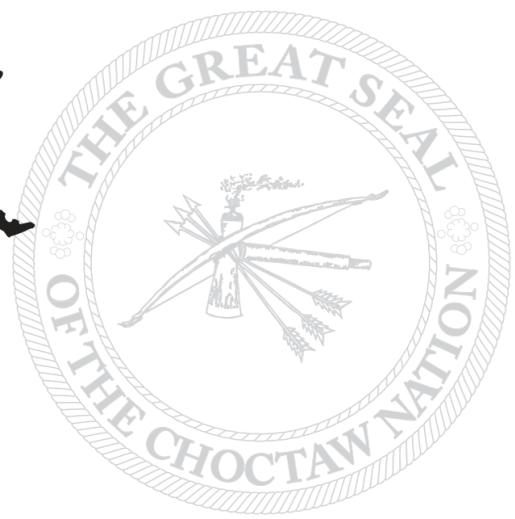


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CHOCTAW NATION

The Official Publication of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

September 2015 Issue

## Tribal Council holds regular session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session Aug. 8 at Tvshka Homma. The following council bills were unanimously approved:

- Approve Jones Academy's Student Parent and Employee Handbooks for the Residential Program and Elementary school for school year 2015-16.
- Plan application for the FY 2016 funding through the Department of Health and Human Services for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance program.
- Application for the Methamphetamine and Suicide Prevention Initiative-Methamphetamine Prevention.
- Application for the Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention Initiative.
- Funds and Budget for the Replicating Evidence-based Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program Grant.
- Funds and Budget for the Choctaw Nation VOCA Grant for FY 2015/2016.
- Budget for the Educational Talent Search Program.
- Approve membership to the National Congress of American Indians.
- Approve the Issuance of Limited Waiver of Sovereign Immunity for CNO Legacy, LLC.
- Amend the Choctaw Nation Revenue Allocation Plan.
- Approve the Amended and Restated Choctaw Nation Banking, Savings, and Investment Act.
- Approve Adoption of the Choctaw Nation Peacemaking Act.

For detailed meeting information on these resolutions and council bills, go to <http://www.choctawnation.com/government/tribal-council-bills/2015-council-bills>.

Tribal Council meets at 10 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month in the Council Chambers at Tvshka Homma.

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### The Mission of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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

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## Tribe and state cooperate to supply free flu vaccinations



Photo by Brandon Frye

Chief Gary Batton and Oklahoma Commissioner of Health Terry Kline sign a Memorandum of Understanding to initiate a joint effort to protect the health of southeastern Oklahomans with free flu vaccinations.

By **BRANDON FRYE**  
Choctaw Nation

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO) and the State of Oklahoma signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Aug. 20, marking the beginning of a joint effort to protect the health and welfare of all citizens within the 10.5 counties of the Choctaw Nation.

Chief Gary Batton and Oklahoma Commissioner of Health Terry Kline sat down to sign the form, making official the arrangement between CNO and the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH), wherein the CNO supplies influenza vaccinations and the state-run local health departments administer the vaccinations to citizens.

The vaccinations will be available to any person, whether a tribal member or a non-tribal member, and without any cost to them.

"I do have a strong belief in community health and public health," Chief Bat-

ton said. "We can't let one person be sick and everyone else be healthy. That one person will eventually affect everybody else."

The county health departments will distribute the vaccinations to schools, businesses, community centers, and other appropriate venues within the Choctaw Nation.

Kline said, "When we look at vaccinations, you'd be hard pressed to find any healthcare intervention in a community that would offer more protection for its members."

The MOU article cited two circumstances which prompted the agreement, including a steady increase in influenza and influenza-like illnesses in recent years within southeastern Oklahoma; as well as the resulting economic burden on the area due to health care costs and reduced productivity.

For the 2014-2015 flu season, OSDH reported 2,299 cumulative influen-

za-caused hospitalizations and/or deaths in Oklahoma. In the same time, they reported 109 hospitalizations and two deaths caused by influenza within the 10.5 counties of the Choctaw Nation.

