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CHOCTAW NATION

The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

October 2015 Issue

Tribal Council holds regular session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session Sept. 12 at Tvshka Homma. Parliamentarian, Recording Secretary, Sergeant-at-Arms, and the Committee of the Tribal Council were appointed. The following council bills were unanimously approved:

- Letter of re-appointment of Jack Austin Jr. as Assistant Chief of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.
- Letter of Appointment of Michael Burrage as General Counsel of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.
- Budget for General Fund FY 2016.
- Budget for Capital Projects FY 2016.
- Budget for Health Services Programs FY 2016.
- Budget for Consolidated Tribal Government Programs FY 2016.
- Budget for Choctaw Nation WIC FY 2016.
- Budget for Choctaw Nation WIC Farmers' Market FY 2016.
- Budget modification #2 for Choctaw Nation WIC and WIC Farmers' Market FY 2015.
- Budget modification #1 for Choctaw Nation Child Care Development Fund budget for FY 2015.
- Approve a line of credit for Choctaw Defense Manufacturing, LLC.
- Approve a line of credit for Choctaw Defense Munitions, LLC.
- Approve disposal of surplus equipment.
- Approve a determination under the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, 25, U.S.C. 1680c(c)(2) to extend health services to all non-native Health Service Eligible employees of the Choctaw Nation and their covered dependents.
- Application for the Special Diabetes Program for Indians Community-Directed Grant Program.
- Application for the Methamphetamine and Suicide Prevention Initiative-Generation Indigenous Initiative Support
- Funds and Budget for Support for Expectant and Parenting Teens, Women, Fathers, and Their Families Program.
- Funds and Budget for the Native American Library Services Basic Grant Tribal Youth Initiative.
- Funds and Budget for the Tribal Personal Responsibility Education Program for Teen Pregnancy Prevention.
- Authorize the Boys & Girls Club of McCurtain County, Oklahoma, to participate and accept funding on behalf of the Community from the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs to support the Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Programs for Youth.
- Authorize the Boys & Girls Club of Durant, Oklahoma, to participate and accept funding on behalf of the Community from the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs to support the Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Programs for Youth.

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.

Interior Secretary Jewell announces \$186M trust settlement to Nations



Photo by Kendra Germany

Signing a multi-million dollar agreement that settles a long-standing land dispute are, from left, Gov. Bill Anoatubby of the Chickasaw Nation, U.S. Department of the Interior Secretary Sally Jewell, and Chief Gary Batton of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. The historic signing took place Oct. 6 at the Choctaw Event Center.

By CHARLES CLARK
Choctaw Nation

On Oct. 6, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell visited Choctaw Country to announce the \$186 million agreement resolving a dispute with claims dating back more than 100 years. Staff of the Choctaw Nation, many wearing traditional tribal attire, lined the hallway to greet Jewell on her historic visit.

The settlement is the result of a lawsuit brought by the Choctaw Nation and the Chickasaw Nation against the Department of the Interior. Not only has a monetary figure been reached, but it brings an end to, as the Interior Department explained, "protracted, vigorously contested and expensive litigation that has burdened both nations and the United States for a decade."

At issue was the accounting of management and disposition of more than a million acres of Chickasaw and Choctaw tribal lands that the U.S. government took control of on the eve of Oklahoma statehood. The U.S., as federal trustee, held those lands in trust for the benefit of the Nations. In December 2005 the Nations filed suit in U.S. District Court seeking a long overdue accounting of the federal trustee's management of those resources and an equitable restoration of the value of that trust.

After a decade of litigation, a \$186 million settlement was reached. The settlement will be divided between the Chickasaw and Choctaw Nations based on longstanding treaty agreements. According to those treaties, the Choctaw Nation will receive 75 percent of the funds, while the Chickasaw Nation will receive 25 percent. Based on the treaties, the Choctaw Nation will receive \$139.5 million and the Chickasaw Nation will receive \$46.5

million.

When asked what the event meant to the ancestors of today's Choctaw people, Chief Gary Batton said, "It means their sacrifices have not been in vain."

Chief Batton led the entourage showing the location where the Choctaw Cultural Center is to be built, the Nation's print shop business, Career Development campus, Recycling Center, Food Distribution Center, Child Development Center and School of Choctaw Language; also shown was the Fire Department, a community partnership effort.

From there the group proceeded to the main event—the signing of the agreement.

Bill Anoatubby, Governor of the Chickasaw Nation, and council members from both tribes met Chief Batton and Secretary Jewell at the door of the Events Center and all moved inside together.

Flags of all three nations lined the back of the stage. All seats were filled in front. Two risers stacked with members of the press were behind the audience.

Choctaw Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. served as emcee introducing District 6 Councilman Joe Coley to open with a prayer. Next, Scott Wesley sang *The Lord's Prayer* in the Choctaw language as Junior Miss Choctaw Nation Loren Crosby and Little Miss Choctaw Nation Ariana Byington presented the hymn in sign language.

Gov. Anoatubby spoke first.

"This is a historic moment," he began.

Directing his remarks to Secretary Jewell, he said, "We appreciate all of your help with this matter and this administration's help."

Reiterating an earlier press release, he said, "This settlement represents a significant milestone

in helping solidify and improve our relationship with the United States. We respect the vital role Secretary Jewell has taken in helping make this historic settlement a reality. We are confident she will play an essential role in our efforts to continue strengthening the relationship between our governments, because we believe she has a unique appreciation for the mutual benefits of a positive government-to-government relationship."

Then it was Chief Batton's turn.

"The Choctaw Nation is very blessed," he said.

"It is a historic occasion to have the Secretary of the Interior visit the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations. I am appreciative of having a sovereign-to-sovereign relationship between the Choctaw Nation and the United States government. It is also historic that these three sovereigns have agreed to a settlement of the timber trust account case."

Touching on the July visit by another federal government notable, Chief Batton said, "This visit marks the start of a revitalized relationship with the United States. Secretary Jewell's presence here, coming soon after President Obama's recent visit, also serves to reaffirm that the foundation of this relationship is government-to-government."

"This is a time of healing," he said.

With an introduction that spoke to her empathy and support of American Indian issues and people, Secretary Jewell came to the podium. She met the crowd with the Choctaw greeting, "Halito!"

"Today's agreement is the latest addition to a record number of long-standing settlements resolved under this Administration," Secretary Jewell said, *cont'd on page 3*



Photos by Brandon Frye

Delton Cox smiles with AARP representatives after being presented his honorary medallion. Pictured are, from left, Associate State Director Mashell Sourjohn, Regional Vice President Nancy Stockbridge, Choctaw Tribal Council Member Delton Cox, and Oklahoma AARP State President Joe Ann Vermillion.

Cox honored for service

By BRANDON FRYE
Choctaw Nation

Delton Cox, long time tribal council member and speaker of the tribal council, was among 50 honorees at the 7th Annual AARP Oklahoma Indian Elder Honors, held Oct. 6.

"Of course, I appreciate the honor, it shows recognition for some things I have done over the years," Cox said. "I am

not done yet, though. It's not a period at the end of the sentence. It's just one event, and I have a lot more I'd like to get done before I cash in my chips."

During his time spent in service to the Choctaw people, Cox has been vital to many facets of the Choctaw Nation. Most notably, he has served District 4 as councilman for 14 years, a role he continues to fulfill. He also served as speaker for eight years.

cont'd on page 12

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

VETERANS ADVOCACY PROGRAM

Choctaw Nation Veterans Day Celebration
November 11, 2015
Tvshka Homma
Begins at 10 a.m.
Includes Lunch

Transportation Schedules

Antlers	(580) 298-5501	8:30 a.m.
Atoka	(580) 889-6147	8 a.m.
Bethel	(580) 241-5637	8 a.m.
Smithville	(580) 244-3289	8:30 a.m.
Broken Bow	(580) 584-6372	7:30 a.m.
Coalgate	(580) 927-3641	8 a.m.
Crowder	(918) 334-5344	8 a.m.
Durant	(580) 924-7810	8 a.m.
Hugo	(580) 326-7551	8 a.m.
Idabel	(580) 286-6116	7 a.m.
McAlester	(918) 423-1016	8 a.m.
Poteau	(918) 647-9324	8 a.m.
Spiro	(918) 962-3832	8 a.m.
Stigler	(918) 967-2398	7:30 a.m.
Talihina	(918) 567-2106	No Transport
Wilburton	(918) 465-2389	8 a.m.
Wright City	(580) 981-7011	7:30 a.m.

For any questions, please call 800-522-6170: Brent Oakes ext. 2163, Roger Hamill ext. 2160, Harlan Wright ext. 2735, or Jason Burwick ext. 2369.
Check with local community centers for any possible changes for transport.

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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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FAITH, FAMILY AND CULTURE



The family is the heart of the Choctaw Nation

Family is very important to me. The cooler weather has given me the opportunity to spend quality time with my grandchildren over the past few weekends. We have shot baskets and gone fishing. Choctaw Country in the fall is beautiful and it is a blessing to be able to make such good memories.

My wife, Angie, and I are adoptive parents. We were elated to welcome our daughter and son to our hearts and our home. If we had not adopted our children, we would not be enjoying our two grandchildren! I thank God every

day for them.

I have often said our granddaughter is the boss of the family! She has our hearts wrapped around her finger.

Our grandson is athletic and, at thirteen, is already taller than me. He keeps us active and busy.

There are many families such as ours who are united through programs like the Choctaw Nation's Children and Family Services. There are many more children needing a place to call home than there are families to provide that home.

Choctaw children need to be raised in a Choctaw home.

Choctaw foster families do more than just provide a home and necessities. They share the Choctaw heritage and teach the children stability and values. They give them all their love.

The children can be in the foster homes for a few days, a few months or a few years. I have watched foster parents show strength and compassion as they are called with requests to accept a newborn, a toddler, or sometimes an older child. The unconditional love is evident as they change one child's life, then another, and another even though they know the child will most likely be there for just a short time. The foster families work with the children's families so that they can have a better chance of returning home. More than 100 Choctaw children were returned to their homes last year after temporary intervention.

There have been many compassionate families who began as foster parents and later adopted a child. In cases where the children have entered foster care and it is not possible for them to return to their parents or their own extended family, the child's foster family can have the first choice in adopting.

There are many couples like Angie and me who are unable to have children and want to make a difference, not only by adding to their lives but also by nurturing the life of a child. If you are interested in becoming a foster parent, please call (800) 522-6170, extension 2331.

Yakoke, thank you, to all of the amazing and dedicated Choctaw families who reach out to hold these children in your arms.



The first family of the Choctaw Nation includes, from left, son David, grandson Jeffrey, wife Angie, granddaughter Kaylynn (in front), and Chief Gary Batton.



Employees always ready to aid Choctaws

Fall has officially arrived and like any other time of the year, there are many things going on in the Choctaw Nation. Thankfully, we can enjoy an extended reprieve from our hot Oklahoma summers in more pleasant weather for upcoming events.

I am very proud of the exceptional employees who work out in our communities to ensure that the needs of Choctaw people are met. This tribe is blessed with a broad spectrum of programs and services in place which are designed to assist tribal members of all ages. These

employees know our members and are their best advocates for a better future.

The purpose of our tribal programs continues to be to educate and ensure happier, healthier lives for our tribal members. One of the best ways to accomplish this is to begin before birth. The Support for Expectant Parenting Teens (SEPT) program works with young women and men who are preparing to be parents. Specialists give the young mothers and fathers valuable tools to handle the significant challenges of parenthood which increases their chances of success moving forward.

Because of the personal relationships built by caring employees, our employees are able to anticipate needs of tribal members throughout their lives. Kids in hardship situations are identified and programs such as annual coat and shoe drives are there to make a difference. Fun events such as the Harvest Carnival held at Tvshka Homma offer an enjoyable environment for entire families to spend quality time together.

The care of our elders is paramount and service employees spend countless hours in homes assisting with things as simple as helping to complete an application for services.



Victims of domestic violence are honored as candles are lit by a circle of Choctaws and other southeast Oklahomans at the Remember My Name Vigil earlier this month at Tvshka Homma.

for positive outcomes. The circumstances that assistance arises from could be from the loss of a job, a divorce or an extended illness. Sadly, the reason could be life threatening and involve domestic violence. October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and Victims Services will hold its 2nd Annual Domestic Violence Awareness Walk on Oct. 23 at the walking trail located by the Outreach Services complex in Hugo, Oklahoma. Also this month, Choctaw Nation's Children and Family Services department held its annual Remember my Name Memorial/Vigil on Oct. 2 at Tvshka Homma.

The employees of Choctaw Nation do a tremendous job daily that exemplifies the values of our ancestors. A full list of services can be found on www.choctawnation.com.

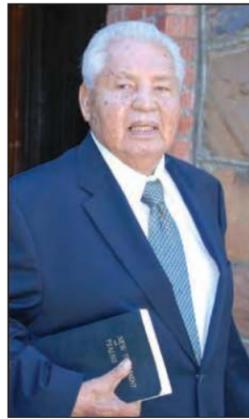


Tell a Tale

Check out the Choctaw Nation Facebook site this month for spooky stories straight from Choctaw Nation employees and tribal members.

Chaplain's Corner

God has a perfect plan for you



Rev. Bertram Bobb
Tribal Chaplain

I am thankful for the privilege to share with you God's Plan of Salvation and answers to questions as these.

Where can I find the truth about life? Where can I find guidance and directions for how to act at home, at work, and at school? Where can I find comfort in a time of need?

To the Christian, the answers to these questions are obvious.

The answers have been repeated from the pulpits, in Sunday school classes, in personal testimonies and in the Bible. The Bible is God's Word.

The writer in the Book of Hebrews 4:12 wrote: 12. "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Whatever your profession, or vocation, get to know the Bible. Get a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. There are many people who have not committed themselves to God in faith. They are just waiting for a wind to come along to blow them in any direction.

Will you today commit your life to Jesus Christ? Let Him have complete control in your life. Let Him be the Lord of your life. Serve Him with love and a committed heart.

Jesus said in Luke 14:27-30:27. "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

28. "For which of you, intending to build a tower,

sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?"

29. "Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, 30. "Saying, this man began to build, and was not able to finish."

What Jesus is saying is, "If you are going to follow me, down and count the cost."

There are three problems we face when we come to the Word of God.

First, there is a mind problem.

We must decide who Jesus Christ is. Was He the Son of the Living God, the Way, the Truth, and the Life? (John 20:31; John 14:6). Was He all Truth as He claimed?

That's a decision you have to make about Jesus Christ—a mind problem.

The Bible has this to say about the mind in Matthew 22:37: "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." And in Philippians 2:5, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

The mind is important but remember that the mind has been affected by sin. You cannot come to Jesus Christ by the mind alone, that step has to be taken by faith.

Jesus is God. He left Heaven to come to this earth. He became man to pay the penalty for sin, which is death, in our place, He died, He was buried, He arose from the grave (I Corinthians 15:3-4), He lives today, and this is what we believe by faith.

The second problem that we face in coming to Jesus Christ is a moral problem. Meeting the high standards of Christ.

Jesus Christ demands first place in everything. You come to Jesus realizing you have to pay a price. You can't drag those dirty sins with you. You will have to quit lying, you will have to quit stealing, you will have to quit sleeping with that woman or man who is not your spouse, you will have to quit cheating in school or at work.

You will have to invest study time in the Word of God "... to show yourself 'approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be

ashamed'..." (II Timothy 2:15).

All these things are costly. Are you willing to pay the price? You can't live a clean life today, except one way, and that is through Jesus Christ.

Paul said in Galatians 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Paul writes in his letter to the Romans in Romans 6:14: "... sin shall not have dominion over you." There was a time when sin ruled in your life, but when you came to Jesus Christ sin no longer rules and He can help you to meet the high standards that He sets in moral living.

Now, coming to Christ isn't going to make you perfect.

Suppose you accept Jesus Christ and you slip and fall, what happens? Immediately, you need to say, "O Lord, I am sorry, I turn from that sin, I don't ever want to commit it again." Remember First John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive you your sins. If you have sinned, go to Him and say, "Lord, I have sinned, I am sorry."

The third problem in coming to Jesus Christ is an emotional problem because we are made of mind, and will, and an emotion.

Nobody says that you have to cry when you come to Christ or that you have to laugh when you come to Christ. You can't look at the cross and realize the Love of God without being emotionally moved that God sent His Only Begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to shed His blood and die for you, so that you may have forgiveness of sin and eternal life. But there is more to it than that.

To know Jesus Christ as Savior doesn't mean just blessings in heaven, it also means blessings here on earth until you get to heaven. God has a perfect plan laid out for you here now.

Remember to pray for USA and Native America and their leaders. Pray for our service men and women who remain on active duty.

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



Student School & Activity Fund

FY 2016 funds now available

ONLINE Application now available

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Students will now receive a \$100 pre-paid Visa gift card in 2-3 weeks that can only be used at clothing retailers

Student School & Activity Fund
 P.O. Box 1210
 Durant, OK 74702

Email: SSAF@ChoctawNation.com

Paper applications still available at
ChoctawNation.com

Secretary Jewell cont'd from page 1 noting that this was the 86th agreement reached, the fifth largest, under President Obama. There had been 100 facing the United States. "This president has settled more than any previous administration," she said.

Referring to the issue as "a black mark of our history," she said today's step shows "our commitment" to "the trust and treaty obligation."

"This historic settlement is the start of a new chapter in our trust relationships with the Chickasaw and Choctaw Nations, and underscores our commitment to fulfilling those responsibilities to Native communities across the country."

To the members of the Nations present, she said, "You have moved beyond being victims, you are survivors."

As she stepped back from the podium, she turned and said, "Governor, Chief, if you will join me, we have something to sign."



Photo by Charles Clark

Preparing to enter the Events Center for the document signing are, from left, Chief Gary Batton, Secretary Sally Jewell and Gov. Bill Anoatubby.

The three nation representatives then moved to sit side-by-side at a table on stage where they each signed the document.

In return for the settlement, the nations will dismiss their current lawsuit and forego further litigation regarding the United States' historic management or accounting of the nations' funds and natural resources held in the trust. The parties will abide by alternative dispute resolution procedures to reduce the likelihood of future litigation.

The parties also agree to undertake new information-sharing procedures that will lead to improved communication concerning the management of the nations' trust funds and natural resources.

"We plan for the proceeds to be invested in our people—expanding education, creating jobs, promoting economic development and culture as well as a portion to be invested in a sustainability fund for the future of our citizens," Chief Batton said.



The CSBDS provides business assistance to Choctaw tribal entrepreneurs that want to start or expand their business.

Choctaw Tribal members that utilize the services will receive specialized technical assistance through one-on-one business counseling, training workshops, an extensive network of business assistance programs and educational networking opportunities. Assistance offered includes, but is not limited to:

- Business Planning
- Business Counseling
- Business Registration
- Access to Financing
- 8(a) Certification Assistance
- Minority Business Registration
- Marketing
- Business Taxes
- Bid Assistance

November Events Calendar:
 (Please contact CSBDS for more details and to register)

Nov 10th Antlers : Business Planning 10:00-12:00
 Nov 12th Coalgate : Business Planning 10:00-12:00
 Nov 17th Broken Bow : Business Planning 2:00-4:00
 Nov 19th Durant : Business Tax Workshop 9-11:30

Contact Small Business Development Services today!

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



Photo by Payton Guthrie

Billie Nowabbi, a retired member of the United Methodist clergy, looks on as Chief Gary Batton of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma signs another historic document this month.

Chief signs proclamation naming second Monday in October as Indigenous Peoples Day

Chief Gary Batton signed a proclamation declaring the second Monday of October as Indigenous Peoples Day for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

The proclamation states: "The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has a responsibility to highlight its glorious history, rich culture, and promote who we are as Chahta people."

The signing took place at the Choctaw Nation headquarters in Durant, on Oct. 7, 2015, with Billie Nowabbi, a retired United Methodist clergy, in attendance.

In the U.S., the second Monday of October is federally recognized as Columbus Day. The national holiday is observed as the anniversary of Christopher Columbus' arrival to the Americas.

A growing number of municipalities,

and even states, across the country have reclaimed the day for indigenous people, who were living here when Columbus arrived.

Among the communities making this change are: Alaska; Anadarko, Oklahoma; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Portland, Oregon; St. Paul, Minnesota; and Olympia, Washington.

Batton said the Choctaw Nation's proclamation will help to educate and promote the significance of the contributions made by the Chahta people to the United States of America and the State of Oklahoma.

"This is an opportunity to celebrate the thriving cultures and positive values of the Indigenous Peoples of our region," Batton added.

PROCLAMATION:

WHEREAS, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma recognizes that the Indigenous Peoples of the lands that would later become known as the Americas have occupied these lands since time immemorial; and

WHEREAS, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma recognizes that this community and surrounding communities were built upon the land owned by the Choctaw people; and

WHEREAS, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma value the many contributions made to this community through Indigenous Peoples' knowledge, labor, technology, science, philosophy, arts, faith and the deep cultural contribution that has shaped the character of this community; and

WHEREAS, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma has a responsibility to highlight its glorious history and rich culture and promote who we are as Chahta people; and

WHEREAS, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma promotes the closing of the equity gap for Indigenous Peoples through policies and practices that reflect the experiences of Indigenous Peoples, ensure greater access and opportunity, and honor our nation's indigenous roots, history, and contributions; and

WHEREAS, Indigenous Peoples' Day was first proposed in 1977 by a delegation of Native Nations to the United Nations sponsored International Conference on Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations in the Americas;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Gary Batton, Chief of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, do hereby proclaim the following:

Section 1. Indigenous Peoples' Day shall be an opportunity to celebrate the thriving cultures and positive values of the Indigenous Peoples of our region.

Section 2. Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma schools and other educational institutions are encouraged to recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day.

Section 3. The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma businesses, organizations, and other institutions are encouraged to recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day.

Section 4. The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma shall promote the well-being and growth of the American Indian and Indigenous community of the greater Choctaw Nation.

Section 5. Indigenous Peoples' Day shall be used to reflect upon the ongoing struggles of Indigenous People, and to celebrate the thriving culture and value that Indigenous nations add to our community.

Section 6. The second Monday in October shall be declared as Indigenous Peoples' Day in the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

SIGNED AT THE CHOCTAW NATION HEADQUARTERS, DURANT OKLAHOMA, THIS 7TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 2015.

Remember My Name

Vigil a reminder of the dangers of domestic violence

By CHARLES CLARK

Choctaw Nation

Emotions ran high at the second Remember My Name Memorial/Vigil. Beginning just before dusk Oct. 2 at the Choctaw Nation Capitol grounds at Tvshka Homma, more than 35 women, men, and youth gathered in the cafeteria. October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. At last year's inaugural event Chief Gary Batton was the first chief in Choctaw history to sign a proclamation recognizing the focus of the month and the seriousness of physical violence within families.

The Choctaw Nation Children & Family Services' Family Violence Prevention Program sponsored the event. Representatives from several of the Nation's programs that touch on domestic violence came together to share information. Help is available for members of the Choctaw Nation and some offices offer help to anyone in need.

Jennifer Woods, Community Based Social Work director in Hugo, gave an opening prayer. District 10's Little Miss Kylee Hampton and Junior Miss Maci Wagoner gave The Lord's Prayer in sign language. Cherity Wallace, of Children & Family Services in Durant, gave a reading of the proclamation previously signed by Chief Batton.

Sabrina Ralls, of Children & Family Services in Poteau, gave a reading of the poem "Remember My Name."

"My daughter Ashleigh was 20 years old and four months pregnant with my first grandchild when she was killed," said Tara Woodlee.

Woodlee was the keynote speaker of the evening. The Texas resident is the founder of Ashleigh's Patience Project. Woodlee spoke about her own experience of being abused by a previous husband, and then detailed her daughter Ashleigh Marie Lindsey's life, and eventual death, at the hands of an abuser.

"I could not find a place to kiss my daughter's face that was not covered in blood," she spoke of her daughter's final moments. "Then, I watched my grandchild die on a sonogram."

Woodlee and the other speakers stressed the importance of seeking professional help if involved in abusive situations and not waiting until it is too late.

Woodlee's presentation concluded as the sun was setting. At that time Marcia Hampton, Choctaw Nation Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Advocate based in Atoka, and primary organizer of the evening, guided everyone outdoors for the candle lighting ceremony.

As each candle in the circle was lit, people offered dedications in memory of someone lost to domestic violence. In some cases, the dedication was for a person currently in a dangerous and painful situation.

The thread of the event was to let people know that the Choctaw Nation stands firmly against domestic violence and that help is being provided.

Another public event scheduled this month is the Glow Run, set for 6 p.m. Oct. 23 starting at the Choctaw Nation Community Center in Atoka. The evening 5K run will have t-shirts for participants. In addition to the fun, the activity has the added purpose of spreading the word that "Domestic violence is not our tradition." For information or to register, call marcia hampton at 580-889-1955 or Cherity Wallace, 580-924-8280 Ext. 2663.

For more information

Choctaw Nation Children and Family Services

- 1-800-522-6170, Ext. 2482, 2402, 2497 or 2635.

Choctaw Nation Project SAFE

- Durant, 580-924-8280
- Broken Bow, 580-584-3150
- Talihina, 918-567-4265

Ashleigh's Patience Project

- 903-449-2335 or Ashleighspatienceprojec@gmail.com

Inter-Tribal Council meeting held in Durant

The meeting of the five tribes was held Oct. 8-9 at the Choctaw Casino Resort in Durant.

Approved resolutions included:

- Resolution 15-29: A resolution supporting the nomination of Joe Byrd as a National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Eastern Region Vice-President.
- Resolution 15-30: A resolution declaring unequivocal support for the Indian Child Welfare Act and the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Guidelines and Proposed Regulations Serve the Best Interests of Indian Children.
- Resolution 15-31: A resolution to respect and protect our Member Nations' rights in original homelands, as well as those of all "removed" Native Nations and Tribes in their original territories.
- Resolution 15-32: A resolution establishing a Youth Committee.



Photo by Payton Guthrie

Chickasaw Nation Governor Bill Anoahtubby, Cherokee Nation Deputy Principal Chief S. Joe Crittenden, Muscogee (Creek) Nation Principal Chief George Tiger, Choctaw Nation Chief Gary Batton, and Seminole Nation Principal Chief Leonard M. Harjo attend the Inter-Tribal meet in Durant.

- Resolution 15-33: A resolution in support of H.R. 592/S. 314 The Pharmacy and Medically Underserved Areas Enhancement Act.
- Resolution 15-34: Resolution to support National Day of Prayer in April for all Tribes of U.S.

The next Intertribal meeting is scheduled to be held in the Creek Nation Jan. 7-8, 2016.

Happy Thanksgiving

*You are invited to a
Thanksgiving Fellowship Supper and
Gospel Singing*

Saturday, November 21, 2015
First Indian Baptist Church
608 West Tyler
McAlester, Okla.
Class singing starts at 3:00 p.m.
Joe Coley – Director
Supper at 5:00 p.m.
Specials at 6:30 p.m.
Emcee – Joe Coley

Everyone Welcome!

Thanksgiving Dinners

LOCATION	DATE	TIME
Antlers (Seniors)	11/18	Noon
Atoka	11/18	Noon
Bethel	11/23	6PM
Broken Bow	11/18	Noon
Coalgate	11/15	2PM
Crowder	11/22	1PM
Durant (Event Center)	11/3	6PM
Hugo	11/4	11:30AM
Idabel	11/18	Noon
McAlester	11/22	1PM
Poteau	11/18	11:30AM
Smithville	11/18	Noon
Spiro	11/19	11:30AM
Stigler	11/18	11:30AM
Talihina	11/19	N/A
Tvshka Homma	11/6	6PM
Wilburton	11/18	Noon
Wright City	11/19	Noon

All dinners are held at the community centers unless otherwise noted.

NOTES TO THE NATION

— Youth of the Nation —

By Emily Dennis, Soper Chapter of the Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board

Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board (YAB) has not only inspired me to be a better person, but has influenced my outlook on becoming more involved in my community.

It is a wonderful program to be in. I have learned so many amazing things.

YAB has taught me how to grow as a person.

Just over the few years I have participated in YAB, it has changed my outlook of the future drastically. I am learning that life is not all about me. I help in my community as much as possible. My life would not be the same without this program.

I have a new outlook for college and the community I live in. I am going to be attending University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, Chickasha, in the fall to pursue a degree in biology/pre-medicine.

One reason I am going to follow this path is so that I

can give back to my community by helping those in need. I want to be the best person I can be and help as many people as possible. I am forever grateful to YAB for teaching me these life skills.

In YAB we do so many great things to help anyone in need. So many stories come to my mind, but the best one would be about my YAB leader, Mrs. Windy Brown.

She is one of the sweetest, most caring people I have ever met. I would like to believe all the YAB leaders are the same way. Windy is always brainstorming for ways to help our community and she has never turned down any of our ideas either. Windy always works around our schedules, so that everyone can participate in the activities. She is a great role model for all youth in this program and the community.

Family ancestry researched

My name is Regina Baker and I have been researching my family tree.

I have come across a lady named Micha Jenny Battiest Anderson. I know she had one son, John Anderson, I descend from him. If there are other descendants of Micha's living in Oklahoma I would love to get in touch with them. If at all possible could you run some type of letter in the paper so someone may get in touch with me?

Please include my email address, rgina811@gmail.com and my mailing address: Regina Baker, P. O. Box 743, Foxworth, MS 39483. If you have any questions please email me or call me at (601) 441-8274.

Thank you very much,

Regina Baker

Seeking family of Kizzie Holman

I'm the great grandson of Kizzie Holman. Kizzie has one sister. Her name is Anleetan Holman. If you have information about family members, please contact me at HO5066 23-17-3UP, P.O. Box 4000, Vacaville, California 95696-4000.

Robert Sellers

Correction:

Michael Rose was a Heritage Award winner for his sculpture, Ball Headed War Club, in the Choctaw Indian Art Show over Labor Day this year. The artist's name was misspelled in a photograph outline in the September 2015 edition. Biskinik regrets any inconvenience the error may have caused.

EVENTS

A Letter from Chief Batton

WHAT: Choctaw Cultural Meeting
WHEN: Tuesday, October 27, 2015
Program with Chief Gary Batton at 7 p.m.
Booths open at 6 p.m.
Beading class from 6-6:45 pm
WHERE: Larry Brinkley Event Center, Idabel Fairgrounds, 1001 NW 9th Street, Idabel, OK 74745

Dear Choctaws and Friends of Choctaws,

You are invited to Choctaw Day in Idabel! Dancers, singers, artists and more are gathering in your area for the special event. I hope you, your family and friends can be there with us as we celebrate our history and share our remarkable culture. The cultural meeting will be held at the Larry Brinkley Event Center.



Chief Batton addresses the Cultural Meeting crowd last month in Durant.

CULTURAL PROGRAM: At 7 pm, Assistant Chief Austin and I invite you to join us and share the tremendous amount of information through booths of pottery, ancient weaponry, tribal language, stickball, Choctaw books and art. You will be entertained with Choctaw social dancing and songs in the Choctaw language. Artists and vendors will have items at their booths for show and sale.

BEADING CLASS: Our Cultural Preservation staff is offering a beading class for ages 12 and up, in the same location, from 6-6:45 pm. You must call to reserve a seat for this beading class and we need to limit the number of people to the first 50 who call for reservations for the class. Reservations are needed because the Cultural Preservation staff must plan for the correct amount of materials for the class to make the jewelry. The contact information to RSVP for the class is (800) 522-6170, ext. 4377.

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES: Tribal Membership will be available to help with CDIBs, tribal membership cards and photo IDs beginning at 5 pm. If applying for a CDIB for the first time, please bring your original documents for verification plus a copy of the original documents for Tribal Membership records. If you should have any questions, please contact our office at (800) 522-6170, ext. 4030.

There is no pre-registration required to attend the event. For more information, please feel free to contact our office at (800) 522-6170, ext. 2747 or 2699. I look forward to seeing you in Idabel.

Sincerely,

Chief Gary Batton



Photo Provided

Area farmers, from left, Lane Wesson, JR Wesson, Billy Springer and Sam Cherry make preparations for the last Farmers Markets of the 2015 season.

FINAL FALL HARVEST FOR FARMERS MARKET

Participants in the Choctaw Nation WIC and Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Programs must cash their Farmers Market checks by the end of the month, Oct. 31.

This will be the final day that the 80 authorized farmers at the eight designated Choctaw Community Centers that hold Farmers Markets, or other listed farmers, will be able to accept the checks.

The markets are held 8:30 a.m.-noon Wednesdays. Many local farms have already gone through their yields, so some sites may have limited produce available.

For information, contact:
 Peggy Carlton
 Choctaw Nation Farmers Market
 Nutrition Coordinator,
 800-522-6170.
 580-924-8280, Ext. 2303



Photo Provided

A sweet ride for D.A.R.E.

Congratulations Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's D.A.R.E. Program—for bringing home a special award! The 28th Annual Drug Abuse Resistance Education International Conference was held in August in Louisiana. The Choctaw Nation D.A.R.E. Officer Isaac James attended and was honored to carry the Oklahoma flag during the opening ceremony. While there, he entered his 2014 Ford Mustang D.A.R.E. car into the car show. The public was allowed to view the vehicles. At the concluding award ceremony, the Choctaw Nation D.A.R.E. car was awarded first place in its class. D.A.R.E. officers provide education to schools and communities regarding the importance of staying off drugs. For information: 800-522-6170.

Oklahoma Indian Legal Services, Inc.
 for low income tribal members who are residents of Oklahoma and have tribal land.
 Free Wills & Estate Clinic
 Friday Nov. 6, 10AM - 3PM, Choctaw Nation Field Office
 1632 George Nigh Expressway, McAlester, OK 74501
 You must call for an appointment to see an attorney.
 Ask for Norma (405) 943-6457.

SULPHUR SPRINGS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ANNUAL BENEFIT GOURD DANCE

Co-sponsored by Southeastern Oklahoma State University

Saturday Nov. 7, 2015
 Dance 2 p.m.-9 p.m. with Supper at 5 p.m.
 SOSU Ballroom, N. 5th St. & University St., Durant, OK

Head Gourd Dancer: Bruce Caesar
Head Singer: Tommy Allen Spotted Horse
Emcee: Eugene Louie Stumbling Bear

Contact: Terry Ashby, 580-924-8280 ext. 2585
 Vendor space: Sheila Johnson, 580-920-2257
 or Teresa Jefferson, 580-371-8427

Proceeds to Sulphur Springs United Methodist Church Campus Outreach Ministries

Gary Batton
 Chief

Jack Austin Jr.
 Assistant Chief

The Official Monthly Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Judy Allen, Senior Executive Officer
 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.



CHOCTAW NATION HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION EVENT
CLEAN OUT YOUR GARAGE AND JOIN US
400 SW "O" STREET, ANTLERS, OK
SAT., NOVEMBER 14, 2015
10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.

Household Hazardous Waste: paints, pesticides, oil, cleaning fluids, photo chemicals, batteries, pool chemicals and more!!



What is Household Hazardous Waste??

Leftover household products that contain corrosive, toxic, ignitable, or reactive ingredients are considered to be **Household Hazardous Wastes**. Products that contain hazardous ingredients are safe to use but require special care when you dispose of them. If disposed of improperly, such as poured on the ground or emptied down the drain, these wastes can pollute the environment and pose a threat to human health.

Sponsored by the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's Going Green Team!! Call 580-920-0488 with ?'s

Choctaw Nation will also be accepting:

Gently used furniture, household appliances and clothing for reuse

Used tires for recycling (no rims)

Electronic Waste

Medications

Light Bulbs

Towels, blankets and rugs for local animal shelters

Ammunition

Change of Program Name Notice

Making a Difference is now

Choctaw Nation High School Student Services

In an effort to better assist our tribal members, the Choctaw Nation Making A Difference Program has officially changed its program name to Choctaw Nation High School Student Services effective immediately.

Choctaw Nation High School Student Services works with Choctaw students in grades 9th-12th who attend an accredited high school.

Our goal is to assist our students with academic information to promote education and/or career path beyond high school. Our office is located in the basement of the south building at the Durant complex. We will be contacting each office that will need to change our program name.

Lori Wells, B.A., Director,
 High School Student Services
 Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma,
 PO Box 1210,
 Durant, OK 74702-1210
 (800) 522-6170 / (580) 924-8280
 Ext. 4007
 lwells@choctawnation.com

HEALTH

Tips to replenishing, rehydrating, & recovering

By ERIN ADAMS

Choctaw Nation
Halito,

We all had such a wonderful time at our Labor Day Festival this year! So many people being active walking, running, dancing, softball, and stickball. With the heat and all this activity I started to wonder about all of our athletes and just how they were replenishing during, after, and between events, as well as preparing for their events.

We all know water is life and we need to be taking in water pre-event, during event, and after events. However, we should also be taking in foods and beverages which can help our bodies to be at top physical performance prior to and during events as well as taking fluids and beverages to help our bodies recover efficiently. I recently found this article from *Sports Medicine* and feel this can be very useful for all who are active, from the daily walkers to the stickball players. Following this information is a recipe for one of my favorite recovery drinks. I hope you will enjoy this too!

After-exercise recovery foods and drinks can help athletes recover quickly after a workout and get ready for the next workout or competition. The following list includes tips to help endurance athletes quickly replenish depleted glycogen stores and rehydrate and repair muscle tissue after exercise.

Recovery Food: Consume 4:1 Carb:Protein Ratio

Research shows that consuming a 4:1 ratio of carbohydrate to protein after exercise results in higher glycogen stores than consuming carbs alone. Consuming more protein, however, slows rehydration and glycogen replenishment, so the 4:1 ratio seems ideal for endurance athletes who train daily. Sports recovery foods and drinks are handy, but expensive. You can get similar benefits with a snack or meal comprised of whole grains, fruit, and dairy. Try these snack options after exercise:

- 1 medium banana and glass of low-

- fat milk
- A bowl of granola with 1 C low-fat milk
- Low-fat yogurt with 1/2 C of fresh berries
- Almond butter on whole wheat toast
- A bowl of whole grain cereal with low-fat milk

Recovery Tip: Hydrate with Water

After your workout, drink enough water to replace any water lost through sweat. The best way to determine how much to drink is by weighing yourself before and after each workout. Then, for every pound of body weight you've lost, you'll need to consume about three cups of fluid.

If you forget to weigh yourself, you can use the "color check" to get a rough idea of your level of hydration. This check simply refers to checking the color of your urine in the hours after exercise. Your urine should be relatively clear in color, so if you have dark, concentrated urine, you may be dehydrated and need to consume more water.

Recovery Drink: Chocolate Milk

Chocolate milk has the right combination of carbs to protein, which make it an ideal exercise recovery drink. In fact, a study comparing the recovery rates of college soccer players using either a sports drink or low-fat chocolate milk found no difference between the two drinks. The details of the research showed similar levels of muscle soreness and fatigue, but after drinking chocolate milk the players had less creatine kinase (which indicates of muscle damage), than they did after drinking a typical sports drink.

Recovery Tip: Don't Exercise on Empty

You will recover faster after exercise if you don't let yourself run out of fuel during exercise. This means you need to stay on top of your food and fluid intake as you exercise. Proper hydration during exercise depends upon your exercise

intensity, time, fitness level and even the weather conditions. But to keep it simple, drink about a cup of water every 15 minutes of exercise.

If your workout takes about an hour, you probably can get by on water alone, but if you exercise hard for more than 90 minutes, you'll need to replenish lost carbohydrates. Consider stashing a sports drink, an energy bar, or other easy-to-digest foods, such as bananas or fig newton's in your gym bag or back pocket.

Recovery Tip: Eat Well Each Day

To exercise consistently, you need to provide a good supply of high-quality energy to your working muscles. The easiest way to this is to eat a balanced breakfast and continue eating a variety of high-quality foods throughout the day.

Carbohydrate in the form of glycogen is the fuel that makes exercise possible, so adequate carbs must be eaten each day if you hope to train consistently. Protein and fat also have a place in your diet and should be consumed daily. In general, each meal should contain a varied combination of carbohydrates, protein and fat.

Sources:

Gilson SF, Saunders MJ, Moran CW, et al. Effects of chocolate milk consumption on markers of muscle recovery during intensified soccer training. *Med Sci Sports Exerc.* 2009;41:508.

Kammer L, Ding Z, Wang B, Hara D, Liao YH, Ivy JL. Cereal and nonfat milk support muscle recovery following exercise. [<http://www.jissn.com/content/pdf/1550-2783-6-11.pdf>] *J Int Soc of Sports Nutr.* 2009;6:2-12.

Rodriguez NR, DiMarco NM, Langley S; American Dietetic Association; Dietitians of Canada; American College of Sports Medicine. Position of the American Dietetic Association, Dietitians of Canada, and the American College of Sports Medicine: nutrition and athletic performance. *J Amer Diet Assoc.* 2009;3:509-527.

NURSERY NEWS

Asher Dominick Anderson

Asher Dominick Anderson was born 11:35 p.m. July 1, 2015, at Physicians Regional Medical Center in Knoxville, Tennessee. He weighed 8 pounds 10 ounces and measured 22 1/2 inches long. Proud parents are Joshua and Erin Anderson of Heiskell, Tennessee. He is the grandson of M. Darrel and Gwyn Dominick of Stillwater and Lynn and Kay Anderson of Clinton, Tennessee. He traces his Choctaw heritage from his great-great-grandmother, Clemmie Arlie Gardner Dominick, an original enrollee.



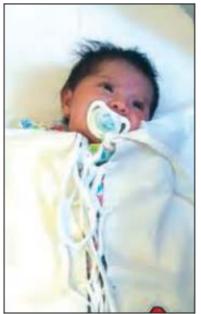
Catherine Corrine Estrada

Proud parents, David and Meagan Estrada would like to welcome, Catherine Corrine Estrada. She was born August, 6, 2015, at 3:41 a.m. She weighed 8 pounds 4 ounces and was 20 inches long. She is the granddaughter to Paula and Ruben Ruiz of Dallas Texas. She is the great-granddaughter to the late Von and Georgia Hudson of Smithville.



Ja'taiya Annlee Thompson

Ja'taiya Annlee Thompson was born August 17 in Lander, Wyoming. Her mother is Sheyanne Thompson from Fort Washakie, Wyoming. Her father is Jason Armajo from Ethete, Wyoming. Proud grandparents are Clarence and Kristine Thompson of Fort Washakie. Her great-grandmother is Caroline Sue Williston from Idabel. Her great-great-grandparents are Ben and the (late) Hazel Williston of Idabel.



Oakley Iris Kuykendall

Our rainbow, Oakley Iris Kuykendall, was born on Sept. 8, 2015. She weighed 8 pounds 8 ounces and was 20 inches long. Proud parents are Kasey Kuykendall and Brittnei Metcalf, of Calera. Big sister Avy and big brothers Zayden, Riley, Roman, and our littlest brother and guardian angel, Talon, are overjoyed with Oakley's arrival. Proud grandparents are Billy and Cindy Kuykendall of Cartwright and Tom and Nancy O'Brien of Calera.



Connor Patrick Wrenn

Connor Patrick Wrenn was born on Sept. 27, 2015, to Alexis and Keith Wrenn of Jacksonville, Florida He was 8 pounds 13.5 ounces and 20.5 inches long.



Kahri Cavaness

Kahri Cavaness is the new daughter of Clayton and Crystal Cavaness and the great-granddaughter of Shirley Zaicek.



Breastfeeding assistance is just a phone call away.
1-800-522-6170 ext 2507

Choctaw Nation WIC welcomes breastfeeding questions and also offers breastfeeding classes in 5 locations.

POTEAU November 4 9:00 - 11:00 am Family Investment Center	McALESTER November 18 1:00 - 3:00 pm Choctaw Nation Health Clinic Downstairs Conference Room	IDABEL October 21 9:00 - 11:00 am Choctaw Nation Clinic Education Room	TALIHINA October 7 9:00 - 11:00 am Choctaw Nation DW
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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 *frequency of feedings
 *growth spurts *breastfeeding resources

Recipe of the Month

Fruit Smoothies

Ingredients

- 1 banana peeled
- 1/2 cup fruit
- Strawberries or mango or any type, frozen is good
- 1/2 cup yogurt, Greek or light vanilla
- 3/4 cup pineapple juice
- Optional 1/2 Tbsp. milled flaxseed

Instructions

1. Place above ingredients in blender
2. Blend until desired texture
3. Serve chilled

Yields: 4 - 4 oz. servings
Nutrition Facts
 Serving Size 4 oz.
 Amount Per Serving:
 Calories 139 Calories from Fat 3
 Total Fat 0.3g Trans Fat 0.0g
 Cholesterol 4mg Sodium 24mg
 Potassium 376mg
 Total Carbohydrates 29.0g
 Dietary Fiber 2.4g Sugars 20.2g
 Protein 6.5g

I hope you enjoy this recipe! For further information you may contact Erin Adams, RD, LD Choctaw Nation Diabetes Wellness Center (800) 349-7026 ext. 6959.

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.asc.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 November 1-30, except for:
November 4: Idabel 9-11:30 a.m.; Broken Bow 1-3:30 p.m. (market open)
November 18: Bethel 9-10:30; Smithville 12-2 (market open)
Closed: November 11 for Veteran's Day, November 24-25 & 30 for inventory & November 26-27 for Thanksgiving
Cooking with Carmen: November 13, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

DURANT

Market open weekdays November 1-30, except for:
Closed: November 11 for Veteran's Day, November 24-25 & 30 for inventory & November 26-27 for Thanksgiving
Cooking with Carmen: November 3, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

McALESTER

Market open weekdays November 1-30, except for:
Closed: November 11 for Veteran's Day, November 24-25 & 30 for inventory & November 26-27 for Thanksgiving
Cooking with Carmen: November 9, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

POTEAU

Market open weekdays November 1-30, except for:
Closed: November 11 for Veteran's Day, November 24-25 & 30 for inventory & November 26-27 for Thanksgiving
Cooking with Carmen: November 5, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

PEOPLE YOU KNOW



Amerman named Ranger at Historic site

The U.S. National Park Service recently named Choctaw Roger Amerman as a Park Ranger at the Whitman Mission National Historic Site in Walla Walla, Washington.

Amerman, who currently resides on the Nez Perce Reservation of north-central Idaho with his wife Carolyn and son Preston, is the great-grandson of the late original enrollee Redmond Bond, who was born in 1870 in Atoka County, Indian Territory.

Bond ministered to the Choctaw and Chickasaw communities of Duncan, Marlow, and Pauls Valley in the early 1900's. He also named his great-grandson Amerman Aba-Chaha (both words meaning high, tall, long, or great). He bestowed this name upon Amerman because his feet as a child were long and narrow, indicating young Roger would grow up to be tall.

As a child, Amerman lived in southern Utah

and northern Arizona, in the midst of numerous national parks, like the Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon, and Arches. His family frequently visited these parks, and he admired the landscape, and enjoyed the history and prehistory connected to the locations.

He was so intrigued by the parks and the landscapes he secured several college degrees in geology and plant science—including one bachelor's and two master's degrees. He spent time working as a geologist, soil scientist, and botanist before taking on his most recent position as park ranger.

In his free time, Amerman also planned and implemented Native American and natural resource workshops to educate students in the states of Washington and Idaho.

"I am a cultural interpreter and I educate the

public about the history of the park site and the cultures that lived and interacted in this part of the world," Amerman said. "I believe I have a lot to offer my staff team and the American public."

He said he encourages tribal citizens to learn about Choctaw heritage and practice the traditional values, language, and heritage. "Look hard to see what our ancestors left for us to live by. Our Choctaw people come from strong, holy blood."

He added, "An elder told me that all you need to do is work hard at what you do and pray and everything else will fall in place."

Roger's grandparents are the late Andy Wright and Alice Bond Wright, and his late great grandparents are the late Thomas Wright, Elsie R. Wright, Redmond Bond, and Sally Lewis Bond.



James teaches D.A.R.E lessons

Isaac James, Choctaw Nation Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) Officer, visited the Choctaw Nation Head Start in Poteau to teach a program about safety. James visits the young students once a week. During a recent week, his lesson was on "stranger danger," or what to do if a stranger tries to take a child.

Leisey reaches rank of Eagle Scout



Kale Andrew Leisey, of Hahira, Georgia has been awarded the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest rank in The Boy Scouts of America.

He is a member of Troop 440, Hahira, Georgia, sponsored by Hahira United Methodist Church.

McWhorter crowned Miss Nevada Junior High America

After competing in pageants since she was a baby, Tinley McWhorter recently earned the title and crown of Miss Nevada Junior High America 2015. In the national competition, she also won the overall Fashion Runway Award.

McWhorter, 14-year-old from Las Vegas, Nevada, competed on an anti-bullying platform aimed at "building respect and values for everyone", or "B.R.A.V.E."

In her own past, McWhorter experienced bullying because of eye problems which often left her wearing an eye patch to school. She remembers brushing off the name calling, but going home upset and crying.

"One day, I asked the teacher if I could talk to the class," McWhorter said. "She let me. I just stood up there in front of everyone and told them the names they called me, and how they made fun of me, really hurt my feelings."

After opening up to

her class, she found the students started asking questions about her eye. They were curious. She said almost all the name calling stopped.

With this in mind, she entered as a competitor in her home state's miss junior high pageant wanting to spread a message of understanding and compassion.

"It was like this pageant was made just for me. I wouldn't just take a crown home, I could actually help other kids who were being bullied," she said.

After making her decision to pursue the title, McWhorter had the official competition to take on. A panel of judges interviewed her, she took part in an evening gown competition, and she competed on a fashion runway.

After being crowned, her new title came with the opportunity for McWhorter to publically speak with many elementary and junior high students, coaching them on how to deal with and stop



bullying.

She has since maintained two public appearances a month, working for charities, riding in parades, and talking at schools. Over the last 10 months she has made numerous appearances at elementary schools to read to children and to discuss the effects of bullying.

McWhorter said she appreciates her mother, Tina McWhorter, who has always been there to support her no matter what she chose to do. "She taught me that I can do anything I want despite my disability," she said.

"I am extremely proud of how Tinley has grown and contributed to the commu-

nity," Tina said. "She fed the homeless, walked in numerous marathons to support breast cancer awareness and fitness. Her dream is to continue her anti-bullying campaign at a higher level."

Outside of her time spent earning crowns and volunteering, McWhorter is a competitive cheerleader who enjoys any beach she can visit.

She is also an honor roll student who plans on pursuing a career in law, after attending universities in Kentucky and Ohio.

McWhorter has three sisters named Jessica, Jorie and Kaitlyn. She also has three brothers, Jarryd, Andrew and Sean.

Bradshaw heads to finals in rodeo



PJ Bradshaw, representing the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, placed in the first go-round of the Arrington McSpadden Region 8 Indian Rodeo Finals in Grandfield.

Bradshaw competes on her mare, Hotbox, that she trained herself.

PJ won the Finals Average and qualified for the Indian National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas, Nevada, that takes place this November.

Birthday wishes for Paula Smith



The Smith, McGehee, and Britton families would like to wish wife and mother Paula Donnett Turnbull Smith a happy 65th birthday.

The families said, "You are our inspiration and our rock, we are so blessed to call you ours."



Mecom celebrates 90 years, receives overdue Bronze Star after WWII

Barney Mecom, of Tulsa, celebrated his 90th birthday on June 19 with a party at his family home with relatives and friends, many of them visiting from locations spanning the U.S., from New York to California.

His wife, Melba Mecom, said the event was extra special because Barney was awarded the Bronze Star by Army servicemen for meritorious service in a combat zone during WWII.

Mecom arrived in Europe in October 1944 and served the 100th infantry division, starting in southern France, moving on to Belgium, Germany, and Austria. He also later served in Korea.

Barney's son, Richard Mecom, studied his father's military records and discovered his father was due for the award.

Hicks wins county fair doll competition with corn husk doll

Jo Ella Hicks won first place in a doll competition during the Bryan County Fair, held Sept. 8-12.

Hicks, who currently serves as the second vice president of the Durant Choctaw Seniors, submitted a traditional corn husk doll to compete against a selection of porcelain dolls.

After winning the competition, she donated her doll to the Durant Choctaw Community Center, where it is available for viewing.

Hicks picked up traditional cornhusk doll making from a previous Durant Choctaw Seniors president, Carol Ayers.

Ayers and Hicks, as well as other elders of the group, travel to different youth classes across the Choctaw Nation to teach the art of making corn husk dolls.



Urice (right) is pictured with son Roy Kirk.

Urice receives Choctaw elder blanket

Joe Urice, 91-year-old Choctaw citizen from Kerrville, Texas, was thrilled when he received his elder blanket from the Choctaw Nation. He draped it across his living room couch.

He is the son of original enrollee Beryl Dendy Urice, who was born in 1905 in Elmore City.

Both are veterans. Urice served in the 8th AF/351st bomb group in the bloody 100th drop over Holland toward the end of WWII. He is active with the 100th bomb group, having served as board member. He attends at least one military reunion per year.

Daughter Kathy Urice said she is very proud of her father. She wished to thank the Choctaw Nation for honoring him.



Heavener and group lay flag to rest

Poteau senior Leroy Heavener (right) and four other disabled American veterans (from left), Joseph Houle, Ray Helton, Wanda Ludwig, and Gary Ludwig gathered to lay an American flag to rest.

A fire left the flag tattered, and the group wanted to show their respect.

Dumond celebrates 95th birthday



Nina Cody Dumond of Denton, Texas, proudly displays her Choctaw Elders blanket on her 95th birthday on Aug. 20.

Five generations of Choctaws attended her birthday celebration.

Dumond's mother, Harriet Oakes Cody, was an original enrollee.



York donates historic documents

Lynn York, of Marlow, stopped by the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Headquarters in Durant on Sept. 29 to donate his father's historic collection to the Nation in the name of the York family trust.

Harvey York, Lynn's father, had spent much of his free time, when not on duty as a police officer, cutting out newspaper clippings, taking photographs, collecting memorabilia, and journaling in stacks and stacks of notebooks—all to document the lives and times of Choctaws from roughly 1970-1986.

The resulting historical documents, Lynn thought, would likely belong in any upcoming cultural museums the Choctaw Nation builds.

Some noteworthy items included in the collection: two portraits painted by Choctaw artist Brunetta Griffith, a wooden podium Harvey built for tribal council meetings, stickball sticks constructed by Sydney J. White, and scrap books containing images from the first stickball game to be held on the Tshka Homma grounds during the resurging popularity of the game.

OBITUARIES

Johnny Ray Watson

Johnny Ray Watson, 48, of Smithville, passed away on June 23, 2015. He was born to the late Clyde Watson and Julia Ann Lewis Watson, on Aug. 15, 1966, in Talihina.

Johnny Ray was carefree and friendly with everyone he met. He always had a smile, and never met a stranger.

Johnny was proud of his heritage, and even more proud to be full-blood Choctaw. He was a loving and kind son, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, great-uncle and friend to all. He will be dearly missed.

Johnny Ray is survived by daughter, Stormie Watson of Hot Springs, Arkansas; two sons, Kelly Watson of Wickes, Arkansas; Jody Watson of Dardanelle, Arkansas; his mother, Julia Watson; a grandmother, Rhoda Sullivan of Smithville; great-aunt, Minnie Edwards of Smithville; two sisters, Regina Yates of Smithville and Teresa Watson of Watson; three brothers, Julian Watson of Tulsa, Michael Watson of Bergman, Arkansas, and Brian Watson of DeQueen, Arkansas; granddaughter, Hanna Watson of Dardanelle; along with numerous nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Beasley Wood Funeral Home in Mena, Arkansas. Interment was at Buffalo Cemetery.



Hazel Kathrine (Bennett) Kruz

Hazel Katherine (Bennett) Kruz, 96, of Fort Worth, passed away on July 27, 2015. She was born to Horace and Neter Bennett, in Bokchito.

Hazel loved quilting and gardening. She was a member of the Richland Hills Baptist Church, and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, and son; H.O. "Dick" Kruz.

Hazel is survived by two daughters, eight grandchildren, and twelve great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren.

Arrangements were made specially, under the direction of Taylor C. Murphy of Shannon Rufe Snow Funeral Chapel in Fort Worth. Interment was in Dibble.



Bettye Marcille Morris Stills

Bettye Marcille Morris Stills, 83, of St. Joe, Arkansas, passed away on Aug. 22, 2015. She was born on Dec. 5, 1931, to Howard and Dora (Palmer) Morris, in Soper.

Bettye worked as a seamstress and was a homemaker. She enjoyed fishing, flower gardening and was a proud member of the Choctaw Nation.

Bettye was preceded in death by her parents; and sister, Scottie Maurice Morris.

She is survived by her four children, Howard Bigger of St. Joe, Bennie Stills and his wife Jeanette of Harrison, Arkansas; Dave Jones, wife Terri and their daughter Toni; Larry Glenn and Claudie; five grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Coffman Funeral Home of Harrison and Jasper. Interment was at Osborne Cemetery in St. Joe.



Bill Brumley

Bill V. Brumley, 91, passed away on Sept. 4, 2015, at Mercy Hospital in Ardmore. He was born Dec. 7, 1923, to Virgil Bryant and Mary Elizabeth Rushing Brumley, in Ada.

Bill was a resident of Ada. He attended Colbert and Byng schools and graduated from Byng.

He was a proud member of the Choctaw Nation.

Bill enlisted in the United States Navy July 8, 1941. He was assigned to the USS Saratoga and the "Lucky Biloxi," seeing action in the Pacific theater. He retired from Tinker Force Base in 1980.

Bill was a member of Aydelotte Baptist Church near Shawnee. He married Emily P. Eberle Oct. 10, 1946.

Bill was preceded in death by his parents; wife Emily; son, Bill V. Brumley Jr.; and two sisters, Jo Lee Tipton and Dennis Faye Miller.

Bill is survived by two daughters, Ramona Kay Wetherill and husband Rick, Ada, and Emma Lou Roberts and husband Mike, Pauls Valley; 11 grand-children, Erin Wetherill, Ryan Wetherill, Megan Nevada Smith, Alison Flores, Heather Howard, Jennifer Callison, Hilary Sharp, William Bryant Brumley, Andrew Brumley, John Roberts and Jay Roberts; and 12 great-grandchildren.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Criswell Funeral Home of Ada. Interment was at Rosedale Cemetery in Ada.



Deborah Kay Johnson

Deborah Kay Johnson, 57, of Honobia, passed away on May 1, 2015 at Saint Edward Mercy Medical Center Fort Smith, Arkansas. She was born on Sept. 6, 1957, to Molly Garvin and the late Ray Garvin, near Red Oak.

Deborah married Raymond Johnson on June 28, 1975, in Talihina.

She was preceded in death by her father; Ray Garvin, father in law; Raymond Johnson, Sr.; sister, Evah Rodgers; grandson, Joseph Savage.

She is survived by her husband; son, Kevin Johnson and wife Elizabeth of Whitesboro; daughter, Brandy Savage and husband Jason of Panama; mother, Molly Garvin; and mother-in-law Thelma Johnson; three sisters, Charlotte Smith of Tipton, Sandra Murray and husband Dale of Randlett, and Janna Smith and husband Robert of Washington; three brothers, Mike Garvin and wife Beverly of Forney, Texas, Leonard Garvin and wife Karen of Gladewater, Texas, and Kenneth Garvin and wife LaVonda of Attwood; grandchildren, Holly, Kason and Lathan Johnson of Whitesboro, Stuart and Wade Savage of Panama; one special aunt, Jane (Sike) Marley of Red Oak; sister-in-law, Kathy Ludlow and husband Clifford of Tuskahoma; sister-in law, Sheri Carshall and husband Mark of Wister; many aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins; special friends, Gilbert BreeLove and wife Lori.

Arrangements were made under the direction of the Burkhardt Funeral Service in Talihina. Interment was at Old Talihina Cemetery.

Ian Michael Pruitt

Ian Michael Pruitt, 19, passed away on Aug. 27, 2015, near the community of Enville. He was born April 23, 1996, to Kelly Harris, in Ada.

Ian attended the Marietta Day Care, then Marietta Public Schools through the fifth grade. He graduated from Dickson High School in 2014. He was a heating, ventilation and air conditioning tech apprentice, having studied HVAC at the Southern Oklahoma Technology Center for two years.

Ian loved and respected his sister, Jenny, her husband Jeremy, his brother, T.J. and his wife Brook. He dearly loved his friends and family. Especially his nieces and nephews, who pestered the life out of him.

Ian delighted in vacationing and spending time with his sister and her family. He also enjoyed hunting, and fishing with his brother. Family gatherings were always of utmost importance to Ian, spending time with cousins and other relatives.

His hobbies included arrowhead hunting and bowling. Ian won many medals and trophies for his bowling. He also loved hunting deer, turkey, opossums and armadillos. He especially loved hunting and fishing with his brother. He liked playing video games with his cousins and baseball with friends.

He also enjoyed installing stereo systems and speakers. Ian spent time tinkering with the lawnmower and his trucks, in particular painting the dash yellow and orange/maroon. Ian was an excellent artist. Even though he was colorblind he had a very unique way with colors. In addition, he was a very talented guitarist and drummer.

Ian was preceded in death by his great-grandparents, Willard and Lois Willis.

He is survived by his mother, Kelly Harris of Enville; sister and brother-in-law, Jenny and Jeremy Spradling; brother and sister-in-law, T.J. and Brook Williamson; nieces and nephews, Jordan Rex Spradling, Jaedyn Lynn Spradling, Karly Jade Williamson, and Briar Coy Williamson; grandparents, J.C. Harris, and Claudia and Jerry Vaughn; aunts and uncles, Pam and Jimmy Kerley, Kathy and Regan Kester, and Kim and Brad Goss; and numerous cousins.

Arrangements were made under the direction of the Flanagan-Watts Funeral Home & Cremation Services in Marietta. Interment was at Lakeview Cemetery in Marietta.



Bert Holt

Bert Holt, 64, passed away on Saturday, June 27, 2015, at his home in Antlers. He was born on Aug. 5, 1950, in Tom.

He served in the U.S. Army and was a veteran of the Vietnam War.

Bert was a drug and alcohol counselor for over 30 years. He worked at the Choctaw Nation Recovery Center, and the Kiamichi Council on Alcoholism and other Drug Abuse. He was an avid motorcycle rider, and loved spending time with his family. Bert was a member of the Kulli Tuklo Methodist Church, and was a proud member of the Choctaw Nation.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Joel Holt and Selma Maytobe Holt; son, Ira Huston Holt; and brother, Nathaniel Holt.

Bert is survived by his wife, Faye Holt of the home; daughters, Michelle Holt and Jeff Madbull of Rattan, Kim Holt of Idabel, and Angela Holt of Antlers; son, Tim Holt of Rattan; grandchildren, Chris Baker, Mona Jones, Ivan Wayne Baker Jr., Jordan Holt and Kamryn Baker; brothers, Alan Holt and Beth, Joel Wayne Holt, Nathan Holt and Bobbi and Melvin Maytubbie and Donna; sisters, Juanita Lajeunesse, Mona Salinas and Margaret McKinney and Deroy; several nieces nephews, other relatives and a host of friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of the White Family Funeral Home in Idabel. Interment was at the Kulli Tuklo Cemetery.



Denton Smith

Denton "Lee" Smith, 70, of Nashville, Tenn. passed away on Aug. 12, 2015.

Denton is survived by his wife, Donna Smith; son, Benjamin (Sarah) Smith; daughters, Angie Smith and Karen (Patrick) Clark; four brothers and four sisters; seven grandchildren.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Madison Funeral Home in Madison, Tennessee. Interment was at Middle Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery.



George McKee

George Ray McKee, 72, of Soper, passed away on Sept. 18, 2015. He was born to George Harvey McKee and Eulah Mae (Ray) McKee, on Oct. 22, 1942, in the community of Buckhorn.

George served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War and was a member of the American Legion in Soper. He married Edith "Kay" Legg on July 15, 1992, in Grand Prairie, Texas. George retired from Texas Instruments after working for over 30 years, as a supervisor in the defense technology department working with missile guidance systems.

George is survived by his wife, Kay McKee; three sons, Patrick McKee and wife Beckey of Soper, Greg Carroll of Soper, and Brian Dunn of Dallas; sister Mary Boykin of Soper; two grandchildren, David Willson III, and Zachary Dunn; along with numerous family members and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Miller & Miller Funeral Home in Hugo. Interment was at the McKee Family Cemetery.



Paul David Wesley

Paul David Wesley, 73, passed away on Aug. 26, 2015, at McAlester Regional Health Center. He was born March 31, 1942, to Taft and Carrie (Pickens) Wesley, in Talihina.

Paul married Leona Mary Christie on Oct. 16, 1964 in Hartshorne.

Paul was trained as an electrician. He worked over 20 years at Komar Manufacturing as a maintenance supervisor, and several years at the First National Bank.

Paul was a proud member of the Choctaw Nation, and was fluent in the Choctaw language. He assisted the tribe in translating the Holy Bible into Choctaw.

Paul was a Deacon at Brushy Missionary Baptist Church for over 40 years. He taught Sunday School, organized the yearly all-night singing, bass singer in the quartet, organized Vacation Bible School, and took care of the over-all health and maintenance of the Church.

Paul was preceded in death by his parents; granddaughters, Brianna and Alexis Wesley; sister, Rozella Wesley and brother, Isaiah Wesley.

He is survived by his wife, Leona Wesley of the home; son, Anthony Wesley and wife, Norma of Haileyville; daughters, Michelle Wesley of McAlester, and Jeanelle "Peewee" Collins and husband, Corey; grandchildren, Anthony Wesley, Kirstean Wesley, Kyleigh Stewart and husband, Cameron, Kenna Brumley, Miranda Winlock, Jandyn Winlock, Kristian Winlock, Joseph Winlock, Tyler Collins and Jordan Collins; great-granddaughter, Hadleigh Stewart; Sisters, Loyce Wesley Wright and husband, David of McAlester, Leola Lester and husband, Bill of McAlester and Ramona Robertson of McAlester; and numerous nieces, nephews and other family and a host of friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Chaney Harkins Funeral Home in McAlester. Interment was at the Brushy Missionary Baptist Church Cemetery.



Herbert Harris Carnes

Herbert Harris Carnes, 81, of Battiest, passed away on Jan. 28, 2015. He was born to Solomon and Oceana (Homer) Carnes, on June 21, 1933, in Bentley.

Herbert was of the Methodist faith. He enjoyed watching westerns, reading, listening to country music, crossword puzzles and reading the paper.

He was preceded in death by his parents; one brother, Ellis Carnes; and one sister, Joella Carnes.

Herbert is survived by his daughter, Terri Carnes of Pendelton, Oregon; grandchildren, Sequoia Carnes-Conner and Dylen Conner; nieces, Toni Bowers, Mary Lois Hayes, Georgia Jarvis, Lillie Dusenberry, Peggy Carnes, Phyllis Badgewell; nephews, Ellis Carnes and Noel Carnes; special friends, Don Koljonn and Pinty; numerous great nieces and nephews and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Brumley Funeral Home in Broken Bow.



James Elliot

James Elliott, 84, passed away on, Sept. 04, 2015, in Shawnee. He was born June 29, 1931, to James Arthur and Jane Louise (Bigger) Elliott, in Ada.

James attended high school in Asher, and Pleasant Grove where he graduated. He served in Korea in the U.S. Army for two years. James also attended college at Oklahoma State University Tech.

James married Joyce Rich in Tecumseh on Jan. 15, 1956. They lived a short while in Seminole and Louisiana, before returning to Oklahoma. He owned and operated Elliott Plumbing in Tecumseh for years.

James never met a stranger, and enjoyed talking and visiting. He also enjoyed attending various events in Oklahoma, which later included entering his homemade quilts into contests.

He was preceded in death by his parents; and sister, Shirley Elliott.

James is survived by his wife, Joyce, of the home; two daughters, Jaime Elliott of Tecumseh, and Janette Elliott of Roseville, Calif.; granddaughter, Ansley Elliott of Tecumseh; sister-in-law, Pat Tucker of Tecumseh; brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Jerry and Phyllis Rich of Edmond; sister and brother-in-law, Leota and Ted Violett of Eufaula; many nephews, nieces, cousins; and numerous friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Cooper Funeral home in Tecumseh. Interment was at Tecumseh Cemetery.



Moses Williams

Moses Williams, 96, passed away peacefully at his home on Sept. 4, 2015. He was born Feb. 18, 1919, to Harvey Williams and Fannie Battiest Wesley, in Kulli Tuklo.

Moses was full-blood Choctaw.

He attended Jones Academy in Hartshorne, and Goodland Indian School in Hugo. Moses was employed with Dierks Lumber Company, which later became Weyerhaeuser in Wright City. Moses made his home in Wright City until his retirement. After retirement he moved to Eagletown.

Moses enjoyed watching football and basketball. He loved fishing and watching his grandkids play sports. In 2000, he received the Outstanding Choctaw Nation Senior Citizen plaque.

Moses was an elder and a member of the Mt. Fork Presbyterian Church where he taught Choctaw Bible class. He was one of the founders of the Fifth Sunday Choctaw Singing Class, which started at St. Matthew and continues to this day.

Moses married Helen Edith Bohanan on Feb. 8, 1942, at St. Matthew Presbyterian Church in Broken Bow.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Helen; daughter, Joann Dalby; grandson, Jerald Carney, Jr.; three sisters, Elsie Battiest, Laura Willie, Edna Gibson; and one brother, Harvey Williams, Jr.

Moses is survived by three daughters; Wanda and husband R.J. Frazier, June Williams of Eagletown, and Patricia Gaines and husband Rev. Melvin Gaines of Midwest City; sisters, Norma and husband Andy Choate, of Finley, and Lou Billy, of Finley; sister-in-law, Mary Williams and brother, John Dixon Williams of Texas. Moses is also survived by thirteen grandchildren, thirty great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren. Along with several nieces and nephews and many friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of the Brumley Funeral Home in Broken Bow. Interments was at Williams Cemetery in Eagletown.



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

Lyle Lawrence Thomas

Lyle Lawrence Thomas, 50, passed away on Feb. 27, 2015, in Antlers. He was born on Aug. 12, 1964, to W.W. and Rosalyn (Begay) Thomas, in Los Angeles.

Lyle enjoyed being outdoors, hunting and fishing.

He is preceded in death by his mother, Rosalyn Thomas; grandmother, Lizzy Mae David; grandfather, Impson Thomas Sr.

Lyle is survived by father, W.W. Thomas of Antlers; sister, Lori Thomas of Oklahoma City; nieces and nephews, Paige Thomas, Tyler Thomas, and Jeffery Thomas; four uncles, Lester Thomas, Mack Thomas, Gerald Don Thomas, Impson Thomas Jr.; two aunts, Hazel Wilson and Ruby Harjo; as well as numerous relatives and a host of friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Burkhart Funeral Services of Antlers. Interment was at Corrine Cemetery.



Henry Lee Harrison

Henry Lee Harrison, 71, of McAlester, passed away on Aug. 29, 2015, at his home. He was born on July 1, 1944, to George and Louise Harrison in Atoka. Henry was the oldest son of 15 children.

He graduated in 1963 from the historic L'Ouverture High School in McAlester. Henry soon after joined the United States Army, serving in the United States, Germany and France. He was honorably discharged in 1969, and transitioned to civilian life in Oklahoma.

Henry moved to Tulsa, where he married and had two sons, Ronald and Shawn Harrison. Before moving back to McAlester, Henry had his third child Natosha Sabir. In the early 1980s, Henry remarried and became a stepfather to Monica Owens. In this marriage Shalondra Harrison was born. In the 1990's Henry met Shirley Hunter, and they shared their lives together until his passing.

Henry worked in several job roles throughout Oklahoma. He worked as a correctional officer, security guard, as a construction worker and as a forklift operator at Simmons Poultry Processing Plant.

Henry was preceded in death by his parents; and siblings, Ruezell, James, Dwight; Debra, Sandra Kay, Carolyn, Geneva and Sylvia.

Henry is survived by, Shirley Hunter; his sons: Ronald Harrison of Tulsa; Shawn Harrison (Jackie) of Moore; Daughters: Natosha Sabir, Arlington, Texas; Monica Owens, Huntington Beach, California and Shalondra Harrison, Oklahoma City; grandchildren, Shawn Mycal Harrison, Christopher Harrison, Kamrie Harrison, Kanille Harrison; Te-Era Harrison; Raheem Sabir, Rakaiyah Sabir, Xavier Sabir; Don Benefe IV "Bentley"; great-grandchildren, Kolby Harrison and Amira Harrison; his brothers, Kenneth Harrison of McAlester, George "Ray" Harrison of Nebraska, Harold Harrison, Kansas; sisters, Theresa Harrison, Nello Porfilio, Pamela Harrison-Ramey all of McAlester; aunts, Cecil Davis of Atoka, Peggy Proctor of Oklahoma City, Patricia Brown of California, Pauline Brown of McAlester; uncles, Jesse Harrison and Joe Harrison both of Atoka; and many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Chaney Harkins Funeral Home of McAlester. Interment was at Oak Hill Cemetery in McAlester.



Joeseph Matthew Homer

Joseph Matthew Homer, 39, of McAlester, passed away Sept. 23, 2015, at McAlester Regional Hospital. Joe lost his 5-year long battle with cancer. He was born on April 14, 1976, to Joseph and Melita (Bennett) Homer, in McAlester.

Joe lived at the family ranch in Albion, and later moved to McAlester where he graduated from high school in 1994. He worked at MEECO and K&B Construction Company.

Joe was a devoted son, brother and friend. He was full of life and enjoyed having a good time with his friends, playing guitar, listening to music, spending time outdoors at the lake, fishing and hunting.

He was preceded in death by his father, Joseph Homer; maternal grandparents, Doris and Bob Cargill and Hugh Bennett; and paternal grandparents, J.F. and Francine Homer.

Joe is survived by his mother; son, Joe Homer of McAlester; nephew, Luke Homer, Jr.; brothers, Stephen Homer and wife, Susan of McAlester and Luke Homer and wife, Christi of Arpelar; sister, Bonnie Gourdin and husband, Travis of West Virginia; other nephews and nieces, Jake Homer, Bethany Griffin, Matthew Griffin, Austin Homer, Melissa Homer, Stephen J. Homer and Akaysha Wolf; sister-in-law, Melissa Homer of Missouri; dear friends, Paige Priddy and Sherri Davis and numerous aunts, uncles and loved ones.

The family would like to thank Rob Stephens and Erik Williamson for their many visits and friendship.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Chaney Harkins Funeral Home of McAlester. Interment was at the Angel Hill Family Cemetery in Albion.



Shirley McPherson

Shirley McPherson, 84, of Lakeland, Florida passed away on July 18, 2015. She was born Nov. 14, 1930, to Roy and June McPherson, in Longmont, Colorado.

Shirley proudly worked and retired as a federal employee, where she accumulated many wonderful stories. She was an avid reader, and prided herself with learning something new everyday.

Shirley moved to Pinellas County, F in 1976 with her husband, Robert E. Johnson, and youngest daughter. She loved the Gulf coast of Florida. Shirley was a proud member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

She was preceded in death by her sister, Conny Price, and brother, Arthur McPherson.

Shirley is survived by her sisters, Juanita Hale and Marilyn Preston; seven children, Annette Hester, Jimmy Johnson, Paul Johnson, Theresa Oss, David Johnson, Marsha Bumgarner, and Janice Drouin; stepson, Robert Johnson; 18 grandchildren, 35 great-grandchildren, and a great-great-grandson.

A celebration of her life was held at her favorite beach.



Rev. William Jennings Frye

The Rev. William Jennings Frye, 76, passed away on Sept. 4, 2015, at McAlester Regional Health Center. He was born on Jan. 10, 1939, to Edmond and Eliza (Pickens) Frye, in Blanco.

William grew up on the family farm near Blanco. He attended school in Blanco early on. He also attended Jones Academy near Hartshorne, before finishing high school at Pittsburg. William attended the Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kan. In 1959, he joined the U.S. Navy. William served for over 10 years in California, the western Pacific Islands and the Far East.

In 1965 he started college at Bacone College in Muskogee, where he met his wife, Ruth Ann Killer. They were married on Aug. 11, 1966, in Locust Grove.

William rejoined the Navy until his honorable discharge in 1971. He returned to Bacone, graduating in 1973. William then attended Northeastern State College in Tahlequah, where he earned his bachelor of arts degree in sociology and American Indian Studies. William was one of the first students to receive a degree in American Indian Studies.

Since then he has served the Choctaw and Chickasaw tribes in many capacities. He served as a Choctaw Tribal Councilman, and was instrumental in starting the Commodity Food Distribution Center. He was recently selected as a moderator for the Choctaw/Chickasaw Association, and had served as a missionary for that organization for several years. William was ordained a minister in 1987, and served numerous churches in the area for many years.

In his free time he enjoyed watching sports on television, studying languages, fishing, hunting and meeting new people.

William was preceded in death by his parents.

He is survived by his wife, Ruth; daughter, Christine Browne and husband John; son, Edwin Frye; five grandchildren, Cyndi McFarland, Tracey McFarland, Jordan Hamilton, Zoe Ann Frye, William Scott Thomas Frye; two great-grandchildren, Clayton McFarland, Delaney Spitzner; brother, Norman Frye; mother-in-law, Clara (Killer) Fishinghawk; and several aunts, uncles, cousins and other relatives.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Brumley-Mills Funeral Home of McAlester. Interment was at Brushy Cemetery.



Lincoln Scott Balch

Lincoln Scott Balch, 22, passed away on, Sept. 25, 2015, at Plains Memorial Hospital, in Dimmitt, Texas. He was born on March 17, 1993, to Paula Susanne (Wayland) and Steve Eugene Balch, in Guymon.

Lincoln was a 2012 graduate of Mustang Public Schools, where he was a member of the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps Program from 2008 to 2012. In May of 2014, he graduated from Canadian Valley Technology Center as a certified diesel mechanic. Lincoln was a lifetime member of the National Rifle Association, the Amarillo Gun Club and First Baptist Church, Dimmitt.

He was preceded in death by great grandparents; Reece J. Balch, Lavada Jones, Bob and Lucille Riedy, Leroy "Bill" and Gertie Williams, Everett and Alma Wayland; and uncle Gary Michael Balch.

Lincoln is survived by his parents Steve and Paula Balch; sister Kerry Balch; grandparents, Steve and Jolene Balch, Paul and Ruth Wayland; uncle and aunts, Maas and Stacy Balch, Aaron Etherington, Joseph and Brenda Fowler, Daniel and Angela Bendon, Thad and Laura Pickard and Everett "Skip" and Ashley Wayland; cousins, Brenden Balch, Camryn Balch, Lauren Etherington, Kaitlin Coleman, Skyler McMinn, Morgan McCurry, Kaiden Coleman, Mattisyn Coleman, James Derrick "JD" Fowler, Rebecca Fowler Cuevas, Little Eli Cuevas, Caleb Pickard, Everett Wayland and Gwyneth Wayland; as well we many extended family members and friends.

Memorial donations may be made to Mustang Public School JROTC Program. Arrangements were made under the direction of Yanda & Son Funeral Home in Yukon. Interment was at Sugar Creek Cemetery in Nelson.



Donald "Xumash" Joe

Donald "Xumash" Joe, 80, passed away on Oct. 4, 2015, at his home in Ardmore. He was born on April 17, 1935, to Tom and Annie (Tecumsah) McKay Joe, at Spring Hallow on the Umatilla Indian Reservation in Mission, Oregon.

Donald grew up on the Umatilla Indian Reservation and attended school for 12 years at Pilot Rock, Oregon. After high school he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1954, and served in the Korean Conflict until he was honorably discharged in 1958. He was stationed at the Ardmore Air Base when he met his wife.

He married the love of his life, Ruby Irene Taylor on July 26, 1958, in Gainesville, Texas.

Donald worked as a sales representative for Coca Cola Bottling Company for thirty years and retired in 1989. He later worked as a janitor for Plainview Schools, until he retired. He then worked part time for Chickasaw Nation Food Distribution until his health forced him to quit.

Donald was an avid bow shooter and won numerous awards in tournaments. He had much respect for his culture and strived to keep his children involved in many activities. He and his two sons formed the drum group High Country Singers. He entered a float in parades for many years and took first place many times. He was and Oregon Ducks fan. He tried to catch every game and support his team. He would spend many days watching football with his grandsons.

Donald was a singer and guitar player. He played in local clubs, until he joined the Durwood Indian Baptist Church. He attended all night singings and formed the group, The Gospel String. He later formed the group, Durwood Gospel Singers and the Ardmore Gospel Singers.

Donald joined the Chickasaw Honor Guard, and marched at the head of grand entries carrying the eagle staff.

Donald will be missed by all that knew and loved him. He was preceded in death by his parents, wife, Ruby Irene Joe; son, Chad Vincent Joe; grandson, Kevin Don Aaron; great-granddaughter, Taygan Helene Joe; brothers, Orlando, Charlie and Bruce McKay, sisters; Augustine, Sarah and Mavis McKay, Elsie McKay Minthorn, Flora McKay James, Minnie and Donna Joe; daughter-in-law, Donna Helene Joe

He is survived by four sons, Michael Joe and wife Jonnie; Mark Joe and wife, Dondi; Brad Leon Joe, and Arlyn Jay, two daughters; Elaine Day and husband, Tim and Annette Aaron; seventeen grandchildren; seventeen great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren; sisters-in-law, Anna Bob and Pearl Marris; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Griffin-Hillcrest Funeral Home in Ardmore. Interment was at Hillcrest Memorial Park.



Charleen Wilson Adams

Charleen Wilson Adams, 69, passed away on Sept. 4, 2015 surrounded by her family. She was born on Jan. 30, 1946.

Charleen touched many lives with her kindness and generosity. She holds a special place in the hearts of those who knew and loved her.

She is survived by her children, Darren, Johnny and Allison; granddaughter, Sara; and many family members and friends.



Geneva Louise Brown

Geneva Louise Brown, 93, passed away on Sept. 22, 2015, in Pottsboro, Texas. She was born on May 22, 1922, to Robert Thomas Moore and Annie Elizabeth (Bard) Moore, in Shawnee.

Geneva had lived in the Boswell community since 1951. She married Henry B. Brown on Aug. 17, 1940, in Purcell.

Geneva was a retired teacher from the Boswell School system, and was a member of the Eastern Star and the Choctaw Nation. She was also a member of the First Baptist Church of Boswell. Geneva was an avid Elvis fan. Her favorite pastimes included shopping, reading, cooking and ranching. However, she loved spending time with her children most of all.

Geneva was preceded her in death by her husband, Henry; and both of her parents.

She is survived by, two daughters, Donna E. Coffey and husband, David of Irving, Texas, and Miranda Hull and husband, Ron of Boswell; three brothers, Robert T. Moore, Alton O. Moore and Thomas David Moore; two sisters, Margaret Seebeck and Jeanne Kyrias; grandson, Jeffery David Coffey and wife, Cristy of Double Oak, Texas; numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and a host of other family members and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Miller & Miller Funeral Home, in Boswell. Interment was at Fairview Cemetery, in Shawnee.



Mary Sue Puckett

Mary Sue Puckett, 85, passed away on Sept. 27, 2015. She was born on Jan. 19, 1930, to Ira E. and Lou LeFlore Maddux.

Mary worked for 45 years at Riley's Reproduction Inc. She started off as a secretary, and by the time she retired she was vice president of the company. During her retirement she became a caretaker to her mother, grandkids, and eventually her oldest daughter.

Throughout her life, her coworkers knew Mary as Susie, by her nieces as Chub or Bub, and by her granddaughters she was simply known as grandma. She was a proud member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Mary loved her family greatly and she knew she was greatly loved by all of them.

Mary was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Robert David Puckett; two sisters, Patricia K. Smith and Dorothy L. Gasseur; as well as many aunts, uncles, and cousins.

She is survived by her daughters, Linda L. Rawlins, and Kathryn Susan Henderson and husband Rick; grandchildren, Miranda K. Rawlins, Jonathan J. Henderson, Ashlee D. Cassil; great-grandson Dakota L. Scott; nieces, Deborah Allen, and Terry Hilprecht and husband Carl; nephew, Robert "Bob" Smith and wife Pauline; great-nieces, Kristen Renfro and husband Denver, Tommi Allen, and Scott Smith and wife Deborah; as well as many more loved ones that will miss her dearly. Services were held at Sunny Lane Funeral Home in Del City.



James Henry Wade

James Henry Wade, 94, of Duncan, passed away on Sept. 30, 2015, at his home surrounded by his family. He was born on May 10, 1921, to Thomas Jefferson and Myrtle (Hopkins) Wade, in Bray.

James was a veteran. He proudly served his country in the United States Air Corps in World War II, as a surgical technician. He retired from Mack Energy as a foreman in 1986.

James was an avid golfer, pool player and loved the game of softball.

He was very proud of to be a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

James married the love of his life, Barbara Weatherman on Nov. 18, 1978, in Ft. Townson. He loved his children and was even known to give them an occasional dance lesson.

He was preceded in death by his parents; first wife, Betty Wade; a daughter, Deborah Jo Wade; brothers, Paul Wade and T.J. Wade; sisters, Vinney Whitley, Ada Hammons, Margie Wade and Agnes Bohanon.

James is survived by his wife; three sons, James H. Wade Jr. and wife Mary of Lawton; Tim Wade and wife Donna of Ardmore; Dino Bohanon of Ash Down, Arkansas.; five daughters, Rebecca Wade Green of Duncan, Elizabeth Fields and husband Scott of Oklahoma City, Barbie Barnett of Oklahoma City, Kelly Sherill and husband Chad of Duncan, Stephanie Stallcup of Dallas; 16 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; and many other family members.

Arrangements were made under the direction of the Don Grantham Funeral Home. Interment was at the Duncan Cemetery.



Christine Rae (Vann) Castaneda

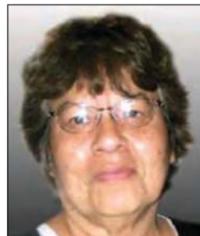
Christine Rae (Vann) Castaneda, 67, passed away on May 25, 2015. She was born Oct. 26, 1947, to Carthel Enex and Ethel Marie Vann.

She was a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Her grandfather, Mitchell Bobb, was a Code Talker for the United States during WWI. Christine was affectionately known by many as "Nannie."

Christine was preceded in death by her parents, and brother, Carthel E. Vann Jr.

She is survived by her children, Michele Castaneda, Michael Castaneda (Debbie), Melissa Castaneda (Mark Martinez), Paul Castaneda (Jessie Bird); her grandchildren, Jennifer (Edward), Jacqueline (William), Nicholas, Michael, Olivia (Brent), Alexa, Zackary, Cyria, Alina, Angelina, and Kaiya; great-grandchildren, Alayna, Leona, Juliana, Jordan, and Julian; siblings, Anella Garcia, James Vann, Joseph Vann; and her beloved dog, Sassie.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Passantino Bros. Funeral Home & Cremations, in Kansas City, Missouri.



EDUCATION



Willett prepares for teaching career

Jordin Willett attended an early childhood world conference in Washington, D.C. in Aug. Representatives from over 38 countries were in attendance. Willett and her colleagues from Park University led a workshop on engaging culturally diverse children and families in literacy. Willett is student teaching this fall and will graduate with a bachelor's degree in middle school education with social sciences. Willett appreciates the financial assistance the Choctaw Nation has offered her in the pursuit of becoming a teacher. She hopes to be able to share her Native American culture with her future students. Mother Annette Willett from Liberty, Missouri; father Wes Willett from Parkville, Missouri; and grandparents Jerry and Peggy Newcomb of Fritch, Texas are all proud of Willett's accomplishments.

Walley named 2015 OCTA Scholar



The Oklahoma Choctaw Tribal Alliance (OCTA) announced Rachel Walley as their 2015 Annual Scholarship winner. Walley's award-winning essay demonstrated her desire to advance her career in higher education by seeking a degree in Arts Education. She is attending the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond. She is involved in volunteering her services at OCTA. Her goal as an art teacher is to help students, with an emphasis on Native Americans, to develop their artistic skills. She is also an up and coming artist in her own right.



Schooling makes trip to D.C.

RayAnn Schooling took a trip to Washington D.C. in June 2015 with her 8th grade class from Decatur, Texas. The Choctaw Nation helped fund Schooling's trip, and she and her mother wanted to offer thanks. "We appreciate them so much for all they do to better the future generations of the Choctaw Tribe," mother Julie Schooling said. "You all made this trip possible for my daughter and the other students who made the trip." In particular, they wanted to thank the Choctaw Nation, Chief Gary Batton, Assistant Chief Jack Austin, Jr., Angel Rowland with the Choctaw Nation Donations Committee, and the Decatur Jr. High School teachers and the parents who chaperoned.



Sanders earns diploma, begins college

Shaylie Sanders, great-great granddaughter of original enrollee Emma Frazier, graduated as valedictorian of her 2015 Heavener High School class. She is the daughter of Rodale and Kellie Sanders, granddaughter of Phil and Terry Sanders, and great-granddaughter of the late

Thelma Sanders. She is attending the University of Arkansas in Forth Smith, working toward a degree in chemistry. Sanders appreciates the assistance Choctaw Nation has offered during her academic pursuits over the years.

Megli moves on to graduate studies



Austin Megli, from Mansfield, Texas, recently graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in philosophy and political science from the University of New Mexico. "I would like to say thank you to the Choctaw Nation and specifically the Higher Education Program for all the monetary support and encouragement," he said. He is continuing his education as a first year law student with an emphasis on political, environmental, and tribal law at the University of New Mexico Law School.

During his studies, he worked for the Office of Governmental Affairs and Community Relations where he conducted policy research and lobbied at the New Mexico legislature, obtaining over \$200,000 in capitol for the student body. Megli was elected to the Associated Students of the University of New Mexico as the Assistant Director of Governmental Affairs. This past summer he attended the American Indian Law Center 2015 Pre-Law Summer Institute. "I am very proud of my Choctaw heritage and thankful to be a tribal member of the Choctaw Nation," Megli said.

Scott meets president, interns



The summer of 2015 was a busy and exciting one for Madilyn Scott, 16 year old junior at Durant High School. Scott spent six weeks of her summer as a research intern in the Native OKstars program with the Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences. "I got the opportunity to do some medical research and, my favorite, dissect cadavers," Scott said. "I got to dissect the major arteries and muscles in the cadavers. The most interesting of

that was being able to take out the brain and examine it on a up close level." Madilyn was also one of the five Choctaw students selected to meet with President Obama during his visit to the Choctaw Nation. "Meeting the president was a once in a lifetime opportunity," Scott said. "I got to sit in my high school gym and talk to him on such a personal level. We got to share our stories and ideas about our native community and how we could possibly better it. He shared so much interest in our thoughts and ideas, it was unreal." She plans on going to college and eventually becoming a medical doctor. Scott has also utilized the Choctaw Nation High School Student Services program (formerly known as the Making a Difference program). "Being Choctaw has also provided a lot of support as a Student," she said. "They have helped me realize that my wants and dreams are possible and have done, and continue to do, anything they can to help me reach those goals."



Intolubbe-Chmil brothers graduate from Colorado Univ.

On May 9, brothers Johnathon and Daniel Intolubbe-Chmil graduated from The University of Colorado on May 9. Johnathon received his Law Degree, and Daniel received a Bachelors in Economics. They are the great grandchildren of Earl & Velma Intolubbe (deceased) of Durant, Oklahoma, grandchildren of Jim Intolubbe, of New Mexico. Pictured are father John, Johnathon, Abigail, Mother Loren, Daniel & Patrick.



Sanders earns blue ribbon for quilting

Rheylyn Sanders, proud 11-year-old member of the Choctaw Nation from Olustee, placed first in a quilting competition at the Jackson County Fair in Altus Sept. 9. In her second year to compete, Sanders entered the novice 1-3 years of experience quilt top only competition. She earned her second first place ribbon. She took summer classes in 2014 from Turkey Creek Quilting, taught by her great-aunt Kay Sanders.

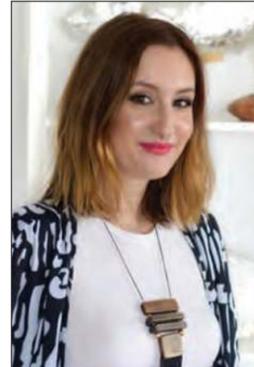
Martinez picked for advisory council



Isabella Martinez submitted an essay and earned a place on the Georgia State School Superintendent 2015-2016 Student Advisory Council. In her essay, she explained the things she would like to reform for the state of Georgia. She also maintained standing on the principal's honor roll.

She has been involved with Choctaw Nation's Success Through Academic Recognition (STAR) program since the 5th grade.

Park creates success through fashion



Coco Park, or Courtney Rush as she was originally named, built up an online following as blogger, beauty writer, mixed media journalist, and now a published author. Her online persona, and the name of her fashion blog, is Beauty Wolf. It can be found at www.thebeautywolf.com. Her work as a freelance journalist and online blogger has been praised by The Daily Mail, Fast Company, Lucky Magazine, Fashionista, and the San Francisco Chronicle. Her upcoming book, "Korean Beauty Secrets," is set to be released in Nov. Originally from Ardmore, Park is a certified aesthetician and professional makeup artist, having lived and worked in places such as Dallas, New York, Toronto, and Montreal. She now lives on the east coast with her family, including husband Richard Park. There, she participates in social activism and volunteers at the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal, teaching Native women about empowerment through beauty and self care. She is the great-granddaughter of the late Earl Labor of Antlers, and the granddaughter of the late Janice Labor Converse of Tishomingo. She is the daughter of Paula Converse Rush of Ardmore.

RUNESTONE 5K/10K

The Choctaw Nation Happy Heart Runestone 5K/10K Run will be held in Heavener on November 14 at the Runestone State Park. Medals will be awarded to the top three male & female finishers in each age group. In addition, the top 3 male and female finishers overall will receive a trophy. Pre-registered participants will receive a t-shirt. On-Site registration begins at 8:30 a.m. and will end promptly at 9:30 a.m., no exceptions. On-site registration t-shirts will be first come, first serve basis. Race will begin at 10:00 a.m. Walkers are not recommended to do the 10K unless they can complete it in under 2 hours. There is a 2 hour time limit.

November 14, 2015
No Registration Fee!
Pre-Registration Deadline Date: October 30, 2015

For more information or for the registration form, contact Mandy Grammar at 918-567-7000, ext. 6391 or by email at mggrammar@cnhsa.com.

INDIAN AG YOUTH ALLIANCE

2015

Who
What
Deadline
Why

Prompt

Essay Contest & Conference

All Native American youth, 9th -12th grade
Writing contest
Nov. 1, 4 p.m. (MST)
Chance to showcase writing talents

Utilizing our resources to our greatest benefit

There are roughly 46 million acres of Indian grazing lands in the lower 48 states and roughly 4.5 million acres of farm land; of the 3.4 billion Indians derive from Ag sales, it is roughly split equally between cows & plows. The theme was selected to demonstrate how the IAC encourages producers to maximize the resources available through federal programs, bringing products to market, all the while gently moving us back to what got us here.

For more info, contact: Verna Billedaux at (406)338-2650/(406)450-8107, Janie Simms-Hipp at (479)409-9125 or Donita Fischer (605) 964-8320.

EDUCATION

Crawford travels to D.C., lobbies for cancer research

Choctaw scholar urges lawmakers to make fighting cancer top priority during national annual leadership summit

By TAYLOR CRAWFORD & JILL COURTNEY

Choctaw Nation

More than 750 cancer patients, survivors, volunteers and staff from all 50 states gathered in Washington, D.C. with a common goal.

Their mission: To make the fight against cancer a national priority.

Their efforts were part of the annual American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) Leadership Summit and Lobby Day from September 27-30, 2015.

Among this group was Taylor Crawford, a 21-year-old member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Through a partnership between the Gates Millennium Scholars Program and ACS CAN, Crawford served alongside a team of Oklahoma advocates lobbying on Capitol Hill on September 29.



Photos Provided

Taylor Crawford is a Choctaw Tribal Member and participant of the Choctaw Nation's WIOA Program.

"The reality of the situation is that we all live within one degree of cancer," said Crawford. "We all know someone who has been affected by this disease—a coworker, family member, or friend. Those are the stories we bring."

The Oklahoma ACS CAN team along with the University of Oklahoma's men's basketball coach

Lon Kruger and his wife, Barbara, took their One Degree stories to their meetings with members of Oklahoma's congressional delegation and their staff.

In the meetings with Senator James Lankford, Congressman Markwayne Mullin and staff members from the offices of Senator Jim Inhofe and Congressman Jim Bridenstine, Crawford and fellow ACS CAN advocates discussed specific priorities necessary to reach their goals. These lifesaving policies include increasing medical research funding dollars for the National Institutes of Health and National Cancer Institute over the next two years, supporting legislation to improve patient quality of life, and cosponsoring legislation to make colorectal cancer screenings more affordable for seniors.

"These priorities are crucial to decreasing the impact of cancer moving

forward," said Crawford. "Cancer is a disease that still kills 1,600 people a day in this country. This is incredibly important for tribal members as cancer continues to have a major impact on our population as well."

Aside from a full day of advocating, Crawford also took part in a Lights of HOPE ceremony at the U.S. Capitol Reflecting Pool. The ceremony of reflection was a powerful presence—complete with more than 20,000 luminaries lit in honor of lives lost to cancer.

"The pouring rain was no match for the hearts and perseverance of each of the wonderful people standing in it—fighting for such an important cause," said Crawford. "Each of us has a story to tell. What are we going to do to end this so more people don't have to face the reality of having a cancer story? Strive for more."



Taylor Crawford (bottom left) with the Oklahoma advocacy team, just before carrying out meetings on Capitol Hill. (Back row, from left): Paula Warlick, Oklahoma grassroots manager for ACS CAN; Michelle Brown, Oklahoma state lead ambassador for ACS CAN from Dist. 2; Desarae Simmons, Dist. 3; Jamie Gross, Dist. 5; Ellen Tillery, Dist. 1; Dawn Watson, Oklahoma government relations director for ACS CAN. (Front row, from left): Taylor Crawford, Dist. 2; Brittney Hodges, Dist. 4; Victoria Gleason, Dist. 2; Lon Kruger, University of Oklahoma men's basketball coach; Barbara Miles.

"Being a member of a team of people who strive for a common goal with great intention has been truly inspiring," said Crawford.

ACS CAN is a non-profit, non-partisan advocacy affiliate organization of the American Cancer Society, which is dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem. ACS

CAN works to encourage lawmakers, candidates and government officials to support laws and policies that will make cancer a top national priority. ACS CAN gives ordinary people extraordinary power to fight cancer. For more information about the work ACS CAN is doing in Oklahoma and across the nation, visit acsan.org.

OU scholar honored for educational excellence



Photo by Payton Guthrie

T'ata Roberts enjoys a University of Oklahoma football game with her family, all dressed for the occasion. Pictured (left to right) her mom Rebecca Roberts, T'ata Roberts, father Michael Roberts, and below are siblings Morning Star Roberts and Paan Pai Roberts.

By BRANDON FRYE

Choctaw Nation

T'ata Roberts' long time dedication to the pursuit of knowledge and the advocacy for Native communities culminated with a unique honor for the young leader at the University of Oklahoma football stadium on Oct. 3.

The university began featuring exemplary student scholars during their games. Roberts, 21-year-old senior, was at the top of the list for many of her mentors, peers,

and professors.

She received a minute of recognition on the big screens of the stadium at the OU vs West Virginia home game. A brief biography was read while various pictures of her highlights on an off campus were shown.

Roberts was selected out of the entire student body at OU based on her past success in the areas of academics, leadership, community involvement, and for her accomplishments and awards.

"This was by far a highlight of my life. Never have I ever imagined I would be honored in such a way," Roberts said. "I not only see this as an accomplishment for myself, but an accomplishment for all Native people at OU. Recognition on a university-level for American Indians is rare."

Roberts is Choctaw, Chickasaw and Taos Pueblo. She was born in Santa Fe, New Mexico to Michael and Rebecca Roberts of Ada. She is the eldest of three daughters. Younger sisters are Paan Pai and Morning Star Roberts. She is the granddaughter of Wilson and Sharon Roberts of Ada, as well as Vincent and Judith Mondragon of Taos, New Mexico.

In 2012, T'ata Roberts entered her college career at the University of Oklahoma named a "Featured Future Sooner" based on her high school grades and leadership skills.

She quickly took on new experiences and leadership roles on campus, including an involvement with the American Indian Student Association (AISA). During freshman and sophomore years she was a member, became the cultural affairs chair as a junior, and today serves as President of AISA.

As president of AISA, Roberts stressed unity and inclusiveness of the Native community as a whole. In 2014, she served AISA as Miss Indian OU, where she represented with the platform of special needs

and special olympics. She volunteered at various events involving special olympics and helped to raise money to send students from a local school to the Special Olympic State Games.

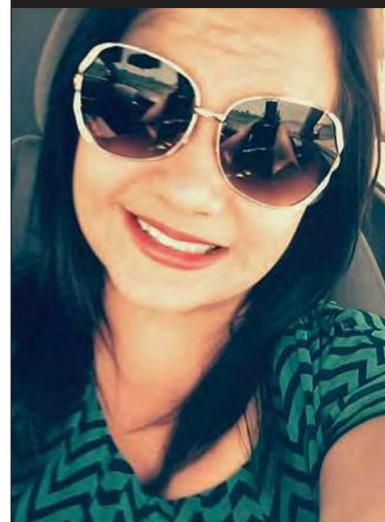
Last year, Roberts was inducted into Gamma Beta Phi Honor Society. She received various scholarships including: Gates Millennium Scholarship, AT&T American Indian Scholarship, McAlester Scottish Rite Scholarship, and the Stratford B. & Eleanor M. "Bobbie" Tolson Scholarship. She is an OU Presidential Leadership Class Alumni, a member of the Dean's Honor Roll, and 2014/2015 Miss Indian OU.

She is currently studying human relations with a minor in Native American studies. She enjoys spending time with my family, traveling to various powwows across the United States and Canada, playing basketball, singing in the car, going on road trips and exploring new places.

Roberts plans to continue with her education by attending graduate school. As a Gates Millennium Scholar, she plans to use the scholarship to its fullest extent and spend as much time in school as she can.

"To the students, never forget who you are and where you come from," Roberts said. "Take your education as far as you can and use it, give back to the community and our people when you've made it to the top."

Batton Scholar Spotlight: Samantha Bishop



(Editor's note: This is fifth 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

Samantha Bishop always knew she wanted to help others.

She began her college journey, with her eyes set on becoming a police officer. Double majoring in psychology and criminal justice, Samantha found herself struggling to find a way to afford her education.

She was thankful to be chosen as a

recipient of the 2014-15 Gary & Angie Batton Family Scholarship.

"Receiving the Batton Scholarship was such an honor, I felt so proud to be acknowledged by the Choctaw Nation for my hard work and dedication to my education," said Samantha.

According to Bishop, the scholarship helped with the financial struggle of attending college.

"The Batton Scholarship provided me with an opportunity to graduate from college by relieving much of the stress that exists while trying to figure out how I will be able to pay for classes, books, and all the other fees that come with a college education," said Bishop.

Since starting her college career, Samantha has decided to use her double major, to work her way towards a master's degree in forensic psychology.

She is currently working for the Jackson County DHS as a child welfare specialist in Child Protective Services.

"When I graduated college I felt a calling to help children," said Samantha. "I began working for Jackson County in July and have recently passed my certification to become a Child Welfare Specialist Level 1. I have found my current job to be very rewarding though it can be difficult at times."

Samantha is the daughter of Billy and Stacy Stein.

She wants to give thanks to her grandmother, Nellie Hunter, for encouraging her to be an active member of the Choctaw Nation.

"I believe the biggest honor receiving this Scholarship was seeing the pride in my Granny's and my parents' eyes when I told them I was going to meet Chief Batton."



The Affordable Care Act

requires you and each member of your family to have health insurance coverage OR qualify for an exemption from the responsibility to have insurance OR pay an additional tax (penalty) when filing your federal income tax return. The Marketplace offers affordable, low cost (and even free for some) insurance plans with little or no out-of-pocket costs when used outside of Indian Health clinics. Native Americans can enroll anytime during the year due to special enrollment provisions. Find out now how the Affordable Care Act will affect you and your family. You may need to take action now to prevent paying additional taxes to the IRS when you file your federal income tax returns.

Visit one of the Choctaw Nation health care facilities and talk to a Benefits Coordinator to find out more. You can also call Choctaw Nation at (800) 349-7026 and ask for a Benefits Coordinator for assistance.

Spotlight on Elders

with
Clarence Wilson

By KENDRA GERMANY

Choctaw Nation

Born and raised in the house he calls home in Fort Towson, Clarence Wilson has seen a lot of change happen in his 88 years of life.

Born the son of Clarence McCurtain Wilson and Mary Jewell Philips, Clarence has one sister named June.

"I was born in that room in there," said Clarence. "I was born in 1927."

He worked at the local drugstore part-time, before graduating high school in 1945. Clarence went into the service for a short period of time, after high school. He then attended college for a couple of years at Oklahoma A&M. In 1949, Clarence married his wife Peggy.

According to Clarence, he lived in Fort Towson until he was 17, and then left like most people do.

"I worked here with my uncle and my dad on the farm," said Clarence. "Then I decided, there must be a better way to make a life than that."

He and Peggy moved to Houston in 1953, and Clarence went to work as an asbestos worker.

Clarence retired in 1985, and he and Peggy decided to move back to Fort Towson.

"We're the ones that ran off from the nest," joked Clarence. "Ordinarily, it's the child, but this time it was us."

All four of Clarence and Peggy's children still live in the Houston area.

"It hasn't been bad, but there's a lot of things that I miss that we had down there. But, you get used to it," said Clarence.

Clarence is no stranger to change, especially the changes he has seen in his community.

"Here, we lived in a good neighborhood. They were really neighbors," said Clarence.

Growing up, Clarence says he knew everybody in town.

"I knew most everybody's name, their dog's name, their mule's name," said Clarence.



Photo by Kendra Germany

Clarence Wilson, Choctaw born and raised in Fort Towson, reminisces and reflects on his life.

"Whatever they had, I knew what their name was."

"Now, you don't know who they are, you don't know how long they are going to stay, and you don't know what they are going to do while they are here."

People are not the only thing Clarence has seen change.

"They keep moving the seasons ahead," said Clarence. "We never saw any signs of Christmas until after Thanksgiving. Then the stores would begin to have fruit and the candies."

Clarence reflected on his childhood memories of going Christmas caroling.

"On cold winter nights, those of us that belonged to the church, not only our church, anyone who wanted to walk and sing caroled up and down the streets," said Clarence. "They don't seem to do that anymore. We don't have them come by, and that is something we really enjoyed. It was one of the few things we had to do."

Clarence says he is not opposed to change.

"People have always accused me of not liking the change, but yet I understand it has to come about," said

Clarence. "It just has to."

He says that there have been a few changes that he hasn't liked over the years, but he has gotten used to them. One of those being everyone's infatuation with social media, like Facebook.

"I'm not supposed to be out there. If I'm out there, somebody has put me on there," said Clarence. "I really don't care for people knowing what I'm doing."

As someone who has lived a full life, Clarence has a lot of wisdom to share with the younger generations.

"One thing I see, I believe in sports, and I support them. But, it seems like some of the students are heading more trying to succeed in sports, than they are in education," said Clarence. "I really believe in education. I like sports too, but I don't think it should come first."

One piece of advice Clarence would give a young person is to enjoy life while you are young.

"I would have to tell you to enjoy what of it you can, because the latter years are okay, but it takes a lot of effort sometimes," said Clarence. "Friends are always good to have, good friends."

Oklahoma State President, said, "The common thread among these honorees is the wisdom and impact they have had on their tribes, family, and community."

"This night, in this place, as Oklahoma tribes and Nations join together in a spirit of harmony and peace, we reflect and give thanks for the lives they have lived and the innumerable ways they have passed on their legacies to future generations," Vermillion added.

The AARP Oklahoma Indian Elder Honors, which has recognized 350 elders from all 39 federally recognized tribes and Nations in Oklahoma since its inception in 2009, is the largest gathering of its kind in the state.

"Whether they are well known or exhibit the quiet devotion to family and community, collectively, this year's AARP Oklahoma Indian Elder Honorees represent what is best about Native American people in Oklahoma: love of family, dedication to culture, and respect for all people," she said.

Anyone interested in joining the AARP Oklahoma Inter-Tribal Community Group can send an email to: ok@aarp.org. For more information about AARP Oklahoma's Native American outreach, visit the AARP Oklahoma Indian navigator website at www.aarp.org/okindiannavigator.

To read more about Delton Cox and his service to the Choctaw people, visit <http://www.choctawnation.com/news-room/press-room/media-releases/protecting-what-is-choctaw/>.

Choctaw Nation offers a variety of housing and rental assistance

By KENDRA GERMANY

Choctaw Nation

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma offers many different services for the benefit of its people. One of those services is The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Housing Authority.

According to Tracy Archey, Service Coordination Director for the Housing Authority, the Housing Authority is here to assist tribal members in their efforts to adequately meet their housing needs.

"The mission of the Housing Authority of the Choctaw Nation is to provide the Choctaw people with the opportunity for decent, safe, and sanitary housing while building stronger, healthier communities and promoting economic independence for our clientele," said Archey.

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Housing Authority's mission is achieved through the several services that are available through the Housing Authority in Hugo.

There are many services available to the Choctaw people and others living within the 10.5 county service area, including programs that assist elders.

Independent Elder Sites offer a total of 121 one-bedroom units across the Choctaw Nation service area. Sites are located in Poteau, Hartshorne, Talihina, Calera, Hugo, Idabel and Stigler.

Applicants and/or spouse must be 55 years or older, have some form of income, pass an OSBI and local background check and have a CDIB and Tribal Membership card. Maximum income for family of one or two must meet the HUD established income limits in order to qualify as well. Rent is based off of 15 percent of total household yearly income. Amenities inside the units include a refrigerator, stove and energy star rated washer and dryer.

Elders can also qualify for the 202 Supportive Housing for elders. 202 Supportive Housing is a partnership with Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to serve Native American and non-Native Americans 62 years and over. This program offers one-bedroom apartment units across the 10.5 county service area. Sites are located in Poteau, Atoka, Calera, Hugo and Idabel. Applicants and/or spouse must pass a federal and local background check and meet the HUD established income limits. Amenities on each site include a common area building with a safe room inside.

Elders are not the only ones who have the opportunity to benefit from the services the Housing Authority offers. The **Choctaw Nation Affordable Rental Housing Properties** are comprised of seven housing communities within the Choctaw Nation service area. They are located in Bokoshe, Caney, Quinton, Red Oak, Wright City, and Talihina. Applicants must have a CDIB card and some form of income. All applicants, their spouse and/or children over the age of 18, must pass an OSBI and local background check to qualify. Applicant's income per number of family composition must meet the HUD established income limits, in order to qualify as

well. Rent is based off of 15 percent of total household yearly income.

Home Financial Services are also available. Homeowners Financial Services offer qualified members of federally recognized tribes the opportunity to purchase, construct, rehab, or refinance a home through its home loan products and counseling services. In addition to the numerous direct loan products, conventional, Federal Housing Administration (FHA), Veteran Affairs (VA), and Native American 184 loans are available through participating lending partners.

The **Choctaw Home Buyer Advantage Program** (CHAP) offers loans to eligible members of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma nationwide with no income ceiling limits. The member qualifies for a mortgage according to credit and debt ratios. The amount of assistance for the CHAP down payment and closing costs are determined by underwriting guidelines of the participating lending partners. It is also determined by other purchase variables that include loan-to-value ratio and sale price.

The **Choctaw Homeowners Lending Services** offers direct loans to eligible borrowers that reside in the 10.5 county service area, who otherwise may not be able to qualify for a secondary market loan through other institutions. Borrowers must be members of federally recognized tribes, with a household income that does not exceed 80 percent of the National Median Income level. Preference is given to members of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Types of loans offered include new construction, purchasing existing homes, rehabilitation, home improvement, energy efficiency/weatherization, affordable development and refinancing of existing home loans.

The **Choctaw Homeowners Support Services** offers a comprehensive menu of support services to eligible tribal member families wanting to purchase, repair, rehabilitate, or improve existing homes or building a new home. To be eligible, you must be a member of a federally recognized tribe, residing in the 10.5 county service area. Preference is given to members of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Eligible qualified tribal families can finance the complete construction cost of their home, the purchase of the land and site improvements.

The knowledgeable Choctaw Homeowner Services Team can assist each family through every step of the process to purchase, repair, rehabilitate, or improve an existing home or construction of a new home and site development.

The Housing Authority is also responsible for the **Choctaw Nation Storm Shelter Program**. The Choctaw Nation Storm Shelter Grant Program is administered through the Choctaw Nation Housing Authority, and provides storm shelters to eligible Choctaw Tribal Members who live in Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas, Missouri, and Arkansas. These are states with a high risk of tornados.

Applications will be pro-

cessed on a first-come-first-serve basis. The Choctaw Nation Storm Shelter Grant Program is dependent upon availability of funds. Storm shelters shall be provided as grants for eligible applicants who meet the qualifications. Applicants must be 55 years and over, or must have a documented ambulatory disability.

Storm shelters are awarded one time only. A storm shelter may be installed in a new or existing home. The storm shelter must be installed at primary residences and must be installed on property owned by the applicant. Those owning two or more homes are only eligible for a storm shelter for their primary residence. Only one person may register per physical address. Those that live in mobile homes, must own both the mobile home itself and the land it is located on to be eligible for the program. Only single-family residential homeowners are eligible for their primary residence.

Those that live in a rented house are not eligible for this program. Apartment complexes, duplexes, and other multi-family residences are not eligible for this program, as they are considered a business. Community or neighborhood storm shelters are not eligible for this rebate.

Homeowners rehabilitation services are also offered through the Housing Authority.

The **Choctaw Homeowners Rehabilitation Services** assists with emergency repairs and rehabilitation to homes that are owned by tribal member families residing in the 10.5 county service area.

The overall goal for these services is to assist as many tribal member families as available annual funding permits, with their efforts to protect their home's long-term viability and create a decent, safe, and sanitary living environment.

Applications for assistance can be obtained by contacting the Housing Authority, or be picked up at any Choctaw Nation Field Office. To be eligible for assistance, applicants must be members of a federally recognized tribe with a household income that does not exceed 80 percent of the National Median Income level. Priority is given to eligible families that are lowest income, elderly, have verifiable disabilities, and members of the Choctaw Nation.

Rental Assistance is available to eligible tribal families who reside in the 10 1/2 county service area. To be eligible, applicants must be members of a federally recognized tribe with a household income that does not exceed 80 percent of the National Median Income level and provide required documentation. Preference is given to elders and members of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

Homeless Emergency Shelter assistance has the same eligibility criteria as rental assistance. Preference is given to members of the Choctaw Nation.

For more information on all of the available programs and services provided by the Choctaw Nation Housing Authority call (800)235-3087 or (580)326-7521.

Cox honored cont'd from page 1

great honor and privilege to serve as speaker, and it was time for another deserving councilman to have the experience.

Cox previously served as tribal treasurer, worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs,

But most of all, Cox said he is proud of the expansion and growth District 4 experienced during his service as councilman.

"The whole idea I had was serving the people, doing what is best for the people," Cox said.



Delton Cox, long time Speaker of the Choctaw Tribal Council, was among 50 honorees at the 7th Annual AARP Oklahoma Indian Elder Honors. He is pictured seated, in the middle, with his wife Deloris to the left. Pictured also, from left to right, are Sean Voskuhl, Council Member Thomas Williston, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., Chief Gary Batton, and seated to Cox's right, Joe Ann Vermillion, Oklahoma AARP State President.

and helped to make life better for hundreds of youth while serving as director of the Jones Academy School.

Cox served on the Choctaw Constitutional Committee in 1983, was instrumental in preserving Wheelock Academy, and has been a strong advocate for the Choctaw language and historic preservation programs during his career with the Nation.

He has worked with senior citizens in the North LeFlore County area to help raise money for cultural activities, classes, and language lessons. He is devoted to the healthy lifestyles of senior citizens.

District 4 also experienced forward momentum with health, commerce, and education during Cox's time as councilman. This can be seen with advances such as the development of a food distribution center, recycling center, clinic expansion, casino expansion, community center, travel plaza, and recent construction of a tribally owned Chili's franchise.

"We have come a long way," Cox said. "We have been standing on the shoulders of the people who came before us. We got to where we are because of what they did." Joe Ann Vermillion, AARP

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



Photos by Ronni Pierce

Stylist Jessa Parson gives Chahta member Taylor Lewis a trim. Other members of Chahta group in attendance included (standing, left to right) Vicki Perez, Angie Hill, Paula Griffith, Melissa Cress, and Marie Battiest.

Single Mom's Day Out

by **RONNI PIERCE**
Choctaw Nation

Chahta Ohoyo Tikba Hikia, a division of Choctaw Nation Outreach Services, found a way to put Chief Gary Batton's servant-leadership commitment to work for women in the Broken Bow area.

This summer, members Rehauna Williams and Angie Hill spearheaded a day out for single, working mothers at Totally Cosmo in Broken Bow in honor of Erica Martinez, a member of Chahta who passed away this year.

The day included a free haircut and style, manicure, pedicure, and facial.



Regina McKinney gets a manicure from Marilyn Culp, a student at Totally Cosmo.

Debbie Elliot, the owner of Totally Cosmo, volunteered her salon and her services. "I did it because Choctaw Nation has funded a lot of students so with their help I have been able to stay in business," she said. "I really appreciated the funding for

my students and this is my way of giving back to the Choctaw Nation."

She also contacted her students and other beauticians to help out.

Jamie Nelson from DeQueen Arkansas made the trip when a friend filled her in on the event. A beautician herself, she came in to help because she "just wanted to make people feel good about themselves."

Over 30 women showed up for the mini-makeovers.

In November, Chahta Ohoyo Tikba Hikia will hold a graduation ceremony for its members. The graduating women will have earned a certification in Home Buyer Education, Entrepreneurship, Energy Efficiency, and Leadership.

The Chahta Ohoyo Tikba Hikia Program is currently seeking Native American women in the McCurtain County area who want to improve their leadership skills and gain knowledge in home ownership, entrepreneurship, and energy efficiency.

The program is an effort to help Native American women in the McCurtain County area become more employable, marketable, and self-sufficient. Participants will be taught leadership entrepreneurial skills and become experts in homeownership, financial literacy, and energy efficiency measures.

They are actively seeking new members. For an application or to find out more, contact Melissa Cress with the Choctaw Nation at mcress@choctawnation.com or (580) 326-8304 ext. 6031.

A lineage remembered



Photo Provided

Ruth Adella (Foster) Downer, original enrollee, with her daughters Sue (left) and Beverly.

by **RON QUERRY**
Contributing Writer

This week a parcel was delivered addressed to my late mother Beverly (Downer) Querry Corbett. My mother died September 24, 2011, of natural causes in Oklahoma City, a few days before her 89th birthday.

Born October 4, 1922, in Norman to Ruth A. Downer, an original enrollee of the Choctaw Nation, and to Pierce A. Downer, my mother spent much of her early childhood on my grandmother's allotted land near Newcastle. Our family always called it "Choctaw Place."

The parcel was accompanied by a letter from Chief Gary Batton. In it, Chief Batton honored my mother for her years of wisdom and her service with a beautiful wisdom blanket. I speak for her three children when I say our mother was always proud of her Choctaw heritage and would have been deeply moved by this tribute.

It was, I suppose, in first or second grade when I was first required to commit to memory and to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, the Lord's Prayer, and the names of the Five Civilized Tribes. Only later did it occur to me not every young scholar in the United States was so well versed in exactly which five tribes were deemed civilized, as were my classmates and I at Andrew Johnson Elementary in suburban Oklahoma City.

I assumed that fresh young people all across America pledged and prayed and chanted "Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek, Seminole" just as proudly and as

loudly as did I.

I am very light-skinned. Over the past couple of decades I have spent a good deal of time and money having skin cancer and precancerous lesions removed, mostly from my face. My hair color has transitioned from orange (when I was born, I'm told), to white-blond (as a kid reciting things in elementary school), to reddish-brown (high school and Marine Corps), to raccoon-like multi-colored, to gray. (A former Principal Chief of the Choctaw Nation told me once that I shouldn't mind what my hair turned, just as long as it didn't turn loose.) My eyes are blue.

To see a photograph of my mother as a young girl you would not likely question her Indian-ness. The same applies with increasing certainty to my grandmother, to her father, to his father (the latter I understand to have sported braids and, when astride a horse and under the influence of strong drink which was not unusual, would frighten women and children—and while that story may not be entirely accurate, I hope that it is), and, I trust, on back to a Choctaw woman named Otemansha, peace be upon her.

The Dawes Commission was organized in 1893 to establish a Roll of American Indians residing in Indian Territory between 1899 and 1907.

My late grandmother Ruth Adella Foster is listed Number 15,137 as of March 26, 1904, on the Dawes Commission Rolls as an original enrollee of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, as are her father and her two older brothers. Her mother is enrolled as an "I.W." or "Intermarried White." My grandmother had a younger brother who was born after the rolls had closed and so, to his eternal dismay, was not considered an original enrollee. E.A. Foster, Jr., was his name—we knew him as Uncle Manny—and he researched exhaustively the Foster family lineage:

My four-greats grandmother was referred to generally in documents I possess as, "the Choctaw woman, wife of William Foster" in Mississippi. In a couple of documents of court proceedings, she is called "O-Te-Man-Sha," which I presume was a phonetic attempt to spell her Choctaw language name.

Otemansha was of the Sixtown Tribe or Clan of Choctaw Indians. Oklahoma Historian Angie Debo says that "Sixtown Indians, Okla Hannali, spoke a distinctive dialect, tattooed blue marks around their mouths, and were shorter and heavier in build than the other Choctaws." (Debo, *The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic*, 1934, p.20).

When Andrew Jackson determined that the southeastern tribes should be removed from their homelands to what is now Oklahoma, so as to better facilitate the white folks who wanted more land, it was the Choctaw tribe that was chosen to be among the first to go on what they called The Long Sad Walk. The Cherokee Trail of Tears came later. I understand that the Choctaws were chosen to be the first removed because they were deemed least likely to protest—they had already begun to assimilate and there were farmers and storekeepers and teachers among them.

There were, to be sure, different levels of assimilation. I remember one of my uncles telling about how our Choctaw ancestor, Otemansha, had held an important position in the Sixtown Clan back in Mississippi—that she had been a bone picker. At the time I didn't know what a bone picker was and I don't recall if my uncle told me. Had he done so, I feel certain that as a young boy I would have remembered so gruesome were the duties of that high office in Choctaw culture. If Otemansha were a bone picker, she was, indeed, an honored person and would have performed important duties in the funerary practices of her community at the time.

She would likely have had distinctive tattoos that identified her position and her thumb and index fingernails would have been long and thick. For when a Choctaw Indian died, he or she was wrapped securely in robes and placed upon a wooden scaffold near the house and left to rot for a number of months. When the appropriate time had passed the bone picker came and removed what flesh remained on the deceased person's bones by using his or her fingernails. The bones were then placed in boxes and stored in a bone house until such time as there were enough bones from the community to bury in a mound.

To be sure, I have no real evidence that I am descended from bone pickers—only a story told by a long deceased uncle. But I hope the story was true. I like thinking of this woman without whom I would/could never have been born—I like thinking about her place in her community.

In preparation for Removal, in September of 1830, at a place near what is now Philadelphia, Mississippi, the making and signing of the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek took place. The Choctaw tribe ceded almost eleven million acres and agreed to remove to Indian Territory in what is now Southeastern Oklahoma.

Possibly owing to the fact that traditional Choctaw people, when they moved or relocated, were bound by tradition to take the bones of their ancestors with them, Otemansha refused ever to leave her Mississippi home, as did her son James, who is my three-greats grandfather. James died in Mississippi in 1833 at about the age of twenty-eight. Otemansha died some four years later and is buried near the Pearl River.

The Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, which was ratified by Congress February 25, 1831, promised, among other things, autonomy of "the Choctaw Nation of Red People and all their descendants," to be secured from laws of U.S. states and territories forever.

I like knowing that I am a direct descendant of a woman who may have used her fingernails to scrape clean the bones of dead people.

See the unedited version of this story online at choctawnation.com.

Nanih Chito

Annual Singing



Wright City, OK
Oct. 24, 2015
Supper: 5:30 p.m.
Singing: 7:00 p.m.

Group and Classical Singing
Featured Singers:

1. Redefine, from McAlester
2. Forbits for Him, from Dallas, Texas
3. Carpitchers, from Talequah

Guest pianist: Thomas Williston from Idabel

Emcee: Henry Battiest Jr. from Durant

If you like good gospel singing, come to Nanih Chito.

ATOKA CHILI'S HIRING EVENT

Monday, Nov. 9
8AM – 8PM
Atoka Choctaw Community Center
1203 W. Liberty Rd.
Atoka, OK 74525
Want to work in an exciting, fast-paced environment? Join the Chili's opening team!
SERVERS, BARTENDERS, HOSTS, COOKS, DISHWASHERS
Onsite Interviews and Offers! Instant Results! Join us for a day of fun and opportunities.
For more information, please call 800-522-6170.

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation

November 2015

Durant - Monday, Wednesday and Friday
Broken Bow - Monday, Wednesday and Friday; Idabel by appointment
Phone: 580-326-8304; Fax: 580-326-0115 Email: ddavenport@choctawnation.com

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

Choctaw singer Lainey Edwards proving she's a 'Lucky Girl'

By BRANDON FRYE

Choctaw Nation

Lainey Edwards, of Moore, began stomping out her own musical path early in life, making her way to Nashville as a performer and the voice of a popular radio show.

"It was just a soul thing," Edwards said, "At age 9, I just knew. I told both of my parents, and I auditioned for the school talent show before asking them."

This was one of her first musical steps, made back when she lived in Moore as a young Oklahoma tomboy. She received full support from Marty and Karen Edwards, her parents. Both were musically talented. Edwards' father served as song leader at the family's home church for 25 years, and he and her mother both sang at weddings.

Edwards said her parents have always enjoyed music. Her father preferred country, and her mother was more of a rock 'n' roll kind of person. "I think I have a great mixture of both of them and their loves," she said.

With such a musical environment, and such supportive parents, it is no surprise by the age of 12 Edwards was performing frequently at the Oklahoma Opry in Oklahoma City. And it wasn't long after the family followed Lainey to Nashville to pursue her ambitions.

It's not an easy task, moving to a city full of musicians and pushing into singer-songwriter stardom. But, Edwards is on her way, and offers appreciation for every



Photo by Brandon Frye

Lainey Edwards stands on the stage of the new Choctaw Nation Grand Theater the night before she performed in Durant. She had returned to her home state and the land of her tribe to share her blend of rock 'n' roll and country.

songwriter, musician, friend, and family member who has played a role in her journey so far.

"Moving to Nashville, everyone has huge hopes and aspirations. I moved to town with a team of people who believed in me," she said. "There have been so many great lessons to be learned, so many great people to learn from."

In particular, she tends to shower praise upon her band members, referred to as "the tribe" in the official name for her group: Lainey Edwards and the Tribe. She also considers her fans to be a part of her tribe.

In 2009 Edwards re-recorded and released her first album, "Lucky Girl," it included 12 songs that she co-wrote.

This summer she released a new five-song extended play, or EP, called "Barnstormin'." The title

track of the EP is a party song likely to transport most anyone who grew up as a southerner back to memories of their roots.

Edwards has joined the list of proud Oklahoman country music performers, alongside the likes of Blake Shelton, Reba McEntire, and Toby Keith – only Edwards holds an additional pride close to her: being a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

She said there aren't many other performers with black hair, chocolate brown eyes, and the skin tone her heritage has offered her. Edwards said she embraces her heritage and where she came from.

"My passion is to get back into Oklahoma as much as I can, work with my own tribe, develop awareness towards the culture," Edwards said. "Everyone is so fascinated when I say I am Native

American. I am extremely proud of it."

She recently returned to Oklahoma and to the Nation to perform in Durant and Pocola, and is planning on coming back soon for more shows.

In addition to her country-rock performances, Lainey has taken on the role of hosting a radio show called "Latest with Lainey" every Saturday. Her show offers a behind-the-scenes look at the music scene in Nashville. The show currently reaches nearly 50,000 music fans a week, and can be found online at www.lotoradio.com.

Her official website is <http://www.laineyedwards.com>, where you can watch her new music video "Barnstormin'," as well as listen to some of her songs, read up on her latest news, and plan ahead to see one of her shows.

USDA Accepts Farm Service Agency County Committee Member Nominations

The Oklahoma Farm Service Agency (FSA) recently announced that USDA will soon begin accepting nomination forms for eligible candidates to serve on local FSA County Committees throughout Oklahoma.

The nomination period is June 15 through Aug. 3, 2015.

Almost anyone participating or associated with agricultural land and who is of legal voting age can be nominated as a candidate.

Tribal members are considered landowners if their tribe has an agricultural interest in the Local Administrative Area (LAA) and they live within the LAA.

All nomination forms must be received in a County FSA Office or postmarked by Aug. 3, 2015. Voting takes place between Nov. 9, 2015 and Dec. 7, 2015.

For more information about the election or to obtain an election map you can contact your local FSA office in Atoka, Holdenville, Hugo, Idabel, McAlester, Poteau, or you can contact the Bryan County FSA office in Durant at (924) 4131 ext. 2, serving as the local FSA contact office for the Choctaw Nation.

"USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer"

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

November

- 11/5 Broken Bow (at 10:00 a.m. instead of 9:00 a.m.)
- 11/12 Atoka
- 11/17 Coalgate

9 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Please contact the community center to confirm she will be there before traveling. Currently we are not providing representation in court or assisting in criminal matters.

THE District

Arcade Bowling Cinema Laser Tag Sports Bar

Now Open At the Choctaw Casino Resort in Durant.

Sun - Thurs 11am - Midnight
Fri & Sat 10am - 2am

2015 Bow Shoot Schedule
TVSHKA HOMMA CAPITOL GROUNDS

Turkey Shoot, Nov. 14
Registration, 10:30 ♦ Competition, 11:00

SELF BOWS|HANDMADE BOWS|NO COMPOUND BOWS

CO-ED AGE GROUPS: 5 & under; 6-8; 9-13; 14-16; 17-19; 20 & over

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

Information, please call
Sue Folsom (800) 522.6170x2134 or Pam Waugh (580) 775.7862

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:

Idabel Community Center • October 30
Crowder Community Center • November 13
at
9:30 a.m. - 11 a.m. & 1 p.m. - 2 p.m.

APPLYING FOR A JOB? NEED HELP?

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is offering assistance to individuals who would like to submit an application for employment and need assistance with the process or any of the following:

- Creating a user profile
- Applying for Choctaw Nation jobs
- Resume building/reviewing
- Interviewing tips and skills

FREE!

10am-3pm

ANTLERS	November 9, 2015	Field Office
ATOKA	October 20, 2015	Field Office
BETHAL	December 1, 2015	Field Office
BROKEN BOW	December 2, 2015	Field Office
COALGATE	November 12, 2015	Field Office
CROWDER	October 13, 2015	Field Office
DURANT	October 15, 2015	Field Office
HUGO	October 14, 2015	Field Office
IDABEL	December 9, 2015	Field Office
MCALESTER	October 22, 2015	Field Office
POTEAU	October 29, 2015	Field Office
SMITHVILLE	December 3, 2015	Field Office
SPIRO	October 28, 2015	Field Office
STIGLER	October 27, 2015	Field Office
TALIHINA	November 5, 2015	Field Office
WILBURTON	November 4, 2015	Field Office
WRIGHT CITY	December 8, 2015	Field Office

For additional information or questions please contact:

Stephanie Burton
sburton@choctawnation.com
580 924 8280 ext.2771

Craig Northcutt
cnorthcutt@choctawnation.com
580 924 8280 ext.2582



Iti Fabussa



On a walk, night has fallen . . .

. . . the moon peeks through the forest as you walk, lighting your way. Off in the distance you hear it, at first very faint, then louder as it moves closer. The haunting call of an owl. Within seconds, it swoops over your head and lands on the fence post along your path, turning its head to look at you. Does your heart skip a beat? Are you filled with dread? If so, you are not alone. For many Choctaws, seeing an owl is a clear omen of an imminent family related illness, accident, or something far worse. For the month of October, Iti Fabussa will explore the legend surrounding owls.

Judy tells of a young girl, a resident of Carter Seminary. She awoke in such a fright that the night staff were unable to console her. Through her sobs she wanted nothing more than to call home. When Judy asked the staff what was happening the staff let her know that the young girl had had a bad dream and wanted to call home. Of course they denied her this request; it was 2 a.m. Judy inquired about the young girl's dream. When she learned it was of an owl, she immediately chastised the staff members and allowed the young girl to call home. Her uncle had just died.

Judy's story is not unique. Many families have stories of owls and their ominous warnings of death in the family, whether extended or close. According to missionary accounts, owl stories were prevalent in our homeland as well, including one of the Choctaw ishkitini, or the horned owl. (Swanson 2011:199) It was believed it prowled at night killing men and animals. If it screeched, it meant this death was sudden, as with a murder. If the ofunlo, or screech owl, was heard it signified a young child under seven in the family would die very soon given the owl itself was small in size. If the opa, or common owl, perched on trees near the home and hooted, then this was an ominous warning of death among close relatives.

"If my grandma heard a screech owl, she would just tremble in fear!"

Mary Sockey travelled the Trail of Tears with her siblings and parents. Her mother, sister, and she were among the only survivors of her family. Having lost relatives as young as two years old in Mississippi, and then young siblings during removal, she was well aware of the pain in losing small children. It is no wonder she held an intense fear of screech owls. But why an owl? Why is the owl the messenger of such bad news?

Joseph recounted a story of his youth, north of Madill. Elders sat on the porch at night. They saw in the distance an owl. It flew closer and landed near them. Each time they tried to scare it, it would fly away only to return and land in the exact same spot. It was a different looking owl, much too tall and bulky. It would flutter its wings and appear to dance before them. One of the elders went into the house, grabbed his gun, and returned to the porch to shoot it. It was shot in the leg and flew away. The next day, one of the elders reported to the others that a local witch or Indian doctor was in the hospital with a leg amputation.

Olin remembered, this owl was different. We hired an Indian doctor to assess the situation during the day time and he found the owl to be an Indian doctor who wished to harm a family member. He offered us a solution to get rid of it. We crushed red bricks and replaced the pellets with brick dust in our shells. When we fired them off at the owl, the red dust scared it away.

Stories like these tell of great witches, or hatukchaya, that can transform themselves into owls. Once the hatakchaya is an owl, they use their medicine on unsuspecting people. For this reason, people have grown fearful of owls and want to avoid interaction with them because their presence is a warning of bad things to come. Traditionally, we consulted the village Indian doctor, or alikchi, to determine if an owl was a hatukchaya. We took their suggestions to counteract the upcoming disaster. Over time people noticed strange human-like characteristics of hatukchaya owls that made them easier to differentiate between regular owls: their deep throated or unusual hoot, their ability to laugh, their tall stature or roundness like a man, even their ability to dance, walk, jump, and move like a human. Despite this, people remain suspicious of all owls.

Olin offered this story. Down in Mississippi, my mother was scared. Very scared because of two owls that would land on the clothesline, swoop down and walk around on the ground every evening. Over and over like a nightly ritual. I prayed with her. Then watched it happen again through the dining room window. Same thing, then they flew off. I went outside thinking there was something that was attracting these owls. Then I smelled the smell, was there a gas leak? I called the gas company and they found a gas leak. While the man was fixing the leak, I asked him if the owls would be attracted to the smell. He told me they would be but also the change in the air. With the leak the air was heavier and they could see it when evening came. It had nothing to do with the superstition at all; it was science.

Our stories, including our legend, are passed down from generation to generation. A rich oral tradition could explain why we believe in the ominous warnings of owls or their true identity as witches. The next time you see an owl, where will your mind take you?



Photo by Brandon Frye

A mound at the Spiro Mounds historical site, where the prehistoric members of the Mississippian culture lived and celebrated times like the Green Corn Ceremony.

The season of harvest arrives at Spiro Mounds and beyond

By BRANDON FRYE

Choctaw Nation

Autumn officially began for the northern hemisphere on Sept. 23, this year's autumnal equinox.

Nowadays, some rejoice in this seasonal milestone because it marks the return of college football, a need for sweaters, and maybe a pumpkin-flavored treat.

But to Native Americans of the past and present—especially those who belonged to the Mississippian Culture of North America or descended from them as the early Choctaw ancestors did—the onset of the harvest season signaled an entirely different series of cultural events.

It was time to collect, prepare, and store for the winter months.

The spiritual importance of the sun and fire also played a role.

Choctaws believed the sun to be a hole in the sky through which this greater being watched over the earth. Fire was revered as it was considered a representation of, or connection to the Creator.

Keeping this in mind, the importance of the autumnal equinox to the Mississippian tribes, and later Choctaws, becomes clear.

An equinox occurs twice a year when the poles of the earth become oriented

perpendicularly to the sun. As a result, across the world, the days and nights are equal at 12 hours and the sun moves across the sky, rising and falling at exactly east and west.

This coincided with harvest time, and reaping what they had celebrated during the Green Corn Ceremony.

For Choctaws, when corn reached the green stage of growth, and when spiritual leaders decided, a ritual and celebration known as the Green Corn Ceremony began. This was usually sometime between June to August.

"The Green Corn Ceremony was the most important time of the year for traditional Choctaw communities in the 1700's, and some Choctaw people even still today," Ian Thompson, Director of Historic Preservation for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, said.

It was a time of renewal, purification, forgiveness, and a time of coming together as a community to prepare for the following year, he added.

Thompson recalled an account of a Choctaw Green Corn Ceremony held in the Sugarloaf Mountains during the late 1800's:

On the first day, people set up camp and spent time with friends.

To facilitate purification

and renew a connection to the Creator, fires in homes were squelched. The only two times this occurred were for this ceremony, or for someone's death.

The second day was a fast, and a spiritual leader gave herbal drinks out to help people purify themselves physically and spiritually.

Then, the males and females separated, and they bathed in a purifying herbal solution. The fast continued through the night and the next day. Sometime during that day, they broke their fast with a feast, and that evening they had the main part of the stomp dance.

The stomp dance occurred around a fire. The fire was seen as being sacred, seen as having a connection with God. The smoke from the fire carried people's prayers up to God.

There was a caller who led it. The females had turtle shell rattles on their legs, and they kept the beat of the music.

Then the fourth day of the ceremony, it was time spent with friends and family again. And coals from the sacred fire were spread to each living space.

Some Choctaws still practice the Green Corn Ceremony, or something similar.

Chahta Anumpa

Aiikhvna

◆◆ Lesson of the Month ◆◆

Vocabulary: vno akosh – I, the one who ...initiates an action with 'li' – 'I'

- Vno akosh tamaha ia la chi.**
Con conversationally: Anakosh tamaha ia la chi. I am the one who will go to town.
- Vno akosh shulush himona chompa li tuk.**
Con conversationally: Anakosh shulush himona chompa li tuk. I am the one who bought new shoes.
- Vno akosh chiba hopona la chi.**
Con conversationally: Anakosh chiba hopona la chi. I am the one who will cook with you.
- Vno akosh California ia la chi sv yimmi.**
Con conversationally: Anakosh California ia la chi sa yimmi. I believe I am the one who will go to California.

Vocabulary: vno ako – me, the one whom....an action directed toward me.

- Vno akq sv pisa tuk kiyo.**
Con conversationally: Anako sv pisa tuk kiyo. It was me, the one whom he did not see.
- Vno akq vm anoli tuk.**
Con conversationally: Anako vm anoli tuk. It was me, the one whom he told.
- Vno akq a nukowa tuk.**
Con conversationally: Anako a nukowa tuk. It was me, the one with whom he got mad.
- Vno akq sv hoyo tuk.**
Con conversationally: Anako sv hoyo tuk. It was me, the one whom he was looking for.

vno akosh (ah-noh-ah-kohsh) = the one who
con conversationally: anakosh (ah-nah-kohsh)
tamaha (tah-mah-ha) = town
ia (e-yah) = go
la (lah) = I
chi (chehn) = future tense marker

chiba – with you
hoponi – to cook
yimmi – believe
nukowa – mad
hoyo – looking for me
shulush (shoh-lohsh) shoe/shoes
himona (hah-moh-nah) - new
li (lih) - I

chompa (chohm-pah) – buy/purchase
sv- I or me (referring to self)
pisa (pehn-sah) – see
kiyo (key-yoh) – not
anoli (ah-noh-li) – tell
vno akq (ah-noh-ah-kon) – me, the one whom
con conversationally: anako (ah-nah-kohn)

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Choctaw Language Word of the Day



Listen to Mix96.1 on Mondays for a chance to win PRIZES on Tuesday at 7:45 A.M.



Listen to HD94.7 and K95.5 all week for a chance to win PRIZES on Tuesday at 7:45 A.M.



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Durant



Audrianna Tom is all smiles in her Choctaw dress. The 5-year-old is the daughter of Jared Tom who set up a stick-ball display booth and did traditional dancing.



Early arrival in Durant is Joyce Gilmore, who is often seen at District 9 events. As the mother of Josephine, the Junior Miss, she helps out with the driving and dressing.



The Snake Dance is performed by dance troupe and guests at the Community Meeting. The Choctaw dancers wind in, out, and around each other on the dance floor. A chanter and beating sticks keep the rhythm going at a fast pace. Social dancing is one of the highlights of the Choctaw Cultural Community Meetings, and the one held in Durant at the Choctaw Event Center Sept. 22 was no exception.



The Lord's Prayer in sign language is always a crowd favorite at cultural events. From left, District 9's Little Miss Kenzie Wilson, Junior Miss Josephine Gilmore, and Senior Miss Kayleigh Powell demonstrate with precision and grace.



Jacob Brittingham, 11, a Boswell fifth-grader, gets a lesson in beading from his grandmother Teresa Jacob, also of Boswell. As she worked with her grandson, she explained that she still lives on the land allotted to her grandparents.



Durant family, from left, Elaine Bennett, Jennifer Paddock, Laynie Paddock and Lerran Preston check their tickets during the drawing for door prizes.



Rosa Gilmore wins a Choctaw ballcap, presented by Chief Batton, during the drawing. Door prizes included everything from tote bags to beadwork.

Artist Bazaar



Lorene Blaine, a Choctaw who is popular with folks in need of tasty fry bread or jewelry to go with their traditional clothing, sat near the entrance to the Choctaw Welcome Center in Colbert for the Artist Bazaar. She greeted visitors and told them about her bead work and embroidery.



Theresa Prough attended the Artist Bazaar with granddaughter Tristan Boucher, who is learning traditional Choctaw art from Prough.



John Berry and Russell Washington, with Achukma Pecan Oil, sit ready to inform attendees about the culinary and healthy-living uses of their cold-pressed oils.

Photos by Charles Clark & Brandon Frye



Sheila Johnson (left) makes beaded jewelry, including necklaces and hats with beadwork brims. Husband Jarbis Johnson makes turtle rattles, war clubs, and knives. Grandson Emanuel Johnson (right) makes both jewelry and weaponry.



Linda Lou of Antlers weaves baskets while chatting with attendees. She has traveled and learned from basket weavers across the country from different tribes.

11th Annual POW WOW

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DECEMBER 5 & 6, 2015

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