity-owned businesses in Native American communities throughout the United States.

The focus is on 8(a) Business Development and the unique rules and considerations for tribally and Native owned corporations and organizations:

- Assisting you, as an applicant to the 8(a) Business Development Program, with decision-making and timing of application submissions.
- Enhancing your understanding of eligibility requirements and the application process, specific to tribal or native-owned firms.
- Clarifying requirements for success and defining your expectations as an applicant.
- Improving the quality of your submission.
- Enhancing your understanding of the program rules.

Find out more and register at www.native8atraining.com!

smallbusiness@choctawnation.com or 580-924-8280 ext.2901

The Choctaw Nation Next Step Initiative was successfully launched April 2015! This supplemental food voucher program is meant to assist Tribal Members reach the next step of self-sustainability through supplemental food vouchers as well as financial fitness and healthy living.

This Initiative is designed to help the working poor by providing families food supplements as well as assorted trainings to help them reach the next step. These trainings include, but are not limited to, financial budget training, food demonstrations, holiday spending webinars and other trainings that best suit the household needs.

Eligibility Requirements include:

- One Choctaw Tribal Member in Household
- Reside in the Choctaw Nation Service Area
- No one in household can be participating in SNAP
- Must be a Working Household unless on Social Security or Disability
- Over Income for Food Distribution Eligibility

To sign up for the Next Step Initiative, the participant should call a Next Step Social Worker at a location listed below to arrange an interview first. This guarantees participants bring all required documentation with them. Eligibility cannot be determined without all documentation present.

Offices and Social Workers are located at the following five locations:

- Durant Food Distribution Center (580) 924-7773
- Antlers Food Distribution Center (580) 298-6443
- McAlester Food Distribution Center (918) 420-5716
- Poteau Food Distribution Center (918) 649-0431
- Broken Bow Outreach Services Building (580) 584-3832

Choctaw Nation joins USDA Senior Nutrition Program

By **RONNI PIERCE**
Choctaw Nation

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has been named by the USDA as the 52nd state agency to operate the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.



Photos by Brandon Frye

The farmers' markets are located in Durant, McAlester, Hugo, Atoka, Broken Bow, Idabel, Antlers, and Stigler every Wednesday at the community centers.

The program includes 78 farmers over the 10 1/2 county area and provides access to fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables to at least 800,000 low-income older Americans across the country. It also includes eight Indian tribal organizations, now including Oklahoma. Last year,

SFMNP coupons for fresh produce were accepted by over 20,000 farmers at farmers markets, roadside stands, and community supported agriculture programs.

"I am so excited about the official announcement today on our award," says Claudene Williams, Choctaw Nation's Director of WIC. "I started working with the grants department in 2010 in hopes to receive both the Farmers Market Nutrition Program for WIC and Seniors. We received the WIC Farmers Market Program almost immediately upon applying, appointed Peggy Carlton to be our coordinator, and we were off to a good start. Each year since, we have applied for the Seniors Farmers Market annually in hopes that this would be the year, until finally here it is!"

In 2014, Choctaw Health Services in partnership with Going Lean funded the Seniors Farmers Market Program to get it started. With the additional financial help, Choctaw Health Services was able to serve 1,200 senior tribal members within the Choctaw Nation. And with the additional funds from the USDA, the program will be able to serve not only eligible tribal members but also their spouses who are non-tribal members and also meet the eligibility guidelines. With the funding from

Choctaw Health Services and the USDA, the Seniors Farmers Market program continues to grow each year serving tribal seniors healthy, locally grown fruits and vegetables.

According to Peggy Carlton, Choctaw Nation's WIC and Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Coordinator, "We've been applying for this grant for the past six years and we were determined not to give up. So this announcement has been really exciting for us."

"Seniors represent a particularly vulnerable demographic to food insecurity, with unique health, social, and nutrition challenges," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "This issue has a particular importance for seniors living in rural areas, as America's rural population is older than the nation overall and rural seniors experience higher poverty than seniors nationwide. The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program is one way USDA is working to improve the health and well-being of older adults, ensuring that all older Americans have access to healthy food."

For more information about the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, please visit: www.fns.usda.gov/sfmnp/senior-farmers-market-nutrition-program-sfmnp.



Jennene Fuller, of Yuba, holds a barrel of her most recent harvest of silver peas and green garlic at the Durant Farmers Market on Aug. 5. Following in her mother's footsteps, Fuller runs a family farm near the Oklahoma-Texas border called "Pecan Acres Too," growing and selling much more than just pecans, including potatoes, peppers, okra, garlic, herbs, and more.



Photo by Kendra Germany

The Choctaw Nation Early Head Start program was recently awarded an Early Head Start Child Care Partnership grant. The grant will allow the staff (pictured) more opportunities to provide a continuum of care for children, getting them school-ready while helping parents get more involved with their children's education prior to head start.

Nation develops new childcare program

By **BRANDON FRYE**
Choctaw Nation

A new service is in the works for Choctaw families, which will act as a prequel to the Head Start program and expand the serviced age range.

With the new Early Head Start program, the Choctaw Nation will care for infants and toddlers from birth up to age three.

Before, the Choctaw Nation began care with the Head Start program, which children could enter once they turned three years of age. Children with Early Head Start can transition into Head Start.

This effectively extends the age range of Choctaw Nation childcare programs to include children from birth up to five years of age.

The Early Head Start program is currently funded to support the care of 138 children. This support for families will enhance self-sufficiency and school readiness

for the children, beginning at an earlier age than ever before.

Early Head Start will offer additional aid covering the areas of family services, health, mental health, nutrition and education.

The program is focused on low-income families. It is a Choctaw-preference program, but the service is open to all families living near Early Head Start locations.

At launch, two facilities will be available: the Child Development Center in Bennington, and Kids Ranch in Broken Bow. Construction is currently underway for an additional center in Durant, scheduled to open in January 2016.

To apply, parents must fill out a three-page application. Proof of income, residency, and birth will be required alongside the application.

Contact Pam Savage at (800) 522-6170, ext. 2591, to apply or learn more. For in-person assistance with applications, visit one of the Early Head Start locations.

Spotlight on Elders

with
Stella Long

By **RONNI PIERCE**
Choctaw Nation



Stella tells the story of the Trail of Tears at an Oklahoma City University pow wow.

Let's start with her Choctaw name, Fichik. The word for "star" in the Choctaw language. Appropriate, since Stella Long embodies all the characteristics of a star: a celestial body that generates light and other radiant energy.

A long time storyteller, Stella carries on the tradition of Native storytelling, creating a web of stories connecting our present to our past and introducing the stories of our ancestors to our children.

She was born in the Choctaw Nation in eastern Oklahoma near a small community called Kanema.

"They called it Kanema but in Choctaw it's Kanima, which means *somewhere* in Choctaw," she said. "So I had a lot of fun with that word when I was a little girl. People would ask me where I was born and I would answer 'Somewhere,' of course."

She attended grade school for a short time in Kanema. Then her family moved to Chilocco Indian School, an agricultural school for Native Americans in Newkirk. It closed permanently in 1980.

"When my father was living we went to Chilocco. We were living at Chilocco Indian School because my father and my mother had met and married there.

"After that, we moved back near Stigler and there was a lot of hardship there. We lived off the land and my brothers chopped wood to sell."

After her father died when she was 10, she was separated from her brothers and sent to Goodland Indian Orphanage, southeast of Hugo. She didn't see them again for a very long time.

Her life was lived at the orphanage from 7th grade until she was a senior in high school. But she did get to go home every year for Christmas.

"My mother later married and had three children, one died and two are still living."

Before her father died and her world was turned upside down, she would wander the woods around her home. And that's where she learned she had an innate connection to nature and to the animals that lived around her. She said she came to realize that the spirits of our ancestors speak to us through the animals.

"I loved going up into the mountains, up into the rocks and I would see many

birds, many types of birds. I saw flying squirrels jumping through the trees. I met a wolf there one time. He was up on the ridge looking back at me, and he walked forward for a little while still looking at me with piercing eyes. And because I respected animals I got down on my knees.

"This was a great king wolf that we Indian people respected. And I talked to the animal and he slowly went up the hill. He turned back around to look at me but I didn't follow him. And I thought to myself, 'He probably thought that little girl has a lot to learn.'"

Even with all the other animals she's encountered, she still thinks of the wolf as her spirit animal.

"Three medicine men have told me I was part of a wolf clan after I told them I did not know what clan I belonged to," she says.

"Among the Choctaws, there are not many animal clans that are heard of. You see, the Choctaws became what you might call civilized long before the other tribes did because the Choctaws wanted the education the white people seemed to be getting."

Stella thinks that may be when we started losing our connection to nature.

In order to acclimate to the white man's way of thinking "we had to change a lot of things, a lot of the ways we behaved when we lived off the land."

"In fact," she remembers, "I read in history books the first clothing we ever had was all leather, deer leather. And it had only one strap down toward the waistline with one breast showing. With leathers hanging down as a skirt."

She still goes to Indian doctors, as well, claiming she's learned quite a bit from them.

"I've been to a Cherokee medicine man. There are a number of John Ross family members who are in medicine. And he was a part of that family. He lives in Vian near a stomp ground, by the Dwight Mission in a log cabin."

During one of her visits she said, "He placed me on a cot but he did not touch me. Soon I felt a warmth moving over my leg even though nothing was touching me.

"I'm going to baptize you in the old way, he said. This is a special water." So, she explained, he dipped water from a little washpan then he stood behind her and trickled the water over her head.

"Even though there was a cold wind outside," she said "all I felt was a comfortable warmth."

She also visited an elderly Kiowa medicine man who helped her with a vision.

"There was a hurricane that had moved through the east. So I was worried about my children who I had not heard from."

According to Stella, "He called out to the ancestors. It was dark in the cabin. He started playing the flute and singing in his language. Suddenly a bright light, red bright lights, then balls of red light started flying around him."

Then she said he announced the presence of the ancestors.

"I looked around, smiled, and welcomed them," she said. The medicine man told her the eagle that had accompanied the ancestors told them her children were safe. Then she said she felt peace because she knew they were OK.

Stella continues to represent the Nation in the most favorable light. She'll be telling her stories of animals and ancestors during Choctaw Days at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. October 2 and 3.

Going Green Labor Day Class Schedule

Saturday	10:00-10:30 a.m. OU Climate Science presents "Ocean Acidification" 10:30-11:00 a.m. Recycling 101: How and What You Can Recycle at Home, Work or School 11:30-12:00 p.m. OK Conservation Commission/Blue Thumb: "A Tale of Two Streams" 12:00-12:30 p.m. USDA- "Unlock the Secrets of Soil Health" Lunch 1:00-1:30 p.m. Indoor Air Quality 1:30-2:00 p.m. OK Conservation Commission/Blue Thumb "A Tale of Two Streams" 2:00-2:30 p.m. Tribal Water Planning and the Effects of Climate Change on Our Resources 2:30-3:00 p.m. OU Climate Science presents "Water Quality" 3:00-3:30 p.m. Backyard Composting
Sunday	10:00-10:30 a.m. OU Climate Science presents "Ocean Acidification" 10:30-11:00 a.m. Recycling 101: How and What You Can Recycle at Home, Work or School 11:30-12:00 p.m. OK Conservation Commission/Blue Thumb: "A Tale of Two Streams" 12:00-12:30 p.m. USDA- "Unlock the Secrets of Soil Health" Lunch 1:00-1:30 p.m. Tire Recycling and Re purposing 1:30-2:00 p.m. OK Conservation Commission/Blue Thumb "A Tale of Two Streams" 2:00-2:30 p.m. Tribal Water Planning and the Effects of Climate Change on Our Resources 2:30-3:00 p.m. OU Climate Science presents "Water Quality" 3:00-3:30 p.m. Backyard Composting

Choctaw Nation Recycling Center

Durant: 3108 Enterprise Blvd. (580)920-0488

Poteau: 304 Kerr Avenue (918)649-0343

The Choctaw Nation operates two recycling centers with the ability to process all types of paper, cardboard, tin/steel cans, aluminum cans, plastic bags, plastics (1, 2, and 5), printer cartridges and Styrofoam. They are open to all residents and businesses in the communities from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

NOTES TO THE NATION

Youth of the Nation

Bailee Davis, YAB member, Latimer Chapter

The Choctaw Nation has taught me so much, from small things to big. I respect and enjoy learning about the culture. The Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board has been a tremendous blessing and honor. Some of the events they make happen are absolutely incredible.

Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board has taught me how to volunteer with purpose. In the past four years as a member, I have created multiple great memories; although, this year is the one I have enjoyed best.

Our group is more than just some group, it's like another family. They all make everyone feel comfortable. With the Youth Advisory Board, I found many role models. It doesn't get much better than the bonds I share with others from different countries all over Oklahoma.

Through the Youth advisory Board, I have become a more thoughtful and respectful person. One of the things it has taught me is to take the opportunity in each day to make a difference and that anything is truly possible. "Baby steps to big dreams." I catch myself doing friendly things I would not have done four years ago.

The Youth Advisory Board also has shown me how important child and family health are. The information on tobacco I was able to collect from our meetings helped me to preach it to my Papa,

'I'm very grateful to have learned the importance of community service and volunteering through the Youth Advisory Board at an early age.'

which made one of the biggest differences in his life, to not smoke cigarettes.

The Youth Advisory Board has affected my college plans by helping me interact with

other students easier. Also it has given me motivation to join different clubs and groups.

I'm very grateful to have learned the importance of community service and volunteering through the Youth Advisory Board at an early age, but will carry on with me for the rest of my life.

By encouraging other students in my community to join, our surrounding society is becoming better each day. That's exactly how I had heard about it and joined in the 8th grade -- from hearing friends talk about it. After sharing with my younger sister some of the events, she can't wait to join when she gets a little older.

Through the past few years, my priorities have straightend out a ton for the better because of the outstanding advisors.



Courtesy photo

Braelyn Berlowitz shows cattle in competition earlier this year.

Thankful 'til the cows come home

I am writing to thank the Choctaw Nation for the support I received at OYE (Oklahoma Youth Expo 2015). I appreciate the generosity this group always gives to students.

My family is very proud to be a part of the Choctaw tribe!

**Braelyn Berlowitz
8th grade
Cushing Middle School**

Help at a difficult time

We wish to thank the Choctaw Nation for the help on funeral expenses for our loved one.

It meant so very much to us. May God bless each and every one of you.

The family of James Ray Carter

Good experience at Talihina hospital

To the Biskinik, I would like to send a big thank you to the Choctaw Nation Hospital in Talihina. I had to come there to have my gall bladder removed. I was taken great care of.

I wish to thank Dr. Flannagan, my surgeon; Kelly, my sweet little nurse at the hospital; and Dr. Kirkpatrick and Debbie Bradshaw in Family Practice.

I am so blessed and proud to be Choctaw. Thanks again,

**Janet Moren
New Caney, Texas**

Appreciates refrigerator, cool air

I am writing this letter to say thank you for the refrigerator and air conditioner we have received from the tribe. Plus thank you for the gas you helped with.

When you just live from paycheck to paycheck, there is no way we could have gone out and purchased these ourselves. We really appreciate what the tribe does for us.

I am very proud to be a Native American. I also got my first tag.

God bless our tribe, our Chief Gary Batton, and councilmen.

Wanell Perry

Hospital comes through

Choctaw Nation, My wife Linda and I would like to say thank you to Mrs. Karen Massey at the Choctaw Nation Hospital in Talihina.

... We were having difficulty finding a podiatrist. She does not have a CDIB so the Choctaw Nation could not provide medical services. However, Mrs. Massey took the time to find a podiatrist in Poteau, set up an appointment, and helped us fill out the necessary paperwork.

We are so grateful for her patience and help. "Thank you, Karen, and God bless you."

Sincerely,

**Folsom A. White
Clayton**

6th grader gets nod for leadership trip

Miah Johnson would like to say "Yakoke Chito" to her family, friends and the Choctaw Nation for all of their support and encouragement.

Miah attends Talihina School District and was nominated by her 6th grade teacher Ms. Shirley Nelson to attend the Junior National Youth Leadership Conference this summer in Washington D.C.

Miah was selected and attended the event in the U.S. Capital June 28-July 3.

Miah was recognized as student of Scholastic Merit, and Maturing and Strength of Character.



Courtesy photo

Miah Johnson has a summer to remember.

**Gary Batton
Chief**

**Jack Austin Jr.
Assistant Chief**

The Official
Monthly Publication
of the

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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Lisa Reed, Executive Director
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The BISKINIK is printed each month as a service to Tribal Members. The BISKINIK reserves the right to edit submitted material which it finds inaccurate, profane, offensive or morally unacceptable. Copy may be edited for 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 or 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.

If you are receiving more than one BISKINIK at your home or if your address needs changed, we would appreciate hearing from you.

The BISKINIK is a nonprofit publication of the Choctaw Nation.

Circulation is monthly. Article deadline is the 10th of the month for the following month's edition.

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.



EVENTS

Celebration Singing

Aug. 29
Choctaw Nation Community Center
707 Bond Street
Crowder
5:30 p.m. – Fellowship Supper
7 p.m. – Singing
MC: Herb Billy
Sound provided by ReDefined
Hosted by: The Family and ReDefined
All are Welcome

First Nebraska Blake/Parnell Family Picnic

Aug. 29, 8 p.m. - 10 p.m.
Louisville State Park, Nebraska
for the family of
Luther Blake and Grace M. Parnell Blake (Choctaw)
Amy Blake or Parnell family members welcome
All descendants of Robert and Becky Hontubby Parnell (Choctaw) and Isaac and May Blake are welcome.
Contact Gene Blake at (402) 734-5903 for more information.

Williams Family Reunion

**Saturday Oct. 3
Stagrn "W" Ranch, east of Idabel**

All family and friends of the late
Dennis, Emma, Hampton and Francis Williams
are invited to spend the day

Come and enjoy food, fun and games. There will be live music performed by the local Dalton Band. Also storyteller Presley Byington will be sharing Trail of Tears history.

Please bring your favorite side dish, folding chair and your own beverage.

Pictures of late loved ones to share fond memories of will be a highlight during a special gathering time.

For more information and directions, contact Greyhawk or Donna Williams at (580) 212-3024.

Choctaw Asset Building

August Events:

- Free Webinar on Home Foreclosure Aug. 13 at 3:30 p.m.
- Financial Literacy Class on Aug. 22 in Oklahoma City

For information and to register for these events, go online to:

www.choctawcab.com

You are cordially invited to attend . . .

The Choctaw Nation

of Oklahoma's

Legal Assistance Events

Samantha Guinn, a licensed attorney, will be available to provide assistance with simple legal documents. This service is **FREE** to all Choctaw members. Examples of matters she may be able to assist with are:

- Family law (adoption, divorces, custody, child support)
- Contracts and leases
- Guardianships and modifications

Community Center Schedule

August

- 27th, Wright City
9 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Please contact the community center ahead of time to confirm the attorney will be there before traveling.
Currently the program is not providing representation in court or assisting in criminal matters.

Choctaw Asset Building August Events

FREE webinar on Home Foreclosure:
Aug 13, 3:30 p.m.

Financial Literacy Class:
Aug. 22 in OKC
For more information and to register, go to choctawcab.com.

Correction:

From the July 2015 edition of Biskinik, Page 16: An article about Choctaw artist Sarah Elisabeth Sawyer incorrectly states, "Her father was born in Mead, and her Choctaw heritage comes from her mother..."

It should have read, "Her grandfather was born in Mead, and her heritage comes through him to her mother, Lynda Kay Sawyer."

Biskinik regrets any inconvenience.

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation

September 2015

Durant - Mon., Wed. and Fri.

Broken Bow - Mon., Wed. and Fri.; Idabel by appt.

Phone: 580-326-8304; Fax: 580-326-0115 Email: ddavenport@choctawnation.com

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Broken Bow 8:00-4:30 Idabel by appt.	3	4	5
6	7	8	9 Antlers by appt.	10	11 Wright City by appt.	12
13	14 Durant 8:00-4:30	15 Talihina 10:00-2:00	16 McAlester 10:00-2:00 Stigler by appt.	17	18	19
20	21 Durant 8:00-4:30	22	23 Wilburton by appt.	24	25 Atoka by appt. Coalgate by appt.	26
27	28	29 Poteau 11:30-1:00	30 Crowder by appt.			

HEALTH

Choctaw Nation WIC celebrates World Breastfeeding Week

From Aug. 1 through Aug. 7 we acknowledge World Breastfeeding Week. Every year, Choctaw Nation WIC celebrates by honoring our breastfeeding mothers.

We are supporting a mother's choice to breastfeed her baby with confidence regardless of her location. Our world is a busy place and babies get hungry no matter where they are. Did you know that in Oklahoma, mothers have the right to breastfeed anywhere? So whether it is in the comfort of their own homes or out in public, breastfeeding mothers need support as they provide their infants with all the nutrients they need to grow and thrive. Each mother who chooses to breastfeed her baby can be proud that she is carrying on the traditions of our ancestors. As Choctaws, we honor those mothers who give life to our descendants by nourishing them with breast milk.

For more information about breastfeeding, call (800) 522-6170 extension 2507.

It was love at first sight ...

NURTURE
your baby
with your
LOVE, your
WARMTH,
your **MILK.**

Babies were born to breastfeed. Give your baby the only thing she needs: your breastmilk and nothing else.

For more information about how you can give your baby the milk made just for her, call 1-800-522-6170 ext 2507.

NURSERY NEWS

Kennedy Laine O'Neal

Kennedy Laine O'Neal was born July 23, 2015, at South Georgia Medical Center to Laine Jackson and Cale O'Neal.

She weighed 7 pounds, 2 ounces, and was 19 1/2 inches long.

Grandparents are Kyle and Cindy Leisey, Tiersa Stalvey, and Ryan and Blair O'Neal.



Parenting Classes



Sept. 8 - 24
Tuesdays & Thursdays
6pm - 8pm

Classes are open to the public and will be held at the **Choctaw Nation Development Center 2752 Big Lots Road Durant, OK 74701**

Food and child care will be provided each week. Certificates of completion will be given on Sept. 24.

Contact: Hayley McIntyre
Phone: 580.924.8280 x2551
Cell: 580.775.5523

Email: hmcintyre@choctawnation.com
Website: Choctawfamilyservices.com

Choctaw Nation Breastfeeding Classes

Come join us for a breastfeeding class in your area! Many mothers want to learn more about breastfeeding so that they can feel more confident in their decision to breastfeed. This breastfeeding class will address the following topics:

• Latch	• Positioning	• Breastfeeding resources
• Frequency of feedings	• Growth spurts	
Durant	Poteau	McAlester
October 14	September 2 • November 4	September 9 • November 18
1pm - 3 pm	9am - 11am	1pm - 3pm
Choctaw Nation WIC Office	Family Investment Center	Choctaw Nation Health Clinic
Talihina	Idabel	Downstairs Conference Room
October 7	October 21	
9am - 11am	9am - 11am	
Choctaw Nation DWC	Choctaw Nation Clinic Education Rm.	

Sponsored by Choctaw Nation WIC

For more information or for breastfeeding help, please call Erin James, IBCLC 1-800-522-6170 ext. 2507.

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Needs Choctaw Resource Parents

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is currently needing Choctaw resource families in Oklahoma. As a Choctaw resource family you will serve as a temporary parent to a Choctaw child or children placed in your home. Not only will you provide for their basic needs, food, shelter, clothing, and safety but also help to preserve the child's Choctaw Culture and Heritage. Our children grow by teaching and providing stable, loving homes for them. For more information about the requirements to become a Choctaw resource family, please contact our office at:

Choctaw Children and Family Services

P.O. Box 1210
Durant, Oklahoma 74702
Larry Behrens or Justin McDaniel
(800)522.6170 or (580)924.8280
lbehrens@choctawnation.com
jrmcdaniel@choctawnation.com



View our website at: www.choctawfamilyservices.com

BACK to SCHOOL

Gathering school supplies, filling the backpacks and picking out clothes for the first day of school are all very important BUT don't forget the value of health insurance for your kids.

Depending on the size of your family and household income, Native American kids could qualify for free or low-cost insurance coverage through Medicaid/SoonerCare.

Visit with a Benefits Coordinator when you are at one of the many Choctaw Nation health care facilities. The staff can quickly see what type of benefits you and your children would qualify for and can also assist you with enrollment.

Call Choctaw Nation at (800) 349-7026 and ask for a Benefits Coordinator for assistance.

Choctaw Nation WIC WOMEN, INFANTS and CHILDREN

Site	Hours	Days
Antlers (580) 298-3161	8:30-4:00	Every Tues.
Atoka (580) 889-5825	8:00-4:30	Every Mon., Wed., Thur., & Fri.
Bethel (580) 241-5458	8:30-4:00	1st Tues.
Boswell (580) 380-5264	8:30-4:00	Every Fri.
Broken Bow (580) 584-2746	8:00-4:30	Daily, except 1st Tues. & 2nd Thurs
Coalgate (580) 927-3641	8:00-4:30	Every Wed.
Durant (580) 924-8280 x 2257	8:00-4:30	Daily
Hugo (580) 326-5404	8:00-4:30	Daily
Idabel (580) 286-2510	8:00-4:30	Mon., Thur., & Fri.
McAlester (918) 423-6335	8:00-4:30	Daily
Poteau (918) 647-4585	8:00-4:30	Daily
Smithville (580) 244-3289	8:30-4:00	2nd Thur.
Spiro (918) 962-3832	8:00-4:30	Every Wed.-Fri.
Stigler (918) 967-4211	8:30-4:00	Every Mon.-Wed.
Talihina (918) 567-7000 x 6792	8:00-4:30	Mon., Tues., Wed., & Fri.
Wilburton (918) 465-5641	8:30-4:00	Every Thur.

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

WAREHOUSES & MARKETS
Antlers: 306 S.W. "O" St., (580) 298-6443
Durant: 2352 Big Lots Pkwy, (580) 924-7773
McAlester: 1212 S. Main St., (918) 420-5716
Poteau: 100 Kerr Ave, (918) 649-0431

FOOD DISTRIBUTION SITES
Bethel: Choctaw Community Center
Broken Bow: Choctaw Community Center
Idabel: Choctaw Community Center
Smithville: Choctaw Community Center

The U.S. Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.) If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). For any other information dealing with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) issues, persons should either contact the USDA SNAP Hotline Number at (800) 221-5689, which is also in Spanish or call the State Information/Hotline Numbers (click the link for a listing of hotline numbers by State); found online at http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/contact_info/hotlines.htm.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

***** HOURS *****
 Open 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday;
 10:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Thursday

ANTLERS
 Market open weekdays September 1-30, except for:
September 2: Idabel 9-11:30 a.m.; Broken Bow 1-3:30 p.m. (market open)
September 9: Bethel 9-10:30; Smithville 12-2 (market open)
Closed: September 7 for tribal holiday and 29 & 30 for inventory
Cooking with Carmen: September 16, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

DURANT
 Market open weekdays September 1-30, except for:
Closed: September 7 for tribal holiday and 29 & 30 for inventory
Cooking with Carmen: September 2, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

MCALESTER
 Market open weekdays September 1-30, except for:
Closed: September 7 for tribal holiday and 29 & 30 for inventory
Cooking with Carmen: September 18, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

POTEAU
 Market open weekdays September 1-30, except for:
Closed: September 7 for tribal holiday and 29 & 30 for inventory
Cooking with Carmen: September 10, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

PEOPLE YOU KNOW



Cawthon earns diploma, pursues musical aspirations

Allison Cawthon graduated from Plano West Senior High School in Plano, Texas last June and now, with the help of the Choctaw Nation, intends to continue her academic journey at one of the best music schools in the world: the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami.

She earned a 2030 on the SAT, a 3.95 GPA, and placed in the top 25% in her class upon graduation at a school in the top 1% in the U.S. She also became a member of the National Honor Society, French National Honor Society, and was a Ventures Scholar.

"Some people are born to invent; some people are born to play sports; I was born to inspire the world through music," Cawthon said.

Her voice is her main instrument, but Cawthon said she also picked up acoustic guitar, electric guitar, bass guitar, and keyboard in her efforts to inspire emotion in others.

At age 18, she is following the dream she has had since childhood, and according to Cawthon, her parents have been supportive from the beginning.

"Most parents, if they heard that their child wanted to pursue music as their career, would force their child to choose a more 'practical' career path," she said. "But my parents have always supported my dreams."

Cawthon's parents, Kevin and Mary Cawthon, taught her happiness comes from doing what you love and not from money. To help her on her path, they flew with her across the United States to audition at the best music schools to give her the best opportunities possible.

In the end, Cawthon said, she aims to earn a Ph.D. and teach at the collegiate level.

A combination of Cawthon's upbringing, her own strong drive, and a few nudges from the Choctaw Nation are some of the things Cawthon gives credit to in her success.

In particular, she remembers the Ivy League and Friends conference put on by the Nation, which she said allowed her to meet with many colleges that she had never before considered. She also recalled the Choctaw-funded Princeton Review SAT Prep Course, which she said allowed her to score so well on the test, helping her get accepted to her ideal college.

"I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation for the amazing support I received," Cawthon said. "I feel so proud of my heritage, and I am so happy that Native Americans today have the opportunity to go to college and be successful."



O'Brien named new NAGPRA manager

The National Park Service selected Choctaw Melanie O'Brien to manage the National Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) program; a program meant to return ancestral remains and cultural objects to Native American tribes.

As the manager of the National NAGPRA Program, O'Brien will serve as the Designated Federal Officer to the NAGPRA Review Committee, assist museums and Federal agencies, and award grants.

"I'm excited to lead the National NAGPRA Program and hope to raise the level of productive discourse about NAGPRA and to support the many people who are working so diligently to implement the letter and the spirit of the law," said O'Brien.



Choctaw women plant honorary tree

The women of Chahta Ohoyo Tikba Hikia (Choctaw Women Leaders) planted an ornamental plum tree in Broken Bow in memory of fellow member, Erica Martinez, who passed away this year.

Group members included (left to right) Vicki Perez with her granddaughter, Sierra, Taylor Lewis, Rehauna Williams, Marie Battiest, Kimberly Allen, Cassandra Davis, Paula Griffith, and Melissa Cress.

Chahta Ohoyo Tikba Hikia is an organization with the Choctaw Nation, a division of the Choctaw Nation Outreach Services, in McCurtain County working to empower Choctaw women. To join, contact Melissa Cress at mcress@choctawnation.com

Allen to attend University at Hawaii as Air Force Reserve Officer



Aaron Allen received an Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) scholarship to the University of Hawaii.

Scholarships are awarded on a merit system in areas such as academic achievement, extra curricular activities, physical fitness, specific performance or accomplishment, leadership abilities, and personal interviews.

Upon graduation and completion of the ROTC

program, Allen will receive a bachelor's degree and a commission as a second lieutenant in the Air Force.

Allen is the son of Indira Allen, Brenda Allen, and Scott Allen. He is the grandson of Jerry Allen.

He is a 2015 graduate of Calloway County High School, in Murray, Kentucky.



Masopust wins Rendezvous contest

David Masopust of Oklahoma City won first prize for most authentic camp at the Ft. Washita Rendezvous. His camp portrayed life for a traditional Choctaw fur trapper and trader in the early 1800's. Masopust researched and designed his clothing, using paintings of early Choctaws. Masopust was awarded the \$250 first prize at an all camp gathering of Rendezvous participants, after judging by Oklahoma Historical Society officials.



Shin siblings attend Navy Reserves ceremony

Brother and sister Jacob and Narah Shin attended the Centennial Celebration of the Navy Reserves ceremony that was held at Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Michigan.

Narah represented the future Navy Sailor at the cake cutting ceremony along with the youngest sailor present, a WWII veteran, and Senator Gary Peters.

Pictured with Jacob and Narah are commanding officers of the Tomcat Squadron Steven and Sandra Ferrell, and Senator Gary Peters.



Maturino celebrates 65th birthday

Lena Maturino, of Durant, celebrated her 65th birthday on Aug. 3 with family and friends.

Maturino's parents are the late Rev. Daniel and Catherine Sexton of Caney.

She has two daughters, Tina and husband Philip Reitz, and Victoria Maturino, all of Joplin. She has a granddaughter named Erika Torres and grandson named Baby Philip Reitz.

Maturino is a full-blood Choctaw and said she enjoys her time working for the Choctaw Nation.

She is a member of the Sulpher Springs United Methodist Church in Bennington.

Rudie earns dual degrees

Katherine Rudie earned dual degrees from Central Washington University.

Her degrees were a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Educations, and a Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Education.

Katherine is the daughter of Johnnie Palty from Kiowa.



Anderson remembers WWII

Zedrec Bennie (ZB) Anderson is a 94-year-old WWII veteran who spent two years and three months in Germany, England, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland--among other locations--serving his country.

He finished out the war over seas and recalls his time spent repairing fighter planes as an Army Air Force Engineer with the 101 and 82 Airborne. Anderson also remembers the struggles of D-Day and the following days.

Anderson was born in Broken Bow, where he moved back to live in retirement. He can be found at the local Choctaw community meetings and would openly share his stories with those interested.

Mitchell celebrates 100th birthday



Bertie Mitchell celebrated her 100th birthday with family and close friends on Aug. 8 in Oklahoma City in the home of her daughter, Ramona Etris.

Mitchell was born in Lona Valley near Kinta, Okla.

Many members of her family gathered to celebrate, including: granddaughter Karen, grandsons Darrell and Davis, great-grandson Levi, great-granddaughters

Amanda and Kristen, and five great-great grandchildren Riley, Logan, Abbey, Alyseca, and Brycen. All of her family wished her a happy birthday.



Hearon appreciates wisdom blanket

Jim Hearon and his family, from Texas, wrote into the Choctaw Nation to offer appreciation for the wisdom blanket Jim recently received in the mail.

"The wisdom will be passed down to the next four generations of Choctaws," the family said.

Pictured above are (l-r): great-granddaughter Cory Pottberg, grandson Bobby Pottberg, Jim Hearon, daughter Jimmie Pottberg, and being held are great-great-granddaughter twins Ribynn and Reagan.

Britton has first birthday with family



Lucie Elizabeth Britton celebrated her first birthday in August with her mother Allison Britton and father Stephen Britton.

The family themed Britton's party around "ONEd-er woman" on Aug. 5.

Her mother said she enjoys walking, talking, and playing with her cousins.

Britton's grandparents Billy and Donnett Smith of Denison, Texas, and Phil and LaFonda Britton of Duncan all wish her well.



Casey/Ward family holds reunion in Spiro at Choctaw Community Center

The Casey/ Ward Family held a reunion July 18 at the Choctaw Community Center in Spiro. The family included:

(Top row, left to right) Laura Rodgers, Loretta and Wally Thames, Richard McIntosh, Bob and Anna Denny, Charlene (Denny) Strong, Melvin Reynolds, John Casey, Patrick McClelland, Michael Vickers, and Ron McClelland.

(Middle row) Bryan and Sarah Lechner, with daughter Hazel, Avery Howington, Sarah Lindsey, Shlaine Locust, Kenneth Conrad, Sada Vickers, and Brenda McClelland.

(Bottom row) Laiklynn Cullipher, Raymond Lester, Sue (Collins) Giampietro, Geneva Neal, Bettie Reynolds, Sue Conrad, and Garlena Vickers.

Geneva, Raymond, Shlaine, Sarah and Laiklynn represented five generations present at this reunion.

The family expressed appreciation to John Casey for all his work at the Choctaw Community Center in preparation for this event.

OBITUARIES

Robin Dell Neason Hunter Caige Neason

Robin Dell Neason, 44, and son Hunter Caige Neason, 12, of Thornton, Texas, passed away Oct. 4, 2011 in Talihina.

Robin was born April 12, 1967 in Fort Worth, Texas to Bobby Frank Emmert and Marcie Emmert Merritt. She was a 1986 graduate of Mexia (Texas) High School. Robin enjoyed family gatherings and loved the outdoors, especially swimming and skiing. She was a devoted and loving mother, daughter and sister. Robin cherished her sons.

She is survived by her son, Frank Dillon Barron; father, Bobby Frank Emmert of Talihina; mother, Marcie Emmert Merritt of Hubbard, Texas; sister, Lisa Rittenbaugh and husband, Joe of Mt. Calm, Texas; nephew, Blake Rittenbaugh; and niece, Jessica Rittenbaugh.

Hunter Caige Neason was born Aug. 13, 1999 in Waco, Texas, to Joe Wayne Neason, Jr., and Robin Dell Neason. Hunter was a sixth-grade student at Enge-Washington Intermediate School in Groesbeck, Texas.

He was preceded in death by his grandmother, Jean Neason.

Hunter is survived by his father, Joe Wayne Neason, Jr., of Thornton, Texas; brother, Frank Dillon Barron; grandfathers, Joe W. Neason, Sr. of Thornton, Texas and Bobby Frank Emmert of Talihina; grandmother, Marcie Emmert Merritt of Hubbard, Texas; aunt, Lisa Rittenbaugh and husband Joe of Mt. Calm, Texas; uncle, Warren Neason of Thornton, Texas; numerous aunts and uncles in Talihina: John and Janie Emmert, Marrk and Florene Emmert and Patti Atwood; and a number of cousins and other relatives.

Interment was in the Thornton Cemetery.

Ronald Floyd McIntosh

Ronald Floyd McIntosh, 74, passed away on Sept. 1, 2014, in San Luis Obispo, California, surrounded by family.

Ron was born Aug. 13, 1940 in Blanchard, to Floyd and Charlene McIntosh, the oldest of three sons. His family moved to Visalia, California, in 1942. He graduated from Redwood High School in 1958. He then joined the U.S. Navy where he spent the next four years.

He then attended College of the Sequoias and graduated while he was working as an appraiser for Tulare County Assessor's Office. It was while working for the assessor's office that he met his wife, Carolyn. They were married in February 1970.

Ron began his career in real estate when he formed a successful partnership with Don and Bob Buhl. He then became a general contractor and built custom homes in Visalia and Morro Bay. Ron and Carolyn moved to Morro Bay 24 years ago, where he continued building custom homes. Ron enjoyed classic cars and he renovated Ocean View Garage where he spent many hours enjoying his love of cars. Ron was also instrumental in starting the Morro Bay Car Show. Ron belonged to the Visalia Downtown Rotary Club and the Morro Bay Rotary. He received the Paul Harris award.

Ron is survived by his wife of 44 years, Carolyn; his son, Ronald of Morro Bay, California; his daughters, Laura of Visalia, California, and Deborah of Boone, Iowa; his grandchildren, Luke, Caroline, Carson, Matthew and Reid; his brothers, Gary and Holden both of Visalia, California; and many nieces and nephews who were a big part of his life.

George J. Pezzolo

George J. Pezzolo passed away on May 29, 2015 of natural causes at his residence in San Jose, California. He was born Feb. 17, 1951.

George was a lifelong area resident of San Jose and Santa Clara. He worked as an electronic assembler in Silicon Valley during his career, enjoyed playing and listening to popular music of his era, and was an avid fan of the Worldwide Wrestling.

He was deeply devoted to his family and friends, and was a kind and considerate soul who always kept family first and spent much of his life in service of others. George touched many lives with his genuine warmth and unique ability to remember each and every family member and friend's life events with special mention and consideration. He had a unique talent for making a lasting impression upon everyone he came in contact with.

He is survived by his sisters, Christal Saint-Denis, Joanne Cluff; step-sisters, Deborah Wallace and Birdy Evans; aunts, Norma McKay and Kay Pezzolo; numerous cousins, nieces, nephews, great-nieces, and great-nephews.

He was preceded in death by grandparents, Joseph and Mary Pezzolo; his parents, George and Judy Pezzolo; and step-mother, Diane Pezzolo.

Flora Cusher

Flora Cusher, 92, of Smithville, passed away June 6, 2015, in Mena, Arkansas. She was born July 26, 1922, in Smithville, the daughter of Timothy C. and Ennis (Impulambi) Samuels.

Flora loved cooking, going to singings, quilting, and gardening. She loved her family and spending time with her grandchildren. She was a member of the Big Lick Presbyterian Church in Smithville.

Flora leaves to cherish her memory her son, Corneal "Con" Cusher, and wife, Darlene, of Smithville; sisters, Ruby Samuels and Ruth Ann Samuels-Hotella, both of Poteau; three grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; and a host of nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Edd Cusher; Miriam Samuels; Israel Samuels; Evelyn Samuels-Belvin, Sam Lee Samuels; and Mary Jayne Samuels-Harjo.

Interment was at Smithville Cemetery.



Joe Teague

Joe Teague 72, of Huntsville, Texas, passed away March 30, 2015 in Conroe, Texas. He was born Sept. 16, 1942 in Mineral Wells, Texas. He was a member of the Choctaw tribe and very proud of his heritage.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Calvin George Teague and Octavia Ward Teague, and siblings, James Milton Teague, Jasper Calvin Teague, Cecil Teague, Marshall Teague, Betty Jalufka, Charles Teague, Bennie Lee Teague, Genelle Teague, Dottie Marchand and Daniel Teague.

He is survived by wife, Peggy R. Teague; and children, Sheila Quinn and Richard, Clifton and Jacque, and Casey Daniel and Jamie; also grandchildren, Kale Quinn, Taryn Quinn, Logan Teague and Sebastian Teague; sister, Mary Alice Hagan with husband Bud of Yoakum, Texas; brother, David Teague with wife Shirley of Bandera, Texas.

After his retirement from Pepsi Cola in Conroe, Texas, he continued to work on his farm raising cattle and exotic animals.

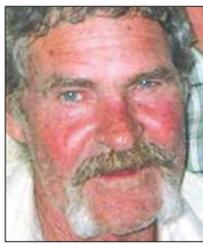
Interment was at Mayes Addition of the Oakwood Cemetery in Huntsville, Texas. Memorial condolences for the family may be sent to www.shmfh.com.

Jeneva Francis Travis-Kennedy

Jeneva Francis Travis-Kennedy, 88, of Bremerton, Washington, passed away on July 30, 2013 in Gig Harbor, Washington.

Jeneva was born Oct. 12, 1924 in Purcell to Edna Mae Walker Travis and Thomas Christopher Travis. The family moved to Bremerton, Washington, in 1938. They also spent many years in Kodiak, Alaska.

Lewis Funeral Chapel, Bremerton, Washington, in charge of arrangements.



Michael Kent Gray

Michael Kent Gray, 74, passed away at his home in Luella, Texas, on May 23, 2015.

Michael was born June 12, 1940 in Norman. He was born to W.T. Cokerell and Carolyn Sue Adkins. He was adopted by James Gray.

He is preceded by his mother, father and sister Tommye; and son, Dilbert Gray.

He is survived by his wife of 28 years, Linda Diane Gray of Sherman, Texas; son, Shawn Gray; daughter-in-law, Jill Gray; grandson, Jenkins Gray of Norman; daughter, Sumere Stevenson; son-in-law, Vince Stevenson; grandson, Vince Jr., Jared; granddaughter, Alyssa; and great-grandson, Grayson Michael Stevenson of Houston; Richard Johnson; daughter-in-law, Stephanie Johnson; granddaughter, Josephine Johnson of Erfurt, Germany; daughter, Heather Johnson and Melanie Hughes of Grapevine, Texas.

Michael served in the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force. He was a graduate from Oklahoma University. He retired as an International Customs Inspector after 30 years of service. Michael was of Indian blood and a member of the Choctaw tribe.

Michael was a loving, kind, compassionate and giving person. He looked forward to doing animal rescue with his loving wife and always was thinking of others, even the four-legged kind. He enjoyed fishing and was a proud OU Sooner fan until the day he died. He will be sadly missed by everyone that knew him.

Interment was at Dallas/Fort Worth National Cemetery.

Calvin Coolidge Wilson

Calvin Coolidge Wilson ("Chiefie"), 60, passed away on Feb. 22, 2015, in Carmichael, California.

He was born Aug. 23, 1955, to Bertha Jane and Calvin Coolidge Wilson in Talihina.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Barbara Ann Wilson; six children, Angela Youngdale with husband Brian, Adrienne Goodin with husband Jamie, Aimee Falk with husband Steve, Amanda Acuna with husband Bryan, Antoinette Wilson, and George Wilson; 12 grandchildren, Raymond, Austin, Shaylah, Jeremiah, Christian, Jaidyn, Steven, Aiden, Calvin, Alijah, Julian, and Jaxon; brother Anthony Wilson with wife Melvis. He was uncle to many nieces and nephews.

Chiefie was the third child born to Bertha and Calvin Wilson. He was preceded in death by both parents; brother, Jonathon Wilson; and sister, Linda Wilson.

Chiefie moved to San Francisco at the age of eight. There, at the age of 13, he met the love of his life at the Native American Indian Center. They were married in Reno, Nevada, on Oct. 5, 1972. Together they created their beautiful family, which he loved more than life itself.

His hobbies were singing, fishing, beading, telling tall tales, drawing, collecting coins and stamps, and most of all making people laugh.

He loved his "Babs" (Barbara), Elvis, the Three Stooges, and his record collection.



Robin Shaune Haiakanubbi

Robin Shaune Haiakanubbi was born on June 21, 1986 in Idabel to Lee Wilson and Cynthia Haiakanubbi and passed from this life on May 30, 2015 in Durant at the age of 28.

Robin graduated from Idabel High School and worked for Big Lots Distribution Center in Durant. He was a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. He was of the Baptist faith and he enjoyed playing video games and spending time with family and friends.

Robin was preceded in death by grandmother, Doris Kaniatobe; great-grandmother, Wilcey Kaniatobe; grandmother, Ada Wilson and cousin, Kathlyn Lewis.

Robin is survived by his mother, Cynthia Haiakanubbi of Durant; father, Lee Wilson of Hugo; sisters, Keri Lynn Wilson, Jennifer Elaine Wilson and Erica Corrine Wilson; girlfriend, Kendra Baker; aunts and uncles, Regina Haiakanubbi, Lewis Haiakanubbi and wife Lawanna, Jeremy Haiakanubbi and wife Valerie, Willard Wilson and wife Beverly, Marilyn Wilson, Debbie Smith, Viola Groves and Carol Ann Kaniatobe; and numerous extended family and friends. Arrangements are under the direction of Brown's Funeral Service, Durant.



Darryl Scott Cook

Darryl Scott Cook went to be with our Lord on June 6, 2015 at the age of 51. He was born on April 22, 1964 in San Antonio, Texas, to Leonard and Linda Cook. He is survived by his father, Leonard Clay Cook Jr., (Choctaw) and his step-mother; Nanette Chopin Cook; his sister, Melissa (Cook) Lane; maternal grandmother, Edith Beard and numerous cousins.

He was preceded in death by his paternal grandmother, Clara June Barton Cook (a Choctaw) and grandfather, Leonard Clay Cook Sr., and his mother, Linda E. Baird.

He left this world and his family behind at an early age. Darryl loved to joke and laugh and was a "hoot" to be around. He always had a story to tell about things he had experienced in life. He was a very compassionate man who worked for Adult Day Care Centers where he loved the individuals who came to spend the day. He was a seventh generation grandson of Moshulatubbe, one of the original Choctaw chiefs in the early 1800's. He was a sixth generation grandson of Robert Clay Freeny (1812) and Sarah Freeny (Moshulatubbe's granddaughter) who came from Mississippi during the movement of the Five Civilized Tribes to Oklahoma. When he was younger, he moved to Bromide, Oklahoma in the 1980's to live with his grandmother Clara June Barton Cook's sister Bobbie. He will be missed by all that knew him. Darryl was one of a kind person.

Robert Brandon

Robert Brandon, 83, of Belleville, Michigan, died June 9, 2015. Robert was born Feb. 24, 1932 in Paris, Texas to Thomas Brandon and Ruth May (Billy) Brandon.

Robert was a very proud member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. He was a member of the 110 IBEW Electricians Union for over 40 years. Robert was a loving husband to the late Loretta and proud father of Steve Brandon (wife Virginia) of Edna, Texas. Robert has four loving step-children of Michigan: Donald Coleman, Brenda Gonnson with husband Chris, David Tarrow with wife Sue, and Linda Shaw with husband Glenn. He is also survived by four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Contributions may be made to Paradise Animal Rescue, Columbiaville, Michigan. Private family services will be held at a later date.

Christola 'Christie' Scott

Christola "Christie" Scott, 53, of Caddo, passed away on June 24, 2015 at Caddo.

Christi was born Jan. 12, 1962, to Pleas and Sherry Jean (Jeter) Scott, at Fort Worth, Texas. She was a housekeeper. Christi went to Stoneburg Baptist Church. She enjoyed fishing, her grandchildren, gardening, and she was a good cook.

She is survived by sons, Ryan Sessom of San Angelo, Texas and Josh Tate of Bowie, Texas; grandson, Bryce Tate of Bowie, Texas; granddaughter, Claire Sessom of San Angelo, Texas; sisters, Debi Scott of Caney and BJ Mashburn of Luther; brothers, Dennis Scott of Caney and Mickey Scott with wife Karen of Bowie, Texas; along with numerous nieces and nephews.

Christi was preceded in death by her parents, Pleas and Sherry Jean (Jeter) Scott; and a sister, Teresa Scott Miller.

Gary Nail

Gary Nail, born Sept. 5, 1946, passed away July 17, 2015 in Shawnee.

He was preceded in death by his parents, three brothers and one sister.

He is survived by brothers, Charles Nail, Bobby Nail and Clifford Nail; and many other family and friends.

As per Gary's request, there will be no service.

Victor Eugene Gilmore

Victor Eugene Gilmore, a resident of Ada, passed from this life in Ada on June 4, 2015 at the age of 59. He was born in Talihina to Even and Rosa (Taylor) Gilmore on Oct. 30, 1955.

Victor enjoyed being outdoors, camping, fishing or playing softball. He also liked playing dominoes, cards and horseshoes.

Gilmore is survived by his mother, Rosa Gilmore of Calera; daughter, Kandyse Denyse Gilmore of Lawton; son, Nicholas Fred Gilmore of Ada; sister, Debbie J. Gilmore of Durant; brother, Kenneth Lee Gilmore of Calera; six grandchildren; girlfriend, Cathy Belvins; and also survived by numerous nieces and nephews.

Gilmore was preceded in death by his father, Even Gilmore; baby brother, Marlon Wayne Gilmore; and a baby grandson.

Obituary Policy

Obituary submissions are for Choctaw tribal members and are free of charge. The Biskinik will only accept obituary notices from funeral homes or other official sources. Family members/individuals may still submit funeral notices as long as the notice is from the funeral home or printed in their local newspapers 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. Notices may be edited for space limitations.

Send official obituary notices to:
Biskinik
PO Box 1210
Durant OK 74702
email: biskinik@choctawnation.com

OBITUARIES

Nova Arnold

Nova Arnold, 91, of Greenville passed away on June 12, 2015. She was born on Feb. 12, 1924, to Rufus Edwards and Melvina Durant-Forbes Edwards in Antlers.

Nova was a tribal member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and attended Shady Grove Baptist Church and Calvary Chapel of Fate. She loved working crossword puzzles, quilting, crochet, watching the Lifetime Channel and she loved her animals.

Nova is survived by her sons, Howard and Jim; daughters, Robin Masterson and husband Larry, Shirley Howell, Tina Turner and husband Gary; grandchildren, Carei Bobbitt, Ryan Pfuhl, Bryan Arnold, Magen Autwell, Roger (Jess) Mercado, Ronnie Pfuhl, Shada Hall, Robin Beckett, Sunni Arnold, Erin Oubre, Alissa Turner, John O'Neill and Kristen Turner; sister, Mary Gibson; 27 great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband, John L. Arnold; her parents; brother, Henry; sisters, Lillian, Kathleen, Ethel and Rae; and son, John D. Arnold.

Johnny Lee Tonihka

Johnny Lee Tonihka passed from this life on June 15, 2015 in Oklahoma City at the age of 69 years and 17 days. Johnny was born on May 29, 1946 in Talihina to Ennie Tonihka. Johnny married Barbara Sue Shomo Feb. 11, 1971 in Idabel.

Johnny attended Jones Academy in Hartshorne and Okmulgee Tech and worked as a watch repairman. He proudly served his country in the U. S. Army from March 18, 1966 until his honorable discharge in Feb. 28, 1968. He and his family moved to Durant 35 years ago from Norman and he was a member of the Grace Indian Baptist Church and a proud member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and Choctaw Honor Guard. Johnny was full of life and his greatest joy in life was his family and friends. He was an avid OU and New England Patriots fan and enjoyed playing cards. He loved to joke and laugh and made friends wherever he went. He was a caring father and grandfather and always cheered on his children and grandchildren in their sports.

Johnny was preceded in death by his parents, Ennie and Lee Cusher; brothers, Kenneth Ray Tonihka, Alfred G. Cusher and Lee Cusher Jr.; nephew, Michael D. Cusher; nieces, Neko Dodson and Taloa Noley and brother-in-law, Ricky Smithson.

Johnny leaves to cherish in memory, his wife, Barbara Tonihka of Broken Bow; children, Adrienne Gregory and husband David of Durant, Annette Choate and husband Russell of Broken Bow, Johnny Tonihka Jr. and wife Kayla of Davis and Jeremy (Bear) Tonihka of Davis; grandchildren, Ashlyn Byington and Brooklyn Choate; brothers, Elias Pete Cusher of Broken Bow and Eddie Cusher of McAlester; sisters, Ada Smithson of Dallas, Myrtle Williston of Idabel, Sharon Noley of Norman, Sue Dodson of Broken Bow, and Geirgie Griffin of Arkansas; and a host of nieces, nephews, other family and friends.

Interment was in Denison Cemetery in Idabel. Arrangements are under the direction of Brown's Funeral Service, Durant.

Alaric Chayton Hall

Alaric Chayton Hall passed away on June 17, 2015, from complications of cancer. He was a very smart boy who had a heart for his family as well as God. Alaric was no stranger to illness. When he was two years old he was diagnosed with a very rare type of kidney cancer. He completed chemotherapy and radiation and was in remission for years. Alaric spent his life making people laugh, smile, and just have fun.

Alaric is the son of Joseph Hall and Lisa Clark. He was born on Oct. 1, 2004, at Fort Sill. His smile and addictive personality will be missed most of all. Alaric leaves behind several siblings to include, Brittani, Austin-Lee, Caitlin, Lily and Brenna Hall. He also leaves behind his grandpa, Jesse A. Hall; his step-mother, Jennifer L. Hall; his great-grandmother, Mary Catherine Guice of Boswell; his aunt, Theresa and aunt, Carla of Soper; his uncle, Christopher in Germany; along with several cousins and loving family members.

He joins his grandmother, Anna L. Hall as well as his great-grandparents.

A celebration of a his life was held at the Hall Family Homestead on Stagecoach Road in Howe, Oklahoma, on July 4 to remember his life and how he loved everyone.

Donald Ray Burris

Donald Ray Burris, 77, of Muskogee, passed away June 22, 2015. He was born Jan. 10, 1938 to John and Bernice Burris in Claremore. He attended Jones Academy in Hartshorne. Joe, as he was known to everyone that knew him, served in the National Guard for about five years.

He was a roofer (also known as a "rainwater control technician") for Ed Marshall Roofing Co. of Leonard for several years and then Brown Root Construction Co. in Houston for six to eight years. He then worked with his brother Charles until his retirement in 2003.

Joe loved riding horses, fishing and moonshine. One of his most favorite things to do was sitting under a shade tree talking to his family and his friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, John and Bernice (Carney) Burris; three brothers, Huck, Kirk, and Forbus; two sisters, Christine Boone and Shirley Holt.

Joe is survived by his daughter, Deana Stovall and husband Bill of Hartshorne; brothers, T.J. "Jack" Burris of Grants Pass, Oregon, "Blue" James Burris and wife Jeannie of Grants Pass, Oregon, and Charles "Bob" Burris of Haskell; sisters, Melba Vaughan of Searcy, Arkansas, and Helen Willis of Temple, Texas; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins and other family members and friends.



Loretta Florence Burris Wilson

Loretta Florence Burris (Bee) Wilson was born Nov. 8, 1925 in Blanchard, to Mabel and Sid Burris. She was the oldest of 10 children. She passed away peacefully June 26, 2015 in Grace Living Center, Norman.

She was married to Doyce Wayne Wilson for almost 65 years before he died Dec. 26, 2006.

They had two children, Larry Wilson and wife Twyla of Norfolk, Va., and Teresa Wilson of Seattle; their grandchildren are Lee Anne Hite, Glen Wilson, and Carlee Wilson; and great-grandchildren Nicole Hite and Dylan Wilson.

Loretta (Sister B) is survived by siblings, Wanda Burris Witt, Burnett Burris and wife Bonnie, Karen Burris McConnell and husband Jimmy, Perry Burris, Terry Burris and wife Diana, Judy Burris Simms and husband Charlie, Jennifer Burris Kniss; and many nieces and nephews.

Preceding her in death were her parents; husband, Doyce Wilson; brother, Sgt. 1st Class Tony K. Burris; and sister, Joyce Joan Burris Thomson.

The Burris family has always been close and takes great pride in supporting one another at all times. Loretta always loved her brothers and sisters and enjoyed their love in return. She enjoyed everyone's visits and was appreciative of the care given by her brothers and sisters. She was especially fond of the brother she helped raise, Terry Doyce. She would call him anytime day or night and get a response. Murlene and Gerald Jobe were particularly close and valued friends.

Loretta was a charter member of the Tony K. Burris Post 3608 Ladies Auxiliary in Blanchard and a member of the Eastern Star.

Loretta, a Choctaw, was a member of the Southern Hills Baptist Church, a wonderful mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and had many close friends. We will miss her dearly.

Burial was at Rest-Haven Cemetery, 500 SW 104th Street in Oklahoma City.

Ellen Moslene Sockey Beathard

Ellen Moslene Sockey Beathard, 86, of Bokoshe, passed away Tuesday, June 23, 2015 in Fort Smith, Arkansas. Ellen, known to everyone as "Granny Een" was born Nov. 6, 1928 in Bokoshe, to Edward and Emiline Jackson Sockey. Ellen used to sing in a gospel quartet "The Smiling Four," loved to crochet, eat chicken and dressing and chicken and dumplings. She quilted and loved to work in the yard with her flowers. But most of all she loved to have her family around her while watching the kids play.

She was preceded in death by her parents; daughter, Alma Lawanda Sutton; grandson, Gary Lynn Beathard II; sister, Marjorie Katherine "Tish" Atkinson; brothers, Wyland Dean, Eddie Joe and Charles "Tiny" Sockey; adopted daughter/niece, Leisa Atkinson.

Survivors include her son, Gary Lynn Beathard and wife, Kay, of Eufaula; daughter, Marilyn Lou Beathard Culwell and husband, Larry, of Bokoshe; three grandchildren, Stacy Culwell Hall and husband, J.J., of Park Hill, John Culwell and wife, Autumn, of McCurtain, Keith Beathard and Sharon Kay Tackett of Bokoshe; 11 great-grandchildren, Landon, JoHanna and Alexa Beathard and Emma Attig all of Fletcher; Jagger and Caz Hall of Park Hill; Stone Beathard of Wister, John Daniel Culwell of Bokoshe, Ali Culwell, Trace and Makenna Murdock all of McCurtain; and one great-granddaughter on the way; nephews, Ty and Clint Statham; nieces, Janet Kay Sockey Taylor, Phyllis Ann Sockey Hogan; other relatives, loved ones and friends.

Interment was in Old Bokoshe Cemetery.

Bessie Lucillie Dillard

Bessie Lucillie Dillard, 77, of Tuskahoma, passed away May 17, 2015. She was born Oct. 21, 1938 in Bokchito, to Inez and Lynch Tyson.

She graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School in Los Angeles in 1956. Bessie graduated from nursing school later on in life and from that point she dedicated her life to helping others and showing her love for all. What Bessie did for one she did for all. Mom will be missed but knowing where she is wipes all the tears away.

She is survived by sons, Alford Lennox of Phoenix, Ruben, Frank; brothers, Joe and Howard Tyson; sister, Vercie Traylor; and a host of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Interment was at Cole Spur Cemetery under the direction of Burkhart Funeral Service of Clayton.

Ruth Ann (Bully) Polk

Ruth Ann (Bully) Polk, a proud member of the Choctaw Nation, passed from this life into the arms of her Lord and Savior in Durant, on June 30, 2015 at the age of 74. She was born in Bennington to Anderson and Elizabeth (Cole) Bully on July 16, 1940. Ruth Ann Bully married Hampton Polk in Durant on March 27, 1965.

Ruth worked for the Choctaw Nation for about 20 years in the mail crew. Ruth was a faithful, active member of the Sulphur Springs Methodist Church in Bennington. She enjoyed working on her arts and crafts projects, and especially cooking for her friends and family. Ruth loved and cherished her family and considered them her greatest blessing.

Ruth is survived by her daughters, Leshia Kenny and husband Liffick of Durant, and Julie Ratcliff and husband Curtis of Durant; granddaughters, Jessica Grant and husband Cody of Boswell, and Logan Polk of Durant; great-grandchildren, Darrell Robinson, Rowdy Robinson and Kaylynn Grant, all of Boswell.

Ruth was preceded in death by her parents, Anderson and Elizabeth Bully; husband, Hampton Polk; son, Darrell Polk; four brothers and one sister.

Interment was at Sulphur Springs Cemetery.



Delois Elsie Powell

Delois Elsie (Anderson) York Powell, age 78, a longtime Tushka resident, passed away on June 21, 2015 in Atoka.

She was born on Sept. 14, 1936, to Thomas and Susan (Lawrence) Anderson in Atoka County. She attended school at Carter Seminary by Ardmore. Dee was a homemaker and housewife. She married J.C. York who preceded her in death then she later married James P. Powell, he preceded her in death also. Dee attended Southside Baptist Church. She enjoyed going to garage sales, casinos and cooking. She was also known as Mama Dee to a lot of her family and friends.

She is survived by children, Deborah Kay Morse and husband Don of Burns Flat, John Richard York and wife Darla of Wichita Falls, Texas, William "Buster" Burl Powell of Lane; sisters, Loveda Holley of Atoka, Gladys Crittenden of Atoka; grandchildren, Sabrina Morse of Yukon, Matthew Morse of Hammon, Jessica York of Ada, William Powell and wife Courtney of Alva, Morgan Erdman of Yukon, Micah Jones and husband Tommy of Yukon; great-grandchildren, Deacon Jones of Yukon, Mila Powell of Alva; special niece, Janice Jones of Atoka; along with nieces, nephews, other relatives and many dear friends.

She was preceded in death by her first husband, J.C. York; second husband, James P. Powell; parents, Thomas Anderson and Susan (Lawrence) Anderson Fisher; brother, Thomas Anderson; and sons, Jim York and Robert E. York. Interment was at Butler Cemetery, Lane.

Terry Lynn Smith

Terry Lynn Smith, 62, of Purcell, passed away June 24, 2015 at his home surrounded by his family.

He was born Sept. 9, 1952 in Purcell. Terry was the third child of four children born to Raymond Lynn Smith and Betty Margaret (Miller) Smith. Terry grew up a farm boy living in the Maysville and Wayne communities. He attended the Wayne Schools and graduated with the class of 1971. He later married a young lady from Purcell by the name of Deborah Ann Johnson on Dec. 13, 1973. Terry and Debbie remained living in the Purcell area where they raised three sons, Michael, Greg and Chris.

Terry grew up learning how to work hard and he continued that same work ethic throughout his life. In 1974 he began working for the Santa Fe Railroad, which later became the BNSF, Burlington Northern Santa Fe. He worked as a Regional Truck Driver, hauling railroad ties for bridges and train tracks all across the country. Terry retired in 2012 after 39 years of faithful service to the BNSF Railroad.

Throughout his life he loved working and being in the outdoors. He was an avid fisherman, hunter and gardener. He also enjoyed working on his farm, spending time on his mower and tractor. One of his most recent hobbies was making figurines out of railroad spikes and horseshoes which he enjoyed giving to friends and family. However most of all he enjoyed spending time with his family and playing with his grandchildren. He will be greatly missed by his family and his many friends.

He was preceded in death by parents, Raymond and Margaret Smith; and brother, Gary Don Smith.

He is survived by: wife, Debbie Smith of the home; three sons, Michael Smith and wife Tammy of Purcell, Greg Smith and wife Mandy of Tulsa, Chris Smith of Purcell; five grandchildren, Hope, Haileigh, Hunter, Maeby and Graydon; one brother, Lee Smith and wife Wynema of Norman; one sister, Ivy Galloway of Ft. Cobb; mother-in-law, Betty Johnson of Purcell; brother-in-law, Gary Johnson and wife Melinda of Purcell; sister-in-law, Teresa Bacon and husband Brent of Purcell; several aunts, uncle, nieces, nephews, cousins and a host of other loving relatives and friends.

Interment was at Hillside Cemetery in Purcell. Arrangements are by Wilson-Little Funeral Home in Purcell. Memorials may be made to the Cancer Treatment Center of America in Tulsa.

Jim L. McCage

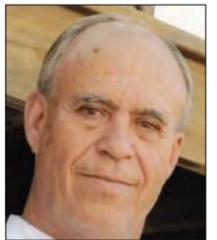
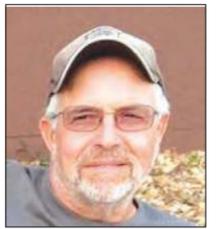
Services for Jim L. McCage of Thackerville were held June 30, 2015 in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Gainesville, Texas. Interment was in Lakeview Cemetery, Marietta.

Jim was born April 15, 1951 in Gainesville, Texas, the son of Burton and Ruby Jo Northcutt McCage. He passed away June 25, 2015, in Mercy Health Love County, Marietta, at the age of 64.

After graduating from Thackerville High School, Jim attended the United Electronics Institute in Dallas, and then operated a TV repair shop for many years. Later he was the maintenance supervisor for Thackerville schools. Always very active in community affairs, he served 10 years on the Thackerville School Board, was Scoutmaster for the Boy Scouts, and on the Thackerville Volunteer Fire Department Board. Jim also enjoyed raising show pigs with his grandchildren. He and the former Katrina Worley were married in Grand Prairie, Texas, on Sept. 3, 1971. Jim was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Gainesville, Texas.

Preceding him in death were his parents; brother, Joe McCage; son, Casey McCage; and mother-in-law, LuJuana Worley.

He is survived by his wife, Katrina McCage of the home; five sons and daughters-in-law, Chad and Shon McCage of Ada, Cody and Callie McCage of Thackerville, Craig and Kimberly McCage of Denton, Texas, and Cliff McCage and Chase and Megan McCage, also of Thackerville; two daughters and sons-in-law, Misty and Wes Werner of The Colony, Texas and Mallory and Billy Fox of Ardmore; three brothers and sisters-in-law, Donald and Rosie McCage of Kingston, and Charles and Judy McCage and David and Barbara McCage of Thackerville; two sisters and brother-in-law, Betty Barnes and Pam and Don Pearman of Thackerville; and 18 grandchildren, Whitney Werner, Alexa Briggs, Wyatt Werner, Trevor Briggs, Zachary Briggs, Madilyn Briggs, Lexi Werner, Riley McCage, Cooper McCage, Maci McCage, Ashton McCage, Presley McCage, Creed McCage, Kinsler McCage, Reagan Vinson, Max McCage, Liam McCage, and Maverick Fox.



EDUCATION

Dreams coming true for Vanderbilt grad

From Paradise Valley to the Smithsonian



Photo Provided by Vanderbilt University

Holly Glass is shown receiving her degree from Vanderbilt University this spring.

By **BRANDON FRYE**
Choctaw Nation

Holly Glass recently graduated from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. She has already carried out research in Peru, and will soon work for the repatriation of Native American remains and artifacts with the Smithsonian Institution.

But the 22-year-old scholar did not always think any of this would be possible.

Glass grew up on a family farm in Paradise Valley (near Lawton) with her parents, Trudi and Robert Glass, and her siblings, which would reach a total of six sisters and two brothers—four of them being adopted Comanche children. Her grandmother Willa told many stories, taught many life lessons, and made it a point to bring the children to the Choctaw church down the road.

“When I was growing up, I just knew we were Native, or we were called Indians. I just knew I was somehow different from people in some ways, and I could fit in with people in other ways,” Glass said.

She recalled earlier days spent exploring the world with her family, especially her father, a Cajun from Louisiana.

“My dad inspired thinking more deeply about the things you see in the world,” Glass said. “We would go hiking, he would tell me to look at plants I didn’t know, we would remember different mountains around us, we’d spot different grasses and different trees.”

She said he would encourage her to figure things out without giving easy answers, which would push her to learn more about something she was curious about. It’s a trait she still maintains today.

Glass’s mother, Trudi, passed the family Choctaw heritage on to her. Trudi was also the parent to push her daughter into working as hard as possible. “She would encourage me to go to a place where I thought it was as much as I could do,” Glass said. “Then she would push me further to excel at everything I tried.”

She recalls thinking, “Yeah it would be cool to do school, to go away and study, do those kinds of things, but that’s not really possible. That’s not something someone like me really does.”

She also remembers the day this changed. The Choctaw Scholarship Achievement Program held an event in Durant, and Glass attended. Representatives from Harvard, Columbia, and other research universities talked to Glass about possible academic opportunities.

This was the first time Glass could visualize going to a school other than the local community college. She went home with a

handful of business cards feeling hopeful.

Like her parents taught her, she pushed forward to attending a two-year boarding school which specialized in math and sciences, the Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics. There, she got to take classes beyond her imagination, in topics like embryology and endocrinology, physics. She was allowed to perform research at the University of Oklahoma. She got in trouble for staying up too late studying.

“Going to that boarding school would have never seemed possible if I had not gone to the event in Durant,” Glass explained, “It really opened my eyes to the fact that I could be a high achieving student.”

After high school, following a desire to be a doctor with the draw of an offer for a full ride through undergraduate studies, she began college at Vanderbilt. There, she met mentors, which would shape her academic pursuits.

She learned how much she enjoyed biological anthropology and found her passion for doing research and being close to communities.

The Choctaw Nation supported Glass during her undergraduate studies with a scholarship. “It gave me the resources I needed to be able to do the research I do,” Glass said. “I always made it a point to focus it on academics.”

Glass helped start the first Native American club at Vanderbilt called Native Americans in Tennessee Interacting at Vanderbilt (NATIVE). The group held their first event last September, which included a powwow and other activities on the Vanderbilt campus.

She also worked on a project with the Chickasaw Nation, repatriating remains to the tribe, during her undergraduate studies.

Now, after graduating, Glass looks to continue her studies at the graduate level and continue her research.

She spent seven weeks in Peru doing skeletal analysis and an archaeological investigation with one of her academic mentors from Vanderbilt.

Glass moves to Washington, D.C., soon for a three month internship with the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History. She will repatriate ancestral remains and artifacts to their descendant tribes and peoples.

She said it is imperative for more young Choctaws to get involved with research.

“I was thinking about younger people who maybe feel like I did...,” Glass said. “I want it to come across, it is possible, and it’s very achievable. It might not be easy, but it is worthwhile.”



Photo Provided

Kelbie RaeAnn Kennedy, left, and Randi Dawn Gardner Hardin are awarded their Juris Doctor degrees this spring from the the University of Oklahoma School of Law.

Choctaws Kennedy, Hardin graduate law school, focus on Native American studies

Two Choctaws recently graduated with advanced degrees from the University of Oklahoma.

On May 9, Kelbie RaeAnn Kennedy and Randi Dawn Gardner Hardin graduated from the OU College of Law. Kelbie earned her Juris Doctor with a certificate in Native American Law.

Randi, a dual-degree student, earned both her Juris Doctor with a certificate in Native American Law as well as her Master of Arts in Native American Studies.

Kennedy, 25, is from Buffalo Valley. Her parents are Brenda Kennedy and Jackie Kennedy. Her grandparents are Lavern Kennedy and Johnny Kennedy. She has one sister, Karessa Kennedy.

Kennedy received her bachelor’s degree from OU in 2012, with a major in Communications and a minor in Native American Studies.

While at OU Law, Kennedy served as the president of the OU Native American Law Student Association.

She was also a member of OU’s Native American Law Student Association Moot Court team, placing in the top eight in nationals two years in a row. She is also a two-time Udall Scholar.

While at OU Law, Kennedy interned with the U.S. Department of the Interior with the Office of the Solicitor, Division of Indian Affairs and with Berkey Law Firm in Berkeley, Calif., focusing on Native American law.

After graduating law school she plans on

focusing her career on Native American law.

Hardin, 29, is from Moore. Her parents are David Gardner and Donna Gardner. Her grandparents are Carol Gardner and the late Chief David Gardner on her father’s side, and Naomi Edwards, the late Robert Edwards, Suzy Watkins, and the late Herb Watkins on her mother’s side.

Hardin has also found time to start a family. She is married to Brad Hardin and has three children: two stepsons, Hunter and Colby, and one son, Dylan.

Hardin received her bachelor’s degree from OU in 2009, with a major in Native American Studies and a minor in anthropology.

Hardin is a Chahta Foundation Doctorate Scholar, an American Indian Graduate Scholar, and a Gates Millennium Scholar. While at OU Law, Hardin served as the vice-president of OU NALSA and as the executive editor of the American Indian Law Review.

In addition, her article titled “Knight v. Thompson: The Eleventh Circuit’s Perpetuation of Historical Practices of Colonization” was published in the American Indian Law Review’s Spring 2014 issue and won the Outstanding Note Award for 2013-2014.

Her graduate work focuses on the revitalization of the Choctaw Nation’s government occurring in the 1970s.

Hardin has interned with the law firms Hobbs, Straus, Dean & Walker in Oklahoma City, and Fredericks, Peebles & Morgan in Louisville, Colorado.

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*in accordance to Council Bill 84-15



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Hartshorne, OK 74547

Choctaw College Connect

A link to your future

CCC 2015 is the Choctaw Nation Higher Education Program’s annual Choctaw student recruitment event. Students will have the opportunity to meet one-on-one with recruiters from colleges and universities from around the country as well as in your own backyard.

**REGISTRATION
BEGINS
AUGUST 1ST**

Saturday, November 7th, 2015
Choctaw Event Center
3702 Choctaw Road
Durant, OK 74701

Registration begins at 10:30 am

Like
**Choctaw Nation Higher
Education Program**
on facebook
for up-to-date details!

EDUCATION

Wesberry named Executive Director of SOSU institute



Chris Wesberry was recently named Executive Director of the Native American Institute at Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

The Institute will include the Master of Science in Native American Leadership, the minor in Native American Studies, Choctaw language minor and the Native American

Center for Student Success. The academic programs will be hosted by the Department of Behavioral Sciences, which will provide faculty oversight of curriculum and all related activities.

The Institute will also include the formalization of an advisory council with tribal participation.

"Southeastern has been recognized nationally for its Native American programs and Chris has obviously played a big role in that," said Southeastern president Sean Burrage. "Under his leadership, the Institute will serve to coordinate all of our efforts in this area. We also hope to grow and expand our Native American programs in the future and the Institute is a key component."

Wesberry has been employed at Southeastern since October of 2005. He has served as an Academic Advisor to Native American students, the Director for the Native American Center for Student Success, and Co-Director of the Master of Science in Native American Leadership (MS-NAL).

In these positions, he has served the Native American community in

areas of academic advising, instructor, grant writer/principal investigator, and project director for federal grants in excess of \$4 million. These grants have consistently focused on Native American student retention and teacher development.

He has also taught several courses at the University.

Wesberry earned a Bachelor of Science, Master in Secondary Education, and Master in School Counseling at East Central University. He is currently in the dissertation phase of a Doctorate in Higher Education Leadership.

He has 10 years of experience working for the Chickasaw Nation, seven of which were in Higher Education programming. Wesberry and his wife Stacy (2013 graduate of Southeastern) have a daughter and son, both of whom graduated from Southeastern. Caley Wesberry ('13) also graduated from Michigan State University with a Master Degree in Public Health, while Leslie Wesberry ('13) will be in his third year of law school at the University of Oklahoma this coming May.

Scott excels at academics and performing arts



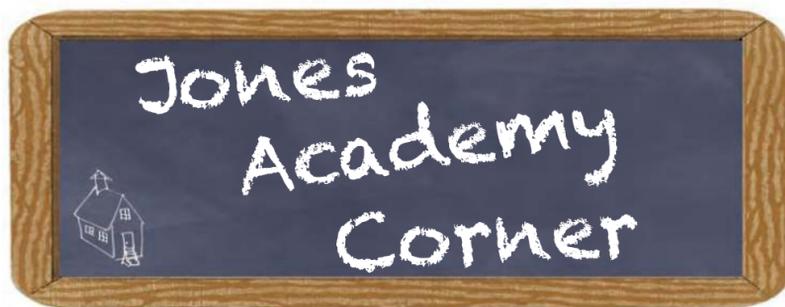
Haley Scott, Junior at Claremont High School, received numerous awards for her scholastic achievements.

She earned an Outstanding Achievement in English. Scott was Inducted into the International Thespian Society - Troup 2129. She also accomplished a monologue in the 2015 California Thespian Festival, making it into the top 1% in the state.

Jackson, Eastep graduate with honors



Alayna Jackson of Norman North High School and Carley Eastep of Jones High School both graduated as valedictorians this spring. Alayna and Carley are cousins and best friends and plan on attending Oklahoma State University. Alayna plans on majoring in animal sciences and Carley chemical engineering.



Photos provided by David Sanchez

Team members (Left to Right- standing) Naomi Christmas, Kanani Watashe, Dale Two Eagles (background), Seth Crow, Jaycelynn Charger, Melissa Chill and (sitting) Kielind Jim. Not pictured is Zachary Bennett.

By DAVID SANCHEZ
Choctaw Nation

Through a joint endeavor of the Department of Education and the Choctaw Nation, the school was able to initiate a Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Program at Jones Academy.

The Indian Demonstration Grant is a government initiative to promote math, science, technology, engineering, and critical thinking skills in junior high and high school students. Choctaw Nation sponsored a robotics class at the academy, which competed in a team-oriented Botball tournament in the spring.

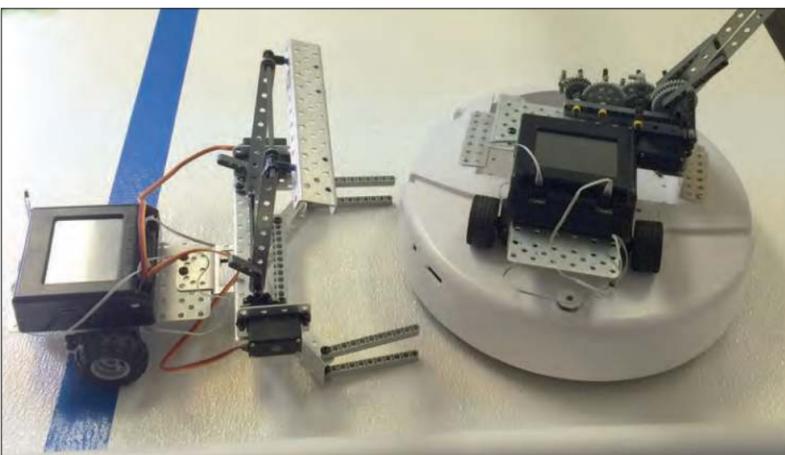
Program coordinator Lindsey House arrived in January and hastily organized a team of eight Jones Academy students to prepare for the contest. They had seven weeks to design and program a robot for the competition.

With the assistance of Steve Goodgame from the KISS Institute for Practical Robotics, and Botball tutor Immanuel Ramirez and other mentors, the team earnestly set about their goals.

The challenge consisted of building two viable robots from a Botball kit. (All competitors had the same materials.) The team participated in the Oklahoma Regional Botball Tournament held in Norman on March 7. Out of 57 teams, the Jones Academy Botball team placed 14th in the competition and were named Newcomers of the Year.

In an effort to generate more interest in robotics, Jones Academy were hosting two summer STEM camps scheduled for July 12-17 and July 19-24. Applicants for the camp are from the 10-county area of the Choctaw Nation. In a related matter, Hartshorne Public Schools also introduced a robotics class this year at the high school. The robotic virus is spreading!

The Jones Academy Botball team consists of Kielind Jim, Zachary Bennett, Seth Crow, Jaycelyn Charger, Dale Two Eagles, Kanani Watashe, Melissa Chill, Naomi Christmas and team coach Lindsey House.



The result of the students' hard work: their robot for the botball game.

Batton Scholar Spotlight: Zach Maxwell



(Editor's note: This is third in a series about the six recipients of the Batton Family Scholarship, which has been offered since 2012 to Choctaw students who are close to graduating at Southeastern Oklahoma State University.)

By KENDRA GERMANY
Choctaw Nation

Zach Maxwell started his higher education journey years ago. He said he began his college career studying Geology, because he "liked rocks."

But, one day by chance, Maxwell found himself in the wrong line when signing up for classes. The line was for a journalism class. Even though he did not have any prior interest in the field, the professor convinced him to give it a shot. After taking the class, he realized that he had found his true calling.

Mid-way through his education journey, he decided to take time off to raise a family.

In 2011, Maxwell decided it was time to go back to school and finish his degree. He started classes at Southeastern Oklahoma State University, to obtain a degree in Communication with a minor in Native Studies. He is still pursuing his degree.

He received financial assistance through the Choctaw Nation Department of Higher Education, but was honored to be considered for additional help through the tribe.

Zach was part of the second round of the

Gary & Angie Batton Family Scholarship recipients.

"It was a tremendous honor to even be considered, much less receive the scholarship," said Maxwell.

Zach is the father of four children, one of which resides with him.

Maxwell faces many of the same struggles as other single parents.

"As a single parent, I have a lot of challenges that I share with many of my fellow students. Every opportunity like this is a tremendous boost" Maxwell said. "I think it really shows that chief and his family are deeply committed to providing that boost to Choctaws that need it."

Maxwell is currently a staff reporter and photographer at the Biskinik. He feels that the opportunity to work for the tribal newspaper is just an extension of the opportunities that came about from deciding to go back to school and receiving assistance through the Batton Family scholarship and Choctaw Higher Education.

Maxwell said if he is going to be a Journalist, he wants it to be at the Biskinik. Maxwell previously worked at four different news publications and public relations position at a non-profit, before coming to the Biskinik.

"I really feel strongly about having the opportunity to be able to tell the stories of other Choctaws. I take every story personally," said Maxwell. "That has been a neat part of this whole opportunity."

Choctaw Nation HSE/GED Classes

The class will meet each week for approximately 13 weeks. Books, supplies, and testing fees are provided. In addition, a \$10-per-day attendance stipend will be paid to those who attend classes on a regular basis and attempt the HSE/GED test.

If you have turned in an application with our Adult Education Program for HSE/GED classes and wish to attend the upcoming class, please contact our office. If you have not applied and wish to attend these or future classes, please contact Kathy Bench at the Durant office, 800-522-6170, ext. 2122. A Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) is required.

Haskell County

Stigler
Beginning date and time
Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2015
Monday and Wednesday
9 a.m. - Noon
Choctaw Nation Community Center
Stigler

Bryan County

Durant
Beginning date and time
Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2015
Tuesday and Thursday
9 a.m. - Noon
Choctaw Nation Tribal Complex, South Bldg. 1st Floor
529 N. 16th, Durant

Latimer County

Wilburton
Beginning date and time
Sept. 8, 2015
Tuesday and Thursday
9 a.m. - Noon
Eastern Oklahoma College
McAlester Campus, Clark Bass Building,
Room # 230

McCurtain County

Broken Bow
Beginning date and time
Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2015
1 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Choctaw Nation Family Investment Center
210 Chahta Rd., Broken Bow

Amateur photographer gives back to Nation, summer school program

By ZACH MAXWELL
Choctaw Nation

One Choctaw youth has found a way to give back to his beloved tribe. John David, a recent high school graduate from Grand Junction, Colorado, spent three weeks in the Choctaw Nation recording and photographing young participants in the Partnership of Summer School Education programs.



Photo courtesy Wayne David

Young shutterbug John David, left, meets with Chief Gary Batton.

Together with his father, Wayne David, they traveled to 14 POSSE sites around Choctaw Country in the first three weeks of June. The idea came about as a way for the Davids to give back to the tribe, for all the educational assistance they have received.

The fruits of their labors—hundreds of photographs and videos from a wide range of summer school activities—have been collected for summer school program usage. The experience offered the Colorado duo a crash course in life within the Choctaw Nation.

“We were never exposed much to Choctaw culture,” Wayne David said. “Believe me, we were immersed in the 10 ½ counties. I got a sense of a growing community and how it all fits together.”

David’s grandfather was a retired Army veteran who was from Fort Towson. Like most Choctaws, branches of their family split off and moved out of Oklahoma in search of new opportunities.

So, the June experience was part educational, part homecoming for the Davids. Higher education leadership at Choctaw Nation saw the potential in John and Wayne, and their skills. Wayne is in the process of starting a videography business, and John plans to study computer science this fall at the University of Denver.

John also utilized the opportunity for job-shadowing Ryan Spring with Choctaw Nation Historic Preservation, as well as the tribal Information Technology Department.

“They wanted to volunteer, and when Wayne began to tell me about their skills and talents, we saw an opportunity,” said Stacy Shepherd, a senior executive officer at Choctaw Nation. She guided John through the growing list of educational programs and internship opportunities within the tribe.

Larry Scott, Director of POSSE, helped the pair find a way to utilize their skills at the summer school sites. Students from 14 school sites are shown reading, participating in enrichment activities and fun-filled field trips.

“It’s a great way to connect with Choctaw culture,” Scott said. “For many who don’t live in the 10 ½ counties, it’s all about things like this, connecting with people.”

At the end of John David’s mini-internship, he and his father were presented a set of stickball sticks and a hand-carved flute as appreciation gifts. They are taking a piece of the Choctaw Nation back home with them: The sticks are made from Oklahoma hickory and the flute is hand-made from native river cane by Presley Byington.



Photos by Charles Clark

From left, Scott Dewald, REI Oklahoma President and CEO; Layton Wilson, Choctaw Defense Services Manager; Chip Melton, CDS Managing Officer; and Brian Treat, CDS Division Manager share the award spotlight.

Choctaw Defense Systems No. 1 Team effort brings Technology Firm of Year honors

By CHARLES CLARK
Choctaw Nation

Another Choctaw business shows it has all the right stuff.

When REI Oklahoma went looking for a company to honor at its 2015 Oklahoma Minority Enterprise Awards Dinner there were a number of outstanding possibilities to choose from. One, however, rose to the top of the list for pick as Technology Firm of the Year – Choctaw Defense Services.

At the July 23 event held on the 18th floor of the Hard Rock Casino Hotel in Tulsa, James Ray, of REI Oklahoma’s Tulsa office and emcee for the annual banquet, said, “Sometimes, old-fashioned shoe leather is what it takes.” For a business to become successful he said, “It’s all

about getting out there.”

Choctaw Defense Services, or CDS, has proven that it is getting out there. The Tulsa-based company has only had its doors open since March of 2013, and has garnered more than \$12 million in contracts. It is servicing public, private and government clients with, among other things, copper, fiber optic and wireless networks, low-voltage power systems, and LED lighting for operations, security and defense.

Jobs have taken CDS crews to 38 cities in 14 states, and Puerto Rico, and South Korea and the United Kingdom. CDS operates two facilities, in Tulsa and Moore.

See the full story on choctawnation.com.

SAVE THE BOX TOPS

Choctaw Nation will select a school district within the nation to be the recipient of each Box Tops Program. The 2015-16 recipient will be Hartshorne Public School. Don't have anyone to give your box tops to? Here's how you can help!

It's easy for anyone to get involved with Box Tops. It's simple. Buy the products; clip the Box Tops; drop off or send the Box Tops to the Choctaw Nation and help earn cash for the things the school needs like: books, school supplies, playground equipment, teacher training, computers, etc.

Drop-off locations:
Choctaw Nation Community Centers
Choctaw Nation Travel Plazas
Choctaw Nation Headquarters

Send to:
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Attn. Jerry Tomlinson
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702

For further information contact Jerry Tomlinson at 580-924-8280 ext. 2904

CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Are you or your spouse a registered member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma? We want to help you celebrate your Milestone Anniversary!

The Choctaw Nation is asking married couples with milestone wedding anniversaries of 50, 60, 65, 70, 75, or 80 years to contact the Public Relations department.

Chief Gary Batton and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. will be issuing special certificates to honor your many years devoted to faith and family. We need your name, address, wedding day/year, and a copy of membership for you or your spouse.

Please mail your information to jjefferson@choctawnation.com and include your favorite photo of you and your spouse. Highlights will also be posted on Facebook. Yakoke!

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

VETERANS ADVOCACY PROGRAM

Veterans Day

November 11, 2015

Tvshka Homma

Begins at 10 a.m.

Includes lunch

For any questions, please contact Brent Oakes, extension 2163, Roger Hamill, extension 2160, Harlan Wright, extension 2735, or Jason Burwick, extension 2369.

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Homeowners Energy Management Services

Offering Free Home Energy Audits

Learn:

- ✓ What your home does right
- ✓ Where energy is lost
- ✓ How to make your home more comfortable
- ✓ The cheapest way to be more energy efficient

- ◇ LOWER ENERGY BILLS
- ◇ INCREASE SAVINGS
- ◇ INCREASE HOME RESALE VALUE
- ◇ UNCOVER HIDDEN PROBLEMS
- ◇ PROTECT ENVIRONMENT

Serving Choctaw Tribal members in all 10 1/2 counties!

Contact Tom Clemons at (580) 317-7089 and Teresa Gallant at (800) 235-3087

Housing Authority of Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma | P.O. Box G - 1005 South 5th St. | Hugo, OK 74743



Photos by Zach Maxwell

Six new buses are lined up outside of the new Choctaw Casino and Resort in Durant recently. These will serve Choctaw elders and other tribal members with comfortable, convenient travel on tribal trips.

Hitting the road in style

Transportation for tribal members gets an upgrade

ZACH MAXWELL
Choctaw Nation

The Choctaw Nation has invested in six new passenger buses that will take elders and tribal members on journeys throughout the U.S. in the coming years. "This new investment of six brand new VanHool buses to our fleet will

Chief and Tribal Council made the decision to invest in the lives and well-being of our Choctaw Nation members."

The investment of nearly \$3 million represents the commitment of Chief Gary Batton, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. and the Choctaw Nation Council in enhancing the lives of tribal members, especially elders, said Cole Osborn, senior manager of transportation at Choctaw Nation.

"Moving down the road is quite a joy" in these new

proving fuel efficiency and cutting carbon waste.

"It gets twice the mileage of conventional buses and the exhaust can be breathed directly by humans," Osborn said. "It is that clean. This bus is eco-friendly."

Some of the hands-on features that tribal members will notice include a restroom, an ADA wheelchair lift, surround sound and video monitors, USB ports and power outlets for "all kinds of electronic devices." Osborn said the technology capabilities on the new buses will allow for slide shows and other displays for training or entertaining while the bus is in motion.

He also said the seats recline, but not onto the passengers behind each seat. These are just a few of more than 100 custom features listed by VanHool and its distributor, ABC Companies.

Safety features include all-wheel disc brakes for quick stopping, and seat belts for all passengers. The refueling range is 1,200 miles.

The new buses, technically called a VanHool CX 45-foot Premier Passenger Coach, will replace several units that had surpassed 500,000 miles of service.



Choctaw Nation transportation officials shown with the new buses include (left to right) Jim Hogan, Ashley Robinson, Cole Osborn, Jeff Penz, Trish Singleton, Misty Hendricks, and Janie Dillard.

definitely raise the bar for our transportation department," said Janie Dillard, Director of Gaming for Choctaw Nation. "The

buses, Osborn said. The features of the 45-foot, 56-passenger buses are designed to make traveling comfortable, while im-

Choctaws making impact at journalism association



Darren Brown

Biskinik staff members earned several awards at the Native American Journalists Association (NAJA) annual contest. Also, a Cochiti Pueblo/Choctaw tribal member was elected to the NAJA Board of Directors.

The Biskinik took five awards, presented at the National Native Media Conference in July in Arlington, Virginia. The paper earned a first-place award for best layout and third place in general excellence.

Staff reporter Zach Maxwell earned a pair of first-place awards for best news photo and best sports photo, for pictures from the 2014 Trail of Tears Walk and youth stickball.

Staff reporter Brandon Frye earned third place in environmental reporting for an article about McCurtain County Boys & Girls Club.

Darren Brown (Cochiti Pueblo/Choctaw) was elected to the NAJA Board of Directors during the conference. Brown is the

producer, videographer, editor and host for Cheyenne and Arapaho Television, the only native-owned and operated broadcast TV station in El Reno.

Local riders invited to join Trail of Tears Corridor Association journey



An Alabama-based group will make a commemorative motorcycle pilgrimage to the Choctaw Nation in September.

Trail of Tears Corridor Association members have been making annual road trips along the various historic routes for two decades. They have arrived at Trail of Tears sites in the Cherokee, Creek, and Chickasaw nations. On Sept. 21, they will end this year's journey at Tvshka Homma.

The final portion of the ride will take a group of approximately two dozen riders from Hot Springs, Arkansas, to Heavener, and finally to Tvshka Homma. The group will tour the Choctaw Nation Capitol and Museum before returning to Alabama.

Local motorcycle riders have been invited to participate in the journey, specifically the final day from Hot Springs to Tvshka Homma. For information about the Trail of Tears ride, visit www.al-tn-trailoftears.net.

Student School & Activity Fund

Deadline for FY 2015

Application must be postmarked on or before September 15, 2015 to receive funding

Check List

- Complete Application
- Copy of Tribal Membership Card
- Copy of Social Security Card
- W-9 with Student's Information

Program Information
<http://choctaw.link/1Sjzlcz>



Student School Activity Fund
P.O. Box 1210, Durant OK 74702
(800) 522-6170

Tribal Members, Want your Choctaw News Snapshot?

It's easy! Sign up to receive news flashes through email. Just call the Choctaw Nation Circulation Department and provide your email address and phone number, 800.522.6170 x2116 or email abentley@choctawnation.com



The STAR program mailed 204 surveys to senior STAR recipients and 165 of those surveys were returned. These wordles (a visual

depiction of the words contained in a piece of text) consists of words used by students describing how the Choctaw STAR program attributed to their academic success.



Greatest High School Accomplishments



Awards received by Seniors for the 2014/2015 spring:

- 82 ★ All A's
- 102 ★ A's and B's
- 4 ★ A's + Perfect Attendance
- 5 ★ A's and B's + Perfect Attendance
- 11 ★ Perfect Attendance Only

Total Awards earned by Seniors: 204

Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association and Choctaw Revolving Loan Fund

The Southeastern Oklahoma Indian Credit Association offers small business, home, home improvement, and agriculture loans. To be eligible to apply, a person must reside within the 10 1/2-county service area of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and must possess a Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) from a federally recognized tribe.

Micro-loans are available for emergency home improvements and small businesses. The loans are available up to \$2,500 and are to be repaid within 24 months. To be eligible to apply you must be Choctaw, possess a CDIB and you must reside within the 10 1/2 county area of the Choctaw Nation.

For more information, please contact Susan Edwards at 580.924.8280 or toll-free 800.522.6170.

If you are interested in applying for a loan from the SOICA or the Choctaw Revolving Loan Fund, there will be a representative from the Choctaw Nation Credit Department at the:

McAlester Community Center • August 21, 2015
at
9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.



Photo Provided by Oklahoma Historical Society

The Peter Conser Home as it was when the location was still an active homestead.

Historic home returns to care and direction of Conser family line

By **BRANDON FRYE**

Choctaw Nation

After growing up in Florida away from the stories and people of her ancestry, Angela Conser-McKean moved to Oklahoma to be near family and found herself working as a caretaker of a historical home built by the hands of her great-great-grandfather.

Her distant relative, Peter Conser, was a well-known Choctaw Lighthorseman born in 1852 who lived a life of great impact on a developing Oklahoma. His home, the Peter Conser Home, stands as one of the Oklahoma Historical Society's (OHS) Historic Homes—historic sites which the organization claims tell the personal stories of the individuals who built the state of Oklahoma.

Conser-McKean's arrangement with OHS supplies a nearby modern home to her and her husband, with utilities and

rent at no cost to the couple. In exchange, Conser-McKean keeps the grounds and interior of the location in pristine condition, plans and holds events filled with learning experiences, and gives tours teaching the history of Peter Conser to anyone interested in visiting.

"Growing up in Florida I didn't know anything about Oklahoma or Choctaw history, and it has been amazing learning about my culture," Conser-McKean said. "I have enjoyed learning some of the stories about Peter, especially from my grandfather."

As Conser-McKean would tell you, the home was built in 1894, near the town now known as Heavener, when Peter Conser was married to his second wife, Martha.

"The story is there was a tree near a creek which Peter liked to play on when he was a kid," Conser-McKean said. "He loved that tree and creek, so when he decided he wanted to live somewhere he came back here."

Visitors can still spot a very large, old tree just behind the homestead to this day.

Martha was pregnant with Peter's 10th child, and the couple needed a bigger home to raise their family. Unfortunately, Martha died during childbirth about two months before the house was finished. So Peter raised his children in the home on his own, and later with the help of a new wife.

Conser was well equipped for life on the frontier, according to Conser-McKean. Many experiences from his youth readied

him for the hardships found in early-Oklahoma.

Peter's father was a Swiss immigrant. His Choctaw mother died when he was only 10.

An elder Choctaw named Ainetubby took a young Peter in, helped raise him, and taught him how to work.

According to Conser-McKean, Peter wrote about an advancing group of Union soldiers who pushed the group of Choctaws Peter lived with into fleeing. Escaping this situation, Peter found himself taking refuge at Robert Jones' plantation.

Jones was a wealthy Choctaw with the Confederate Army. Peter was able to take refuge on his plantation and learn how to farm during his interactions with the slaves. When the war was over, Peter and a friend of his came back to the Heavener area as teens.

Locals formed a small settlement including a general store and post office near the location where the Peter Conser Home sits. Peter played a large role in this community, offering a gristmill for everyone to grind their grains, a blacksmith shop for metalwork, and a sawmill, which made many coffins as a result of the 1918 flu pandemic.

His great-great-granddaughter, Conser-McKean, said she wants to help her community and open the Peter Conser Home just like he did.

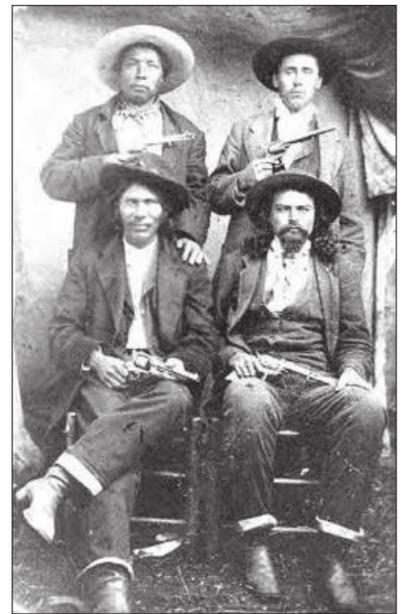
"Taking care of other people and being there for the community was something that Peter and his family did," Conser-McKean said. "If a child didn't have a home, Peter opened his home to them."



Photo by Brandon Frye

Angela Conser-McKean rests in the kitchen of the Peter Conser Home after giving a family a tour of the location.

Maybe we can't open the Peter Conser Home to live in, but we can hold events for them to come learn and experience something."



Peter Conser (top left) poses for a photograph with some of his fellow Lighthorsemen.

Conser-McKean said since Chief Gary Batton became Chief, the Peter Conser Home has had more Choctaw activities. She listed a quilt show and a pottery class. They also have plans to start holding stick-ball games on the property, because Peter used to host them in his day.

Erin McDaniel with Choctaw Nation Tourism said her department has worked with the Peter Conser Home and advertised the recent 150th anniversary event promoting the site through social media, and submitting it to the website roadtrippers.com. She said the Tourism Department is actively finding ways to partner with the home.

Kathy Dickson, Director of Museums and Historic Sites with OHS, said the arrangement her organization worked out with Conser-McKean is a way for the family to share their heritage with visitors.

"It is Angela's family history," Dickson said. "It's not just a job for her, it's part of her family heritage. She is very committed to the property."

To schedule a visit, call (918) 653-2493. To visit the historic site, travel to 47114 Conser Creek Road in Heavener.

Choctaw woman shares grape dumpling recipe

By **TESINA JACKSON**

Contributing Writer, Cherokee Phoenix

Growing up Choctaw Nation citizen Joanne Davis spent a lot of time in the kitchen learning how to cook with her mother, grandmother and sister. But for the past 10 years, she has been making a Cherokee and Choctaw favorite, grape dumplings.



Photos by Tesina Jackson

While the grape juice and sugar come to a boil on the stove, Choctaw Nation citizen Joanne Davis mixes all-purpose flour and grape juice into a dough grape dumplings, a dessert for many Native Americans.

"I'd have to get in there and learn how to do stuff, so I just grew up cooking and helping in the kitchen, learning how to make beans and gravy and stuff like that," she said.

On days when her mother didn't feel like cooking, Davis and her sister would take over in the kitchen.

"I've always liked to learn new recipes," Davis said. "I watch a lot of cooking shows too, try out new recipes and stuff. I just enjoy cooking."

Without following a written recipe, Davis' sister taught her how to make grape dumplings.

"I don't really measure, so I can't say how much flour I use, but we use all-purpose flour and we use grape juice," Davis said. "We put some grape juice on the stove to boil and add sugar to that and then I just mix up the dough, which is the flour and grape juice. Then I roll it out and cut it up for the dumplings and throw them in there. That's the way I was taught to make them."

While tribes make grape dumplings different ways, nowadays they are commonly made with grape juice instead of

traditional possum grapes.

According to "Culture and Customs of the Choctaw Indians" by Donna L. Akers, a traditional way to make grape dumplings is to gather the wild grapes in the fall and dry them on the stem. To cook, boil the grapes and then strain them through cheesecloth and set the juice aside. Then mix cornmeal, baking soda and salt until doughy and roll into shape and drop into the grape juice and cook until done. The dumplings absorb the grape juice and the remainder of the juice is thickened.

Davis said with her way of making the dumplings for a small group of people usually takes about 30 minutes. However, she and her sister usually make them for large events, if asked, such as the Free Feed during the Cherokee National Holiday over Labor Day weekend. They also make fry bread to go along with the dumplings.

"I enjoy making them and I feel like I'm contributing to the dinners," she said. "I just enjoy cooking in general. I'm making stuff that people like. It makes me feel proud of myself."



Davis and her sister usually make fry bread to go along with the dumplings.

Cherokee Nation recipe for grape dumplings:

- 1 cup flour
 - 1-1/2 teaspoon baking powder
 - 2 teaspoons sugar
 - 1/4 teaspoon salt
 - 1 tablespoon shortening
 - 1/2 cup grape juice
- Mix flour, baking powder, sugar, salt and shortening. Add juice and mix into stiff dough. Roll dough thin on floured board and cut into strips 1/2-inch wide, or roll dough in hands and break off pea-sized bits. Drop into boiling grape juice and cook for 10 to 12 minutes. – www.cherokee.org
- Choctaw Nation recipe for grape dumplings:
- 1/2 gallon unsweetened grape juice
 - 2 cups sugar
 - 2 tablespoons shortening, melted
 - 1 teaspoon baking powder
 - 1 cup water
 - flour

Bring grape juice to a boil with the sugar. Mix water, shortening and baking powder. Add enough flour to make stiff dough. Roll out thin on a floured board and cut into pieces. Drop each of these one at a time into the boiling juice. Cook over high heat about 5 minutes. Then simmer for about 10 minutes with cover on before serving. May be served with cream or plain. – www.choctawnation.com

Reprinted with permission from the Cherokee Phoenix.

2015 Healthy Living Expo Tent

Labor Day Festival Events
Friday • Sept. 4
Noon - 8 p.m.: Healthy Living Expo Open

Saturday • Sept. 5
8 a.m. - 8 p.m.: Healthy Living Expo Open
8:30 p.m.: Bicycle Drawing at the Healthy Living Expo
Photo ID required for winners, age 18+
MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN

Sunday • Sept. 6
Educational presentations followed by Q&A
1 p.m.: Suicide Prevention
1:30 p.m.: Healthy Families
2 p.m.: Limited Mobility Exercises
2:30 p.m.: Diabetes Prevention
3 p.m.: Couch to 5K
3:30 p.m.: Things to Know about the Affordable Care Act if you are Native American
4 p.m.: Culinary Kids
4:30 p.m.: Shake that Sugar - Creating a Healthy Snack
1 p.m. - 5 p.m.: Blood Sugar, Blood Pressure, & Cholesterol Checks



Choctaw Nation Health Services
 800.349.7026 | www.cnhsa.com

Excellence in Rural Health Care



3-on-3 Basketball Sept. 5

Team Name _____
 Contact _____
 Address _____
 City/St/Zip _____
 Phone _____

Entry form must be postmarked by August 28: Labor Day 3-on-3 Basketball, ATTN: Kerry Steve P.O. Box 1909, Durant, OK 74702 or fax to 580-920-0024

Category / Division circle one:

4 MAN ROSTER	
WOMEN ALL STARS	AGES ~ 18 & UP
MEN YOUNG GUNS	AGES ~ 18 TO 35
MEN OLD TIMERS	AGES ~ 36 & UP
5 MAN ROSTER	
MINI CO'ED	AGES ~ 9 TO 11
TWEENS CO'ED	AGES ~ 12 TO 14
TEENS CO'ED	AGES ~ 15 TO 18

Co-Ed teams must have either 3 boys and 2 girls or 3 girls and 2 boys. Players who are 18 must still be in high school LIMITED TO THE FIRST 20 TEAMS

Chief Batton's Youth Fitness Challenge

Friday, September 4
on the Council Chambers lawn

Registration at 5 p.m. and the event will begin at 6. This annual event promotes fitness and health in a fun and challenging atmosphere. The challenge will conclude with a tug of war contest and each participant will receive a free T-shirt. A release of liability waiver will need to be signed by the guardian of each participant. All children ages 8-18 are encouraged to participate regardless of fitness level. If you have any questions about the fitness challenge, please call Jason Campbell at (800) 522-6170, ext. 2787.

Tough, Tough Choctaw

Saturday, September 5
on the Council Chambers lawn

Registration at 4 p.m. • Contest starts at 5 p.m. Prizes awarded for first and second places. Anyone under 18 years of age must have parent sign waiver. Free T-shirts to participants. For more information call Jeremy Loper at 1-800-522-6170, ext. 2407, or e-mail jloper@choctawnation.com.

Horseshoes

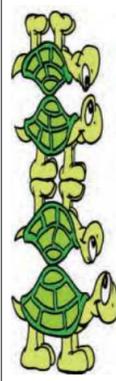
Saturday, Sept. 5
Registration 8 to 9 a.m.

Single elimination tournaments begin at 9:30 a.m.

Men, Women, Youth (up to 13) and Seniors will start at the same time and play concurrent.

There is a limit of 32 women and children, and 64 men (seniors play with the men's group).

A singles tournament will be held for women, youth and men (seniors), a doubles tournament for women and men (seniors), and a ringers championship for women, youth and men (seniors).



TERRAPIN (LUKSI) RACE

Saturday • September 5

Due to the heat, the safety of children and their families, staff, and the terrapins, there has been a change of time for the "Luksi" race.

Prizes for best dressed & fastest terrapins
Gift bag for every entry with a terrapin

Registration begins: 9:45 a.m.
Race starts: 10:30 a.m.

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma 2015 Labor Day Festival

September 3rd - 7th

EDUCATION INFORMATION

Stop by the Education tent at this year's Labor Day Festival, located south of the cafeteria. Staff from the Choctaw Nation Education Department will be available to help with information about our many services.

Tent hours:
Friday 12-6PM
Saturday 9AM-5PM



Tvshka Homma, OK
Chief Gary Batton
Assistant Chief Jack Austin, Jr.
800.522.6170 | choctawnation.com



13th Annual Chief Batton Labor Day Golf Tournament

Date: Sunday, Sept. 6, 2015

Team Cash Prizes	Individual Prizes
1st Place	1st Place
2nd Place	2nd Place
3rd Place	3rd Place
4th Place	4th Place
5th Place	5th Place
6th Place	6th Place
7th Place	7th Place
8th Place	8th Place
9th Place	9th Place
10th Place	10th Place

Labor Day 2015

Shirts & Souvenirs

Labor Day T-shirts
 Children Shirt Size Choices: Children S (6-8), M (10-12), L (14-16)
 Adult Shirt Size Choices: Small, Medium, Large, X-Large, XX-Large, XXX-Large, XXXX-Large

Size	Color	Quantity	Subtotal
	Heather Navy or Kiwi Green	x	\$ 15 =
		x	\$ 15 =
		x	\$ 15 =
		x	\$ 15 =
		x	\$ 15 =

Labor Day Caps

Color	Quantity	Subtotal
Black	x	\$ 12 =
Charcoal/White	x	\$ 12 =

Labor Day Visors

Color	Quantity	Subtotal
Navy	x	\$ 12 =

Labor Day Bags

Color	Quantity	Subtotal
Navy	x	\$ 10 =
Gray	x	\$ 10 =

Grand Total = \$ _____

To order, send payment in the form of cash, money order, or cashier's check with completed form to:
Labor Day T-Shirt
 PO Box 1210
 Durant, OK 74702
 NO PERSONAL CHECKS

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____

CHOCTAW NATION LABOR DAY FESTIVAL 5K

2015

Age as of September 5, 2015 _____

Pre-Registration: Free
Race Day Registration: Free

Race day registration is from 6:30 a.m. until 7:45 a.m. at the race starting line, located at the Capitol Museum.

Pre-registration for all entrants must be post-marked by August 28, 2015.

Send Entry Form To:
 Choctaw Nation
 Attn: Shane Haddock
 5K Road Race/Walk
 P.O. Box 1210
 Durant, OK 74702-1210

Contact:
 1 (800) 522-6170 or (580) 924-8280
 Ext: 2258 or 2122

Applications for Minors Accepted Only With a Parent's or Guardian's Signature.

WAIVER FOR ENTRY FORMS I know that running a road race is a potentially hazardous activity. I should not enter and run unless I am medically able and properly trained. I also know that although police protection will be provided, there will be a possibility of traffic on the course. I assume the risk of running in traffic. I also assume any and all other risks associated with running this event including, but not limited to falls, contact with other participants, the effects of the weather, including high heat and humidity, and the conditions of the roads, all such risks being known and appreciated by me. Furthermore, I agree to yield to all emergency vehicles. I also am fully aware that pushing, pulling, dragging, wearing, carrying or leading any thing or anyone is strictly prohibited. This includes strollers, joggers, pushed wheelchairs, roller blades, skateboards, wheels of any kind (except competitive wheelchairs), animals, flags and head-phones. I agree not to have them on the course. I am fully aware that it is a fraudulent act to buy, sell, switch, or in any way wear someone else's number or allow anyone to wear my number. Furthermore, I agree not to go back onto the course after finishing the race or relay leg and I agree not to cross the finish in a relay unless I am running the final leg. Furthermore, I agree not to hold hands, embrace or touch other participants or connect two or more runners (i.e. centipedes). I am also aware that this waiver applies to sanctioned races and fun runs. Knowing these facts, and in consideration of your accepting my entry, I hereby for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators or anyone else who might claim on my behalf, covenant not to sue, and waive and release and discharge any and all race sponsors, race officials, volunteers, local and state police including any and all of their agents, employees, assigns or anyone acting for or on their behalf from any and all claims or liability for death, personal injury, or property damage of any kind or nature whatsoever arising out of, or in the course of, my participating in this event whether same be caused by negligence or fault. This release and waiver extends to all claims of every kind of nature whatsoever, foreseen or unforeseen, known or unknown. The undersigned further grants full permission to sponsors and or agents authorized by them to use any photographs, videotapes, motion pictures, recordings or any other record of this event for any purpose. Minors accepted only with a parent or guardian's signature.



Iti Fabussa



Photo Courtesy of LA Progressive

All the buildings have been torn down at the Hiawatha Asylum. Only unmarked graves of former patients stand next to a golf course.

Native American History

The Hiawatha Asylum for Insane Indians

This month, Iti Fabussa travels outside of Choctaw Country in order to present a story that forever intertwines the lives of several Choctaw individuals with other people from 52 Tribes across the United States. The Hiawatha Asylum for Insane Indians has been the subject of many articles through the years.

Located in southeastern South Dakota, the Hiawatha Asylum for Insane Indians opened its doors in 1902. Through the first three decades of the 1900s, it housed roughly 75 inmates at a time, of both sexes.

We became aware that there is a Choctaw part in this story when we were contacted by a member of a northern Tribe, who gave us the name of a Choctaw person buried in the asylum's cemetery.

Beginning in 1988, a group of tribal people who have relatives buried in the cemetery began holding an annual memorial service on-site. Through the years, this memorial has brought together tribal people from across the country, connected to each other by their family members buried in the cemetery. The memorial is supported by the town, with community members participating, as a way of acknowledging something awful that happened before they were born, and of making positive relationships with tribal people today.

The asylum's history is an account of something terrible, but a counter story of resilience and perhaps, even of hope can be found.

Imagine, that government agents break into your house, kidnap you, incarcerate you in a dangerous facility located hundreds of miles away, and block all contact with your friends and family. As much as this sounds like the beginning of a fictional novel, for Native Americans living in the early 1900s, it was a real possibility. It may have happened because someone had a disagreement with the Indian agent or for many other reasons, and in some cases, it was because a person actually needed psychiatric care. Whatever the reason, during the opening decades of the last century, hundreds of Native American people were taken from their homes and incarcerated in the only mental health facility that has ever been created in this country for a specific "race."

Once inside this institution, most would never make it back home.

By the accounts of an outside medical investigator, the inmates in this asylum were treated worse than inmates in contemporary prisons. Family members' attempts to get their loved ones professionally evaluated and released were systematically thwarted. Inmates' letters to their friends and families were intercepted, or edited. Direct contact with family members was forbidden. Although treatment for tuberculosis existed, it was denied to inmates at Hiawatha. The disease infected new victims in the institution, which had no running water or electricity. The average life span of an individual incarcerated at Hiawatha was only 42 years. When people died, they were buried in unmarked

graves on the asylum grounds. The only record was a rough burial chart, written onto the wall of the superintendent's office.

From 1908-33, three separate government investigations recommended replacing the superintendent, or shutting the institution down altogether. The asylum closed in 1933. Upon evaluation by a trained doctor, a significant number of surviving inmates were deemed mentally healthy and sent back home. Those who really needed psychiatric care were transported to an institution in Washington, DC, which effectively removed them ever farther from their communities and families. Eventually, all of the buildings at the old Hiawatha Asylum were torn down. Today, the only visible reminder is the cemetery, which contains the unmarked graves of 180 Native American people who died at the



Some of the souvenirs sold by locals included commemorative spoons and plates.

institution.

Organizers of the memorial have reached out to 52 tribes including the Choctaw Nation to make us aware that we had tribal members who experienced this asylum from the inside. We only know the name of one young Choctaw woman, who must have been incarcerated shortly after the institution opened, and was buried in the cemetery in 1905. Subsequent research has revealed a 1926 article, in which a visitor describes meeting an unnamed Choctaw woman in the asylum that year, and indicates that other Choctaw people were at the asylum with her. Unfortunately, their names and stories are, at least for the moment, lost to the tribe.

If you know of a Choctaw person who was at the Hiawatha Asylum for Insane Indians, in Canton, South Dakota, please contact the Choctaw Nation Historic Preservation Department at 1-800-522-6170 ext 2216.

We want to hear your stories and begin to piece together this part of tribal history so that the memory of those Choctaw individuals who experienced the Hiawatha Asylum is not lost to time.

In A Good Way Farm invites all to upcoming cultural events



Illustration of a brush arbor.

In A Good Way Farm will be hosting a pair of events to welcome the autumnal season.

A brush arbor (a Native American pavilion of yesteryear) will be built as a cultural education event at In A Good Way farm, Saturday, Aug. 29, starting at 7 a.m. Anyone interested in helping or watching this Choctaw cultural event is invited to join.

The people of Kulli Chito Presbyterian Church in Bethel will direct the building of the arbor, with the help of Les Williston from Choctaw Cultural Preservation Department.

In A Good Way is a non-profit organization that offers a hand up for Native Americans in need.

The arbor is an educational project that is being built to help preserve the Choctaw culture. The arbor will be used as a covered stage area to be used by singers and musicians at the gospel singing held each year at the farm. The area is also available for outdoor weddings, revivals or picnics.

The fourth annual Homestead Event, with a gospel singing and Native American craft and art sale, will be held at the farm

on Saturday, Sept. 26 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. This event is free to the public.

Any help is greatly appreciated with labor or donations.

In A Good Way Farm is located about six miles west of Talihina off Route 63 if coming from the east. We are seven miles east of the Route 2/Route 63 intersection if coming from Wilburton, McAlester, or Tuskahoma. Coming from either direction, turn south on 1100 Avenue (look for the street sign and balloons). Go one-half mile to a T intersection in the road and turn left, go 100 feet and turn right and travel up the lane about an eighth of a mile.

Call or text Teddi at (918) 718-1302 or email inagoodway@gmail.com.

GPS: 34.721051, -95.145829; Address: 13359 SE 1101 Avenue, Talihina, OK 74571

Please bring your lawn chairs. Indian tacos will be available. Location is in the beautiful mountains of Choctaw Country, near the Potato Hills in the Falfa Community within sight of Buffalo Mountain and just a few miles from the Choctaw Nation Hospital.

Chahta Anumpa

Aiikhvna

◆◆ Lesson of the Month ◆◆

Choctaw pronoun/markers serve as indirect objects when used with a verb to show 'to whom' or 'for whom' something is done. In this lesson we will focus on the markers for

'you' – *chim, chī.*

vm, ǝ – 'my'

chim, chī – 'your'

im, ī – his, her its

'chim' or the 'm' form is used before verbs that begin with a vowel.
chim – pronounced 'chim'

1. *Kafti chim isha chī.*

She will get coffee for you.

2. *Okhissa chim ashvnnichi tuk ǝ?*

Did he lock the door for you?

3. *Abinili chim apoksiachi tuk.*

He repaired the chair for you.

4. *Hattak mvt chim anumpoli bvna.*

That man wants to talk to you.

chī – or the 'n' form (nasal underline), is used before verbs that begin with a consonant.

chī – pronounced 'chinh'

1. *Iti patalhpo chī pashpuli bvna tuk.*

She wanted to sweep the floor for you.

2. *Kvta hosh ofi mǝ chī kanchi tuk?*

Who sold that dog to you?

3. *Towa mǝ chī pila.*

She is throwing the ball to you.

4. *Ohoyo mvt chī hoponaklo ha?*

Did that woman listen to you?

chim, chī – you

achi – future tense

abinili – chair

tuk –past tense

bvna – wants

kanchi – to sell

ohoyo – woman

kafti – coffee

okhissa – door

mvt, mǝ – that

hattak – man

kvta hosh – who

towa – ball

hoponaklo – to listen

ishi – to get

ashvnnichi – to lock

apoksiachi – to repair

anumpoli – to talk

ofi – dog

pila – to throw

ha? – did?

www.choctawschool.com

MEET THE ARTIST

Made With Love



Billie Jo Glidden



Tammy Lorraine



Brandie Francine

Halito – I began making native jewelry three years ago. My Choctaw heritage has always been a part of me and I discovered I could be a part of it. The native jewelry I make is made with natural stone and authentic bone, the items used by my ancestors in the early days of the Choctaw and many other Indian tribes. I continue making and selling native jewelry today to help support my niece Brandie, in her fight against thyroid cancer and the lasting effects of the disease on her heart and body. Brandie's mother, Tammy, also contributes to our cause by making more modern jewelry. Tammy, my sister, began helping her daughter with making jewelry and selling it a year ago to help Brandie in her struggles.

Yakoke!

Saturday, 29 August 2015

11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Choctaw Welcome Center

1882 Hwy 69/75

Colbert, OK 74733

580-296-2672

ChoctawStore.com



ChoctawStore.com

Choctaw Welcome Center
1882 Hwy 69/75 Colbert, OK 74733
855-865-7854
www.choctawstore.com

SPORTS



Kayla Wilson team photo, left, and in action at a long jump competition, on the right.

Wilson on Capital One Academic All-America Second Team

Choctaw excels on the field and in the books

Southwestern (Kansas) College sophomore Kayla Wilson has been named to the 2014-15 Capital One Academic All-America® College Division Women's Track & Field/Cross Country Second Team, as announced by the College Sports Information Directors of America. Wilson became one of the most-decorated track and field student-athletes in the storied history of the Southwestern College women's track and field program. The Mooreland

native finished third in the Triple Jump competition at the 2015 NAIA Outdoor Track and Field National Championships in May in Gulf Shores, Alabama.

That performance followed a pair of All-American performances in triple jump and long jump and the 2015 NAIA Indoor Track and Field Championships in Geneva, Ohio. Wilson also claimed the Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference long jump and triple jump titles at both the Indoor and Outdoor Championship meets. She was a four-time KCAC Field Athlete of the Week selection.

The Capital One Academic All-America® College Division Track & Field/Cross Country Teams are comprised of

student-athletes from NAIA, Canadian and two-year institutions.

To be eligible for consideration, student-athletes must have achieved sophomore academic status or higher, must have attended their respective institution for one full calendar year, must compete in at least 50 percent of his or her athletic events that season, and must possess legitimate athletic statistics.

Student-athletes must also carry a cumulative grade point average of 3.30 or higher. Student-athletes are nominated first for Academic All-Region consideration.

First team all-region selections are then sent on to the national ballot for a chance to become an Academic All-American.

Right on track OK Choctaws run to finals



Ben McBrayer, left, and Jordan Williston, right, won medals at the 2015 state track meet in various events.



Keyia Green, center, took first place in the 300-meter hurdles competition at the state track meet this year.

Three state champion high school track stars are keeping the tradition of Choctaw champion athletes alive.

Here is a brief look at all three athletes:

Ben McBrayer was the 5A State Champion in the 300-meter hurdles at the State Track Meet in Yukon. He also finished third in the 110-meter hurdles. Ben is a 2015 graduate of Altus High School.

Jordan Williston of Broken Bow is the Class 4A state runner-up in high jump for 2015, with a jump of six feet, six inches. He was the 2014 state champion in high jump. He will be a senior this fall and proud parents are Jennifer and Sheldon Herrod of Broken Bow.

Keyia Green, a recent graduate of Idabel High School, is the 2015 state champion in the 300-meter hurdles for class 3A.



Scout Smith of Smithville at the AHSRA Finals Rodeo in Texarkana, Arkansas.

Smithville cowgirl makes it to 'World's Largest Rodeo'

Scout Smith, from Smithville, qualified for and competed at the State Finals of Arkansas High School Rodeo Association held in Texarkana, Arkansas, in three events: barrel racing, pole bending and goat tying.

After three rounds, Scout ended the season qualifying for a coveted spot on the National Team in goat tying. She competed at the National High School Rodeo Finals held in Rock Springs, Wyoming in July. Only the top four from each state qualify for Nationals.

The National High School Finals Rodeo is the "World's Largest Rodeo," featuring approximately 1,500

contestants from across the United States, Canada and Australia. Athletes vie for national titles, prizes and their share of thousands of dollars in college scholarships.

Scout is the daughter of Ricky Smith and Connie Phillips, the granddaughter of Betty Phillips of Bethel, Matt and Judy Phillips of Garvin and Carl and Martha Smith of Smithville. Scout is a recent graduate of Smithville High School and will attend the University of Arkansas-Cossatot in the fall where she will compete as a part the Collegiate Colts Rodeo Team while beginning studies to become a registered nurse.

Choctaw Champions

The Choctaw Nation would like to honor students who have excelled in their chosen sports or academic field.

Guidelines: Must have qualified for a team or individual competition at the state level in high school or have earned a collegiate scholarship for athletics. (Other scholarship winners will be honored in People You Know section.)

Any collegiate competitions will be accepted, and submissions for children below the high school level will also be considered. Any submission for a child under the age of 18 must include their age, grade, and names of parents. If your child is a Choctaw Champion, please send a photo and brief description of their accomplishments to:

biskinik@choctawnation.com
or upload to our Facebook page.

Dean state-bound on Latta squad



Tyler Dean is a freshman at Latta High School and started at third base for the high school baseball team this spring.

The Panthers qualified for the state championship game by defeating the Wister Wildcats in the first round and the Dale Pirates in the semi-finals. They were defeated in the championship game by the Silo Rebels.

Tyler Dean, left, covering third for the Latta Panthers this past spring.

Idabel siblings find success



BAILEY EASTEP

Bailey Eastep, a junior at Idabel High School, went to state in track and powerlifting this season, placing ninth in the state at the powerlifting meet. He also plays football for the Warriors and helped his team advance to the second round of 3A playoffs.

His sister, Victoria Eastep, went to state with the Idabel High School Concert Band in this, her freshman year.



VICTORIA EASTEP

Honey makes All-Cheer Team



Hannah Honey was chosen for the All-Cheer Team at the Dept. of Defense Dependents Schools-Europe Cheerleading Championships 2015. Hannah was a senior at Baumholder Middle-High School in Baumholder, Germany. Hannah was co-captain of the varsity cheer squad.

Hannah is the daughter of Billy and Kerri Honey. Her dad is in the Army and is stationed in Baumholder. Hannah lived in Broken Bow for the first 10 years of her life and she plans to attend East Central University and pursue a career in nursing. She is a descendant of Original Enrollee Elizabeth Jacobs Quinton.



Rylee Tucker shows her state championship banner after winning her latest tennis title.

Tucker takes home back-to-back state tennis championships

Rylee Tucker attends Francis Tuttle's Bioscience and Medicine Academy and Edmond North High School. She will be a senior this fall.

She is a member of the National Honor Society, Oklahoma Honor Society, and Oklahoma Indian Honor Society, as well as Key Club, Spanish Club, and HOSA Club. She volunteers at the Edmond Food Bank and Special Olympics and uses her tennis skills to teach children at the Oak Tree Tennis Academy.

Rylee plays varsity tennis for Edmond North as well as USTA tennis and attends the Oak Tree Tennis Academy and Will Rogers High Performance Tennis Academy.

She is a 4.0 student, takes advanced courses and is interested in a medical degree. She has several colleges that have

shown an interest in her for tennis scholarships.

Rylee has played on the varsity tennis team at Edmond North all three years. She has been a regional champion for the last three years at various positions.

Her freshman year she played 2 doubles and was state runner-up. Her sophomore year she played 1 doubles and placed fourth and took home a team state championship in 6A.

Her junior year she played 2 singles and was the state champion in 6A as well as another team state championship title in 6A. Rylee has a current USTA Missouri Valley ranking of 34 in U18 and travels within the Missouri Valley region playing in USTA tournaments. And she still manages to make time for family and friends.

Stickball tournament continues to grow

By ZACH MAXWELL
Choctaw Nation

The 2015 Labor Day Stickball Tournament has drawn seven teams—up two more from last year as the event continues its growth.

Tournament organizers are also adding a women's game and a 35-and-up men's game to its exhibition schedule, which previously only included a youth game.

The youths will play on Saturday, Sept.

5 at 4 p.m. The 35-and-up men will play at 6 p.m. Sunday, followed by an 18-and-up women's game at 8:30 p.m. Oklahoma ladies will wear red shirts and Mississippi ladies will wear blue.

On July 29, a drawing was held at Choctaw Nation Cultural Services to determine match-ups among the seven teams. Okla Hannali drew the coveted "bye" game and will play the winner be-

tween Beaver Dam and Tvshka Homma at 11 p.m. Friday, Sept. 4.

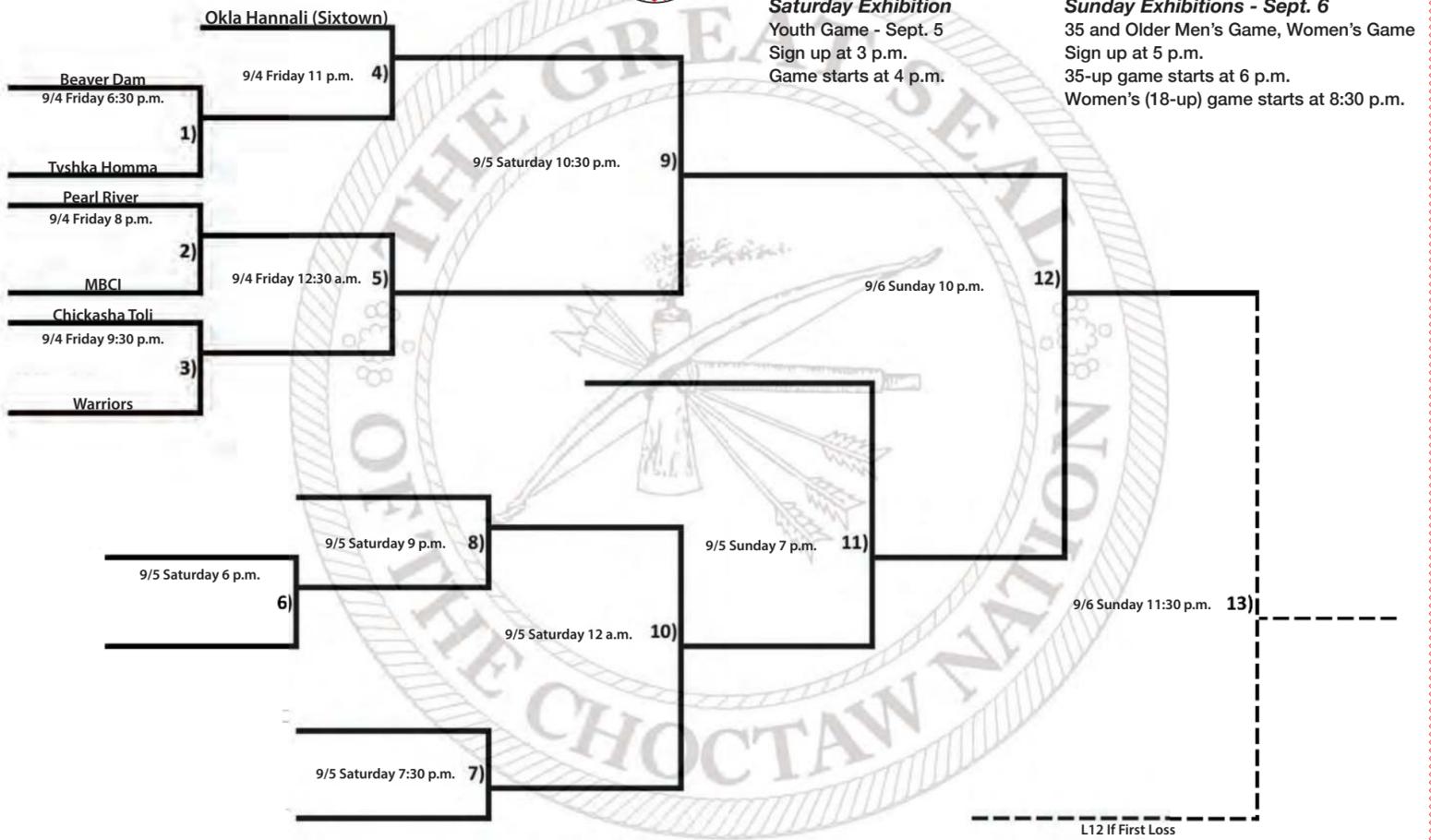
This will be the fourth game of the opening night for stickball. Games start at 6:30 p.m. with Tvshka Homma hosting Beaver Dam. At 8 p.m., Mississippi teams Pearl River and MBCI will square off. At 9:30, Chikasha Toli and the Warriors (also from Mississippi) will play.

There will be five tournament games

on Saturday starting at 6 p.m., and up to three games on Sunday starting at 7 p.m.

"We see more and more youth every year, and the future of stickball is looking really bright because of them," said Les Williston, Head Coach of the host Tvshka Homma team. "The youth league wouldn't be growing without the popularity of the game. It's a sacred game, with a growing tournament and increasing numbers of spectators."

2015 Labor Day Stickball Tournament



2015 Bow Shoot Schedule

TVSHKA HOMMA CAPITOL GROUNDS

Oct. 10

Registration 10:30 ♦ Competition 11 a.m.

Long Bow ♦ Recurve Bow ♦ Selfbows ♦ Handmade Bows ♦ No Compound Bows
Co-ed age groups: 5 & under ♦ 6-8 ♦ 9-13 ♦ 14-16 ♦ 17-19 ♦ 20 & over

Special events:

Sept. 6 Labor Day Festival 8 a.m.

Nov. 14 Turkey Shoot

Prizes for each age group at the end of each shoot.
Final prize awarded at end of year for overall points.



For Information, please call:
Sue Folsom (800) 522-6170 ext. 2134
Pam Waugh (580) 775-7862



Are You??

- Interested in stepping up to help your community?
- Interested in learning more about Choctaw culture?
- A female tribal member, 18 years or older?
- Currently residing in district 11 or 12?

This project is supported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse under award number R01DA037176



The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and the University of Washington Indigenous Wellness Research Institute have joined together to learn more about developing community-wide leaders in health so current and future generations of Choctaw communities grow to live healthfully.

Join us on . . .

The Choctaw Road to Health

For more information: (800) 349-7026 Ext. 6327

Picture Yourself in

CHOCTAW COUNTRY

Southeast Oklahoma is Choctaw Country, a beautiful place filled with history, outdoor fun and southern hospitality!
We're ready to showcase Choctaw Country and all it has to offer. Starting at Choctaw Nation's Annual Labor Day Festival we are going to share with you some of our favorite spots in Choctaw Country and give you a sneak peak of **YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE.**

Visit ChoctawCountry.com

Photos must be submitted by Monday, September 21st. Any photos submitted after this day will not be considered for the contest. The Top Ten photos will be chosen then shared on Visit Choctaw Country's Facebook page. The Best Photo will be chosen based on the most likes on September 28th. The Top Ten and The Best Photo Winner will win some great giveaways to the Poteau Balloon Festival, October 16 & 17.





FESTIVAL RV/TENT CHECK-IN TIMES

Check-in times for RVs and tents will be as follows. Please make arrangements to arrive and check in at your respective gate during one of these times.

	RVs	Tents
Wednesday (9/2)	7 a.m. - 10 p.m.	7 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Thursday (9/3)	8 a.m. - midnight	8 a.m. - midnight
Friday (9/4)	8 a.m. - midnight	8 a.m. - midnight
Saturday (9/5)	8 a.m. - midnight	Locked
Sunday (9/6)	8 a.m. - 10 p.m.	Locked

NEW HOURS - CHOCTAW NATION MUSEUM & GIFT SHOP

	Museum	Gift Shop
Thursday (9/3)	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Friday (9/4)	8 a.m. - 3 p.m.	8 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Saturday (9/5)	10 a.m. - 6 p.m.	10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Sunday (9/6)	12 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	12 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Monday (9/7)	8 a.m. - 10 a.m.	8 a.m. - 10 a.m.

CHOCTAW VILLAGE

Saturday

10:00 a.m.	Choctaw Dancing
10:30 a.m.	Stickball Skills
10:30 a.m.	Traditional Choctaw Hymns
11:00 a.m.	Storytelling
11:30 a.m.	Rabbit Stick Throw
1:00 p.m.	Stickball
1:30 p.m.	Language
1:45 p.m.	Corn Game
2:15 p.m.	Choctaw Dancing

Sunday

1:00 p.m.	Rabbit Stick Throw
1:30 p.m.	Storytelling
2:00 p.m.	Corn Game

Join us in the village for traditional food sampling, crafts, and demonstrations during the festival.

INTER-TRIBAL POW WOW

Friday (9/4)

Staff

- MC – Tim Tallchief
- Head Man – Randy Frazier
- Head Lady – Courtney Reeder
- Head Gourd – James Family
- AD – Bill Takeshorse
- Southern Drum – Otter Trail
- Northern Drum – Young Buffalo Horse
- Color Guard – Choctaw Nation
- Gourd session in honor of Harry James

Schedule

- 2 p.m. - 5 p.m. – Gourd Dance
- 5 p.m. - 6 p.m. – Break
- 6 p.m. - Gourd Dance
- 7 p.m. - Grand Entry

Adult Men and Women

- 19-49 years / Golden Age – 50 years & over
- Men – Straight / Traditional / Fancy Dance / Grass
- Women – Cloth / Buckskin / Jingle Dress / Fancy Shawl
- 1st \$500 / 2nd \$400 / 3rd 300 / 4th \$200 / 5th \$100

Senior Boys and Girls

- 13-18 years
- Senior Boys – Straight / Traditional / Fancy Dance / Grass
- Senior Girls – Cloth / Buckskin / Jingle Dress / Fancy Shawl
- 1st \$150 / 2nd \$125 / 3rd \$100

Junior Boys and Girls

- 7-12 years
- Junior Boys – Straight / Traditional / Fancy Dance / Grass
- Junior Girls – Cloth / Buckskin / Jingle Dress / Fancy Shawl
- 1st \$150 / 2nd \$100 / 3rd \$100

Tiny Tots

0-6

Reserved parking for staff, dancers & drum groups across the road in the Village Parking.

Booth & Fee Information: Willard Polk or Sue Folsom (580) 924-8280
Free admission; bring your lawn chairs; drums welcome; all princesses invited; alcohol & drugs will not be tolerated; not responsible for theft or accidents.

THURSDAY

- 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Capitol Museum Opens
- 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Museum Gift Shop Hours
- 7:00 p.m. Princess Pageant, Amphitheater

FRIDAY

- 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Capitol Museum Hours
- 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Museum Gift Shop Hours
- 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. CCA, Crafts for youth at playground
- 10:00 a.m. Arts and Crafts exhibits open
- 11:00 a.m. Choctaw social dance on Capitol lawn
- Noon-5:00 p.m. Quilt entries at Information Center
- Noon-6:00 p.m. CDIB/Membership/Photo ID booth open
- Noon-8:00 p.m. Healthy Living Expo, next to Council Chambers
- 2:00 p.m. Gourd Dancing on Capitol lawn
- 5:00 p.m. Carnival opens
- 5:00 p.m. Registration for Chief Batton Physical Fitness Challenge, on Council Chambers lawn
- 6:00 p.m. Chief Batton Physical Fitness Challenge, on Council Chambers lawn
- 6:00 p.m. Gourd Dancing on Capitol lawn
- 6:30 p.m. Sculpture unveiling at Heritage Garden in front of the Capitol building
- 7:00 p.m. Stickball Tournament at Stickball Field
- 7:00 p.m. Pow Wow Grand Entry on Capitol lawn
- 7:00 p.m. Fast-Pitch Tournament at Red Warrior Park
- 7:00 p.m. **Easton Corbin**, Amphitheater
- 9:00 p.m. **Chris Young**, Amphitheater

SATURDAY

- 6:30-7:45 a.m. 5k registration, Capitol Museum
- 8:00 a.m. 5k Race begins and ends at Capitol Museum
- 8:00 a.m. Fast-Pitch Tournament continues
- 8:00 a.m.-9:30 a.m. 3-on-3 Choctaw War Hoops Basketball registration
- 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. Healthy Living Expo, next to Council Chambers
- 8:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m. Fittest Choctaw Registration
- 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Daycare & YAB, Crafts for youth at playground
- 9:00 a.m. Horseshoe Tournament
- 9:00 a.m. Co-ed Volleyball Tournament
- 9:00 a.m. Quilt Show at Information Center
- 9:30 a.m. Fittest Choctaw Event, Men's and Women's Divisions
- 9:45 a.m. Terrapin Race Registration at playground
- 10:00 a.m. 3-on-3 Choctaw War Hoops Basketball Tournament
- 10:00 a.m. 11th Annual Choctaw Nation Art Show opens, second floor of Capitol Museum
- 10:00 a.m.-Noon Buffalo Tours, load bus at Capitol Museum
- 10:30 a.m. Terrapin Races, playground
- 10:00 a.m.-2:15 p.m. Choctaw Village activities (see schedule)
- 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Capitol Museum Hours
- 10:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Museum Gift Shop Hours
- 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. CDIB/Membership/Photo ID booth open
- 4:00 p.m. Tough, Tough Choctaw registration, on Council Chambers lawn
- 5:00 p.m. Tough, Tough Choctaw contest, on Council Chambers lawn
- 7:00 p.m. **Neal McCoy**, Amphitheater
- 8:00 p.m. Stickball Tournament at field north of carnival
- 9:00 p.m. **Reba**, Amphitheater

SUNDAY

- 7:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m. National Day of Prayer & Worship, Chapel
- 8:00 a.m. Bow Shoot, Choctaw Village
- 8:00 a.m. Fast-Pitch Tournament continues
- 8:30 a.m. Golf Tournament, Sycamore Springs Course, Wilburton
- 10:00 a.m. Worship Services at Chapel
- Noon Gospel Singing begins at amphitheater
- Noon Domino/Checker Tournament registration
- Noon-4:30 p.m. Capitol Museum Hours
- Noon-4:00 p.m. Museum Gift Shop Hours
- Noon-5:00 p.m. Healthy Living Expo, next to Council Chambers
- Noon-6:00 p.m. CDIB/Membership/Photo ID booth open
- 1:00 p.m. Domino/Checker Tournament
- 1:30 p.m. Golf Tournament, Sycamore Springs Course, Wilburton
- 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m. Choctaw Village activities (see schedule)
- 1:30 p.m.-3:00 p.m. Choctaw Code Talker Assoc. Board, Council Chambers
- 2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. Buffalo Tours, load bus at Capitol Museum
- 4:00 p.m. Choctaw Dancers, Capitol lawn
- 5:00 p.m. Stickball exhibition, Capitol lawn
- 7:00 p.m. Children's stickball exhibition, stickball field
- 7:00 p.m. **Jason Crabb**, Amphitheater
- 8:00 p.m. Women's stickball exhibition, stickball field
- 9:00 p.m. Championship stickball game, stickball field
- 9:00 p.m. **Matt Maher**, Amphitheater

MONDAY

- 8:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m. Capitol Museum Hours
- 8:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m. Museum Gift Shop Hours
- 9:00 a.m.-Noon CDIB/Membership/Photo ID booth open
- 10:00 a.m. Labor Day official ceremonies, amphitheater
- Posting of Flags- Choctaw Nation Color Guard
- The Lord's Prayer in Sign Language- Choctaw Royalty
- Storyteller Tim Tingle
- Introduction of Tribal Council and Judges
- Swearing-In Ceremony
- State of the Nation Address by Chief Gary Batton
- Door Prize Drawings
- 11:30 a.m. Free lunch for everyone, cafeteria
- Noon Pick up quilts from Quilt Show

Sculpture Unveiling

The unveiling of the bronze sculpture by Janie Umsted, will be held on Friday at 6:30 p.m. at the Heritage Garden in front of the Capitol Building. The subject of the sculpture is storytelling and how youth teach one another traditions.