According to the MOU's official arrangement, the tribe and the local county health departments believe the two parties can have a significant impact on reducing the incidence rate of influenza and influenza-like illnesses, not only within the Choctaw Nation, but throughout the entire state.

"The Choctaw Nation will continue with their normal efforts as we administer flu vaccines, and the state will go out and get more individuals," said Teresa Jackson, Senior Executive Officer over Health Services for CNO. "Our goal is to keep schools and businesses from closing, and to reduce the number of hospitalizations in Oklahoma due to the flu."



Photo by Vonna Shults

From left, Delton Cox, Thomas Williston and Anthony Ward share a lighter moment after concluding business at the monthly Tribal Council meeting at Tvshka Homma on Sept. 12. Ward won the seat of District 2 Councilmember.

## Anthony Ward named District 2 Councilman

By **CHARLES CLARK**  
Choctaw Nation

The election dispute in District 2 was settled before the Choctaw Nation's annual Labor Day Festival. This allowed Jonathan Anthony Ward to be sworn in, along with the other winners, at the Labor Day ceremony on the Historic Capitol Grounds at Tvshka Homma.

"Tony Ward is the official winner," said Kaye Green of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's Election Board on Sept. 1.

Green said the board had reached its conclusion on Aug. 27. Since then, board members have been filing paperwork and tying up loose ends.

Ward and Michael Allen Amos were thrown into a runoff for the District 2 Councilman position after the July 11 general election. Ward was declared the winner after the Aug. 8 runoff vote. However, his opponent Michael Allen Amos filed a protest stating a number of irregularities based on voting policy and procedures. After a hearing and consideration, the board determined that Amos's objections could not be substantiated.

According to runoff figures, Ward took a majority of the district at 57.1% with a total of 651 votes:

323 from Broken Bow, 46 from Bethel, 237 absentee, and 45 hand count votes.

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

Upon first hearing of his election win, Ward said, "I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the many volunteers and supporters who stood with me and believed in me. Your tireless efforts, prayers, encouragement and support have sustained me during this successful campaign and I am truly grateful. I will continue to visit and listen to your ideas, concerns and suggestions."

The 42-year-old Ward works as general manager for Choctaw Casinos. He has been employed by the Choctaw Nation for more than 21 years and has long been involved as a volunteer with Choctaw Nation Summer Youth Camps.

The District 2 seat was previously held by Tony Messenger, who chose not to seek reelection.

The election board is made up of three people: Judy Ogle, Jane Parent and Green. Two temp workers, Sharon Davis and Marilyn Mitchell Dill, were brought on to assist. The board released a statement thanking all who worked the precincts for the election.

## Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma 2015-16 Royalty

By **RONNI PIERCE**  
Choctaw Nation

Three new Choctaw royalty were crowned in the Amphitheater to kick off the Labor Day Festival on Sept. 3. The new princesses were crowned in front of an enthusiastic audience and, for the first time, the entire pageant was live streamed.



Photo by Lisa Reed

Chief Batton crowns the new Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Sr. Princess, Neiatha Hardy.

Ariana Byington was awarded the title in the Little Miss Division. From District 11, she is the daughter of Twanna Byington of McAlester. She attends the 5th grade at Parker Elementary and is a member of the First Baptist Indian Church. She enjoys singing, movies, shopping, softball, basketball, and stickball. She is active with beading, arts and crafts, pow wow dancing, and Native pageants.

In the Junior Miss Division, Loren Crosby from District 7 was crowned. She is the daughter of Kenneth and Elizabeth Crosby of Wright City. She attends 9th grade at Wright City High School. Loren participates in the STAR Program, Choctaw language competition, JOM math awards, Show Choir, and All State District Choir.

And in the Senior Miss Division from District 12, Neiatha Hardy will serve as Miss Choctaw Nation. She is the daughter of Paula Carney of Coalgate. She is a recent graduate of Coalgate High School. Neiatha was on the Superintendent's Honor Roll. She enjoys spending time with her family and friends, teaching Sunday school, and playing softball. She is an active member of FCA, FFA, and District 12 activities. The Native Praise Choir also performed dur-



Photo by Deidre Elrod

(left-right) The 2015-16 royalty for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma are Little Miss Ariana Byington from District 11, Miss Choctaw Nation Neiatha Hardy from District 12, and Junior Miss Loren Crosby from District 7.

ing the pageant. Founded in 1999, the Choir sings in English, and three languages which represent the Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma: Muscogee Creek and Seminole Nations, the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations, and Cherokee.

The outgoing royalty Kyra Wilson, Summer Moffitt, and Nikki Amos were also honored for their year-long reign in a special presentation.

# STATE OF THE NATION



Following the swearing-in ceremony performed by Chief Justice of the Choctaw Nation's Constitutional Court David Burrage, Chief Gary Batton gave his State of the Nation.

We are stronger than ever before in the Choctaw Nation!

When I became the Chief of the Choctaw Nation, I promised I would go out into the communities and talk to our tribal members and understand what you wanted us to do, what you wanted this government to do.

There are three things I promised. I said I would keep this rich culture and history alive. That we would, secondly, provide opportunities for all of our tribal members to succeed and do well in life; and third, make sure we are financially strong for a strong nation of Choctaw tribal members.

I am proud to say that we have been able to accomplish that.

When I think about keeping our rich culture and history alive, I think the most important part of that is our people. I think about wonderful people like Jerry and Shirley Lowman who live at Buffalo. In the 1970s, they went over to Mississippi. They learned to chant, they learned to dance and they learned the beadwork.

Now, 48 years later, we have the second year of our youth stickball. Our kids went down to Mississippi and challenged the Choctaws of Mississippi to a game. And we won.

It is great to see our youth become our cultural carriers that Jerry and Shirley have enabled us to continue on.

I think about our culture being shown in the form of art. Our artisans are doing better than ever before. Now we are seeing our traditional shirts being displayed as well as pottery, beadwork and paintings. We have over 400 artisans on our Choctaw registry keeping that cultural tradition alive.

And I think about we, as Choctaw, are known as Tvshka Homma (red warrior), known for our warrior spirit. And I cannot think of a better person that has a warrior spirit than this lady. She went to Poteau to compete in a half marathon. Her grandmother told me she saw her about 200 yards from the finish line and then didn't know what happened. Ambulances were coming; she had collapsed. She went to the hospital and went through some real struggles; they actually lost her. I can tell you she is strong today and she competed with me in the 5k run on Saturday. That's Miss Mandy Steele.

That is a true Chahta warrior. She was not supposed to run, she was only supposed to walk, and I turned around and there she was, sprinting. Made me very proud of her.

The second thing I said I would do is provide opportunities for tribal members. We have the best in education, in career development, in the STAR program. Thank you, Chief Pyle, for starting those types of programs. It has been great to see our youth embrace that.

There aren't too many people who get recognized by the President of the United States. This young lady has been to the White House three times and that is Miss Kelsey Janway from Heavener, Oklahoma. I can tell you with people like Kelsey, the Choctaw Nation looks bright.

I also think of people like this next lady I'd like to introduce. She didn't finish high school. Some of us struggle along but she went on, she went back, and she got her GED. Then she went to work for the Choctaw Nation. And then she went back to college and just this last year got her degree from Southeastern Oklahoma State University. Now she has become the director of our day care program. That's Amanda Johnson.

It's also great, I call that full circle, where you see our youth that go through our education programs like this next young man. He went through the University of Oklahoma, got his degree in architecture and now works for us at an architectural firm that we are partners with. He is designing our Independent Living Center for our elderly in Smithville. That's Mr. Kerwin Moore.

The reason I recognize the tribal members who go on and are successful is because they inspire us. They give us hope. They give us the idea there is going to be a better and brighter future. I believe that's true for our Chahta people. Everybody has the opportunity to succeed if they will just keep the determination and seize the moment.

Also the reason I highlight our Choctaws who have been successful is because without our Chahta people there is no Choctaw Nation. Services are critical to the success of our people. Therefore, I want to make sure you understand we are going to continue to expand

health care. Those in the Bryan County area know this last year we took over the Durant clinic. And we are getting ready to build a new clinic in Durant, Oklahoma.

This last year we built wellness centers in Wilburton and Poteau. We also started a reintegration program to help those who have been incarcerated to get back on the right track and give them the opportunity to succeed in life.

We are also constructing new food distribution sites in McAlester and Broken Bow and we also have started the Next Step program for those working families who are trying to make it to the next level and to provide them food as they continue on the path to success.

We have issued over 2,272 storm cellars for our elders 55 and up. Everybody knows our elders are important to us and that's the reason we need to help protect them. Also, we built independent elderly housing in Stigler, Oklahoma, and are building independent elderly housing in Smithville, Oklahoma.



Chief Batton addresses councilmembers, hospital staff, and Choctaw Nation citizens during the Poteau clinic ribbon cutting in July.

This is probably one of the things I am most proud of this last year—this Council and I have worked together to create over 1,000 new jobs in southeastern Oklahoma. This is hopefully putting our Choctaws to work. It's because of things like expanding our casino in Durant, Oklahoma. Also, we are expanding into other businesses like our Chili's in Poteau and Atoka, Oklahoma. Last year we bought 42,000 acres and were able to buy 700 head of cattle throughout all of our ranching operations. We also harvested 108,000 pounds of pecans.

We have started a new community center, child development center and wellness center in McAlester, and one of the things I promised we would do is reclaim our land base and we have reclaimed another 2,000 acres this last year in southeastern Oklahoma.

For this upcoming year, we want to continue to keep the tribe and tribal members moving in a positive direction by continuing to expand those opportunities for success. We all know as this Council has told me and I've heard from tribal members, we need more money in housing repairs. We are going to do that this coming year.

This is kind of a sad situation but we are going to focus on it—there are almost 1,000 cases in our Indian Child Welfare initiative. We need to do more to keep our families united so we will be adding staff to our Indian Child Welfare.

We will also continue our focus on our elderly by completing the Independent Living Center in Smithville and focusing on our youth by building Head Starts in Poteau, Atoka and Wright City. We are building community centers in Hugo and Talihina; wellness centers in McAlester, Antlers and Stigler; and as I mentioned before the new clinic in Durant.

We also want to continue to create jobs for our tribal members and grow the Choctaw Nation by creating great jobs in southeastern Oklahoma. Did you see our little store in Clayton,

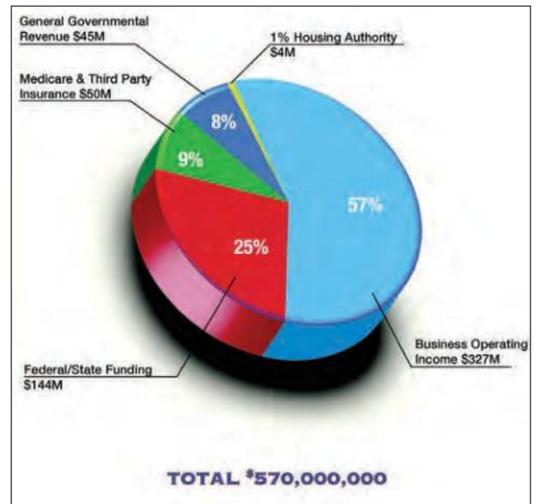
Oklahoma? We want to build this to provide opportunities for our people in the communities. We opened up our gas pumps and gas prices dropped by about 40 cents a gallon. What's exciting about the Choctaw Country Mart in Clayton is we are hoping to eventually sell our own beef and produce there.

Did you see throughout our grounds, Choctaw Country Tourism? We will continue to focus on tourism in southeastern Oklahoma. We love attracting people here so we can grow our communities, grow our infrastructure, and so we can attract manufacturing and all different types of jobs.

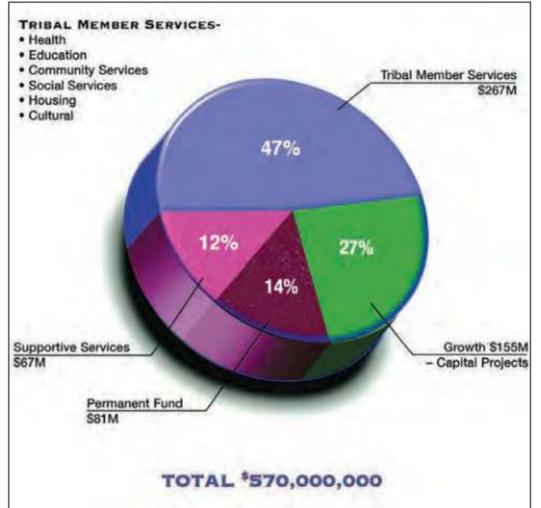
In our area, we have five of the poorest counties in the state of Oklahoma. That is the reason why it is up to us—and this Council is ready to do this—invest in businesses such as the Choctaw Country Mart and develop the Antlers Travel Plaza in Pushmataha County.

The third thing I promised you is that we would have a strong future for the Choctaw Nation. One of the things people always ask about is how much money do we make. Our businesses have done well this last year. We have made \$570 million this last year. Fifty-seven percent of that is from our own businesses. Twenty-five percent is from federal and state funding. Nine percent comes back to us through Medicare and insurance through the health system, and eight percent comes from the government like tribal trust. That is a great, strong nation.

The second piece everyone asks me, is what do you do with all that money the tribe makes? I am proud to say that more than half of that money goes back to you, the tribal members, in the form of tribal member services.



Success in tribal businesses provides funding to create opportunities to improve the lives of Choctaw citizens. And the Choctaw Nation currently employs more than 8,000 people. Financial charts can be found under Tribal Economy on [choctawnation.com](http://choctawnation.com).



The Choctaw Nation is the third largest Native American tribe in the world. Opportunities for individuals include jobs, education, and career training, as well as improvements in services like health and housing. Growth in tribal businesses supports jobs and services.

Twelve percent goes to supportive services to make sure we are able to deliver those services to you; twenty-seven percent goes into capital projects like reinvesting in our businesses and starting new businesses; fourteen percent goes in a rainy day fund. Right now, the Choctaw Nation has enough money to sustain the next 14 years.

The past year I worked with this Council to develop a very aggressive agenda to create jobs and provide more services and opportunities for our tribal members while making sure we stay financially strong. We need to make sure that all of these things help improve the lives of our tribal members while holding true to who we are as Choctaw people and as a Nation. We do not need to forget those who went before us and laid the path that we travel today. By our forefathers and foremothers we are able to celebrate the successes we have today.

How many of you are driving around with a tribal tag? Chahta sia hoke! I am Choctaw! It is great to see those signs everywhere. There's been more than 20,000 issued and on the road in less than one year. This year is also the first time in history a sitting U.S. president came and set foot on Choctaw soil. And no matter what our political views are, it is a great day to be Chahta. Our people showed our culture, we showed our heart to the president. I couldn't have been more proud to represent the Choctaw Nation.

Another success came about recently. The Choctaw Nation and Chickasaw Nation filed suit against the federal government because they stole our timber in southeastern Oklahoma. We thought they sold it illegally, but more importantly we wanted them to provide an accounting. We signed the treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek. They were supposed to be our trustee and know how much money was in that but they never could. It was one of the hardest decisions I have made as the Chief of the Choctaw Nation. There is never enough money to pay for the sacrifices, for the hardships our people endured. But we did settle for \$111 million for you, our Choctaw people. These dollars will go for education, housing, health care, and continue to create jobs to empower and lift our people to be the proud people of the Choctaw Nation.

I consider this a win; however, we must continue to fight for the rights of our people, to remain a strong sovereign nation and to protect the rights of our people. That is why we are working on getting free hunting and fishing licenses for you, our tribal members! We hope to accomplish this next year.

In closing, today you are making history. This is the first time we have live-streamed the State of the Nation. It will be on [choctawnation.com](http://choctawnation.com) so you can go back and view it and hold me accountable for the things I say I will do.

I believe we are living the greatest time in the history of the Choctaw Nation! Our culture is starting to thrive again! We're playing stickball again. We're speaking the Chahta language again.

And our tribe is financially strong. But, yet, we know there are still many people out there who are hurting and going through hard times and I say now is more than ever the time for spiritual healing through the Choctaw Nation. A time to forget the past, a time to look toward the future, a brighter future, so we can make a path for our kids, for our grandkids, and for a greater Choctaw Nation. That's the Chahta way!

I believe with God's help and with your help we can make this Choctaw Nation the greatest Choctaw Nation, above any nation in the whole world. Don't you agree?

Yakoke, thank you, and bless each and every one of you, and God bless the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

*Chief Gary Batton*





Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. addressing the crowd at the State of the Nation during the Labor Day Festival.

## Culture on display during Festival

This year's Labor Day Festival flew by. I hope everyone enjoyed it as much as I did. The weekend is a great time to catch up with old friends and family we haven't seen in a while.

The Nation's culture is one of family and it was in evidence everywhere on the grounds. Memories were being made.

The princess pageant was the perfect event to start the festival weekend. It brought together families from all over the Choctaw Nation to watch the districts' royalty take the stage. The beautiful young ladies were wearing traditional dresses and jewelry and carrying fans and

baskets—the epitome of Choctaw social culture. The backstage area was full of pre-pageant excitement while mothers and grandmothers helped the girls get ready for their big night.

I want to congratulate all of the princesses on a job well done. Each year there is a larger diversity in the talents displayed. It takes strength to face an audience, and these girls did it with amazing poise and skill.

The unveiling of the sculpture in the garden was another example of tradition through generations. Choctaw artist Janie Umsted used two young cousins, Kaylee Folsom and Channing Steve, as models for her fascinating "Choctaw Youth: Connecting the Culture" statue. The sculpture shows an older girl teaching the younger the Choctaw tale of the turtle and the little ants. It represents what we love to see—the youth growing up with the traditions being shared so the Choctaw way will live forever.

The garden's path lies in front of the historical Choctaw Nation Capitol. The red brick building seems to be the heart of the people. It stands tall in the center of the grounds, a beacon inviting all to learn more about the Choctaw Nation. The earliest festivals were held on the lawn, with picnics and singing under brush arbors.

The Choctaw Nation Museum is inside with exhibits about the Trail of Tears, Code Talkers, and much more, including a new one on the Lighthorsemen.

In the village where demonstrations were held Saturday and Sunday, I saw another great example of our culture—a young man who had worked on a piece of pottery with his great-grandfather. The boy made the bowl. His great-grandfather made the bird perched on the bowl. They were both very proud of their creation. It was a simple thing but one they would both cherish forever.

Participating in the dancing and games at the village made me feel young again! The Chief and I joined the men to take on the women during the corn game. That was a fun, fast-paced game with all of us determined to bring the corn to our own side. I think we all spent our share of time in "time out" waiting to be rescued by a teammate. The women were fierce competitors!

The sports fields are another place where families gather—softball, volleyball, horseshoes, basketball and stickball were in full swing. I had the chance to play again with the men's 35-and-up age group, both on the capitol lawn and on the stickball field. It's fun competition with a lot of laughs—less fierce than the tournament games. A lot of the guys did change and play with their teams later that night.

Team Tvshka Homma fought hard and was awarded the third-place trophy. MCBI took the championship trophy with Beaver Dam placing second. Yakoke to our Mississippi cousins for traveling to participate in our annual stickball tournament.

Olin Williams and Folsom White were our announcers at the games this year. I enjoyed listening to their commentary. Olin is from Mississippi and now lives in Oklahoma. Folsom grew up here in Oklahoma. Both are experts on the history and tradition of stickball.

Wherever I went, I had the opportunity to visit with Choctaw people who had set aside their weekend for the festival. Blankets were spread on the ground, chairs set up, and families gathered for the reunion. Some were there for their first time; most were returning as they have for many years. I am thankful to have had four generations of my family on the grounds this year and can't wait for another exciting festival in 2016.



The families of Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. (left) and Chief Gary Batton (right) gather for a family portrait after the State of the Nation.



Congratulations to our 1st Milestone Anniversary couple, Nathan H. Benton Jr. and Aline Scuggins Benton from Arkansas City, Kansas. The Bentons celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary on Oct. 9. The two are sweethearts who met in Haskell and lived and worked at Chillicothe Indian School from 1956 until its closing in 1980 then moved to Arkansas City. Nathan is retired from the BIA and L.G. Pike Construction. Nathan is a Korean War veteran 1st Army Division, attended armored school in Fort Knox, Kentucky, and was stationed in Fort Hood, Texas. He is a member of the American Legion and the National Association of Retired Federal Employees. Nathan's Father, Nathan H. Benton Sr., is an original enrollee of the Choctaw Nation. Aline retired in 1980 from the BIA and Chillicothe Indian School. They have been charter members of Hillcrest Bible Baptist Church for over 55 years. Their children are Nathan III, Marilyn Walking Sky, Phillip, John, and Nancy Anne Smith. They have 15 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. Congratulations to the Bentons.



(left to right) Nathan Benton, Chief Batton, Aline Benton, and Assistant Chief Austin meet for a group photo and a congratulations chat after the State of the Nation on Monday during the Labor Day Festival.

Are you or your spouse a registered member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma?

We want to help you celebrate your Milestone Anniversary!

The Choctaw Nation is asking married couples with milestone wedding anniversaries of 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, or 80 years to contact the Public Relations department. Chief Gary Batton and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. will be issuing special certificates to honor your many years devoted to faith and family. We need your name, address, wedding day/year, and a copy of membership for you or your spouse. Please mail your information to [jjefferson@choctawnation.com](mailto:jjefferson@choctawnation.com) and include your favorite photo of you and your spouse. Highlights will also be posted on Facebook.

Yakoke!

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## Choctaw Nation Farmer's Market



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

Fresh | Local | Organic

All are welcome to come peruse and purchase

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

Assistance Available

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

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

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



## Creative Writing Workshop

Choctaw Culture and History Preservation

what • Creative Writing Workshop

who • Presented by Sarah Elisabeth Sawyer, editor and author of *Touch My Tears*, and *The Executions* (Choctaw Tribune series)

when • October 17, 2015

where • Choctaw Community Center, Poteau, Oklahoma

details • Choctaw writers of varying skill levels are invited to register for this free workshop. Registration required, space is limited.

• Email to register: [me@sarahelisabethwrites.com](mailto:me@sarahelisabethwrites.com)

Supported by the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

Sarah Elisabeth [me@sarahelisabethwrites.com](mailto:me@sarahelisabethwrites.com)





“Choctaw Youth, Connecting the Culture,” a bronze sculpture by Jane Semple-Umsted, was unveiled during a special ceremony.

## Bronze sculpture unveiled at Festival ceremony



Chief Batton removes cover from the statue in front of dignitaries and audience.



The models for the statue's little girls inspect the work.



Jane Semple-Umsted, artist, and Sue Folsom, Executive Director of Cultural Events, greet each other after the unveiling ceremony.

## 2015 Labor Day Art Show Winners



1st Place Cultural Award-winner is Kimberly Proctor for “Leading the Way.”



1st Place in painting goes to Nancy Rhoades for “A Walk with Grandmother.”



1st Place in basketry: Lizabeth Mitchell for her double-weave storage basket.



Best of Show & People's Choice: Karen Clarkson's “Victory Prayer.”



1st Place graphics is Paul King, for his “Patriotic Warriors.”



1st Place for his jewelry work is Chester Cowen for the piece “We the People.”



Heritage Award: Dan Bernier, Choctaw Signal Flute.



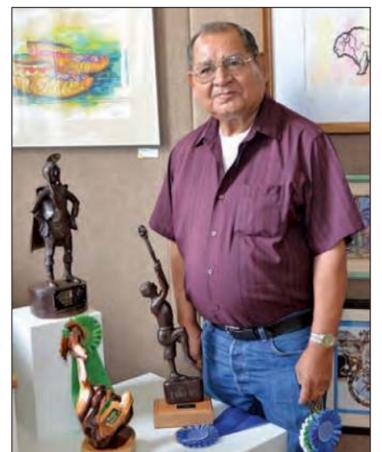
Heritage Award: Michael Rowe, Ball Headed War Club.



Heritage Award: Carol Ayers, painting “Our Heritage.”



More than 25 pieces were entered in this year's show.



Lyman Choate takes 1st, 3rd, & honorable mention in the sculpture division.

**ARTIST BAZAAR**  
SATURDAY  
OCTOBER 3, 2015  
11:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

Artist Demonstrations  
New Works of Art  
Jewelry  
Basket Weaving  
Beadwork

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# NOTES TO THE NATION

## Youth of the Nation

Courtney Patterson is a Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board Senior member.

I have been fortunate enough to work with the Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board since 2009, and I couldn't imagine my life without the program. YAB has opened more than just doors for me. The Youth Advisory Board has opened my eyes, my heart, and my mind in ways I don't believe anyone else could have. I have memories that will last a lifetime.

Kristi Adams taught me, if a kid does wrong you don't throw them away because they've messed up. You should bring them closer so they aren't misguided. The moment you destroy a youth is when you refuse to give them the help they need.

"The moment you turn your back on someone is the moment you lose them," Kristi told me. Since she taught me that message years ago, I have since tried to exercise it in practice. Everybody makes mistakes even the best of us.

Dana Dunlap taught me even if you give your all, sometimes it's still not enough. That the answers, "No," "I can't" and "I don't want to" exist. Being in YAB your schedule will fill up quickly, and I love to help people, but I have had to learn my limit. For a very long time I was giving every piece of myself away, and I had nothing left for me. I've since learned to delegate and ask for help, two things I haven't ever done, and I've actually got more accomplished by doing this. All the pressure that comes with being a leader can't be exercised unless in times of need. Dana helped me use that to my advantage and helped me save myself a lot of stress.

Angie Smith taught me that my work is never done. The day I graduate I may no longer be a member of

the Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board, but I'm still a leader. I am never done growing, I am never through learning, I am never just Courtney, but I will continue to master and learn in my life. Angie helped remind me why I joined the Youth Advisory

**'I honestly feel like I could go anywhere, do anything, and be anyone I want to be.'**

Board in the first place. I joined for a sense of companionship, to help my community, and for me to become a better person.

Angie helped remind me that, I am more than what I ever believed I could be. She continues to lift me up.

Each one of my mentors I've had over the 5 years has influenced my life more than they will know. I've also been influenced by other mentors in the program, such as Alumni's Teyler Williston, other Advisors such as Melissa Cress, Shonnie Hall, and even by members from other chapters like Kelsey Janway.

My entire experience is something I wouldn't trade for the world. I will always be a Youth Advisory Board member at heart, striving to better my community no matter what community I may be in. I've grown such bravery by being a member.

I honestly feel like I could go anywhere, do anything, and be anyone I want to be. All the experiences I've gained through the program have been such blessings. Maybe one day I can travel the world, and talk to kids and schools, or maybe one day I could come back and be an advisor.

Who knows where I would be if Kristi didn't encourage me to come to that YAB meeting back in 2009. I'm scared to even think about it. Thank you Kristi and thank you YAB for making my dreams come true.



Photo Provided

The wood frame of Jones Academy stands tall on stone stem walls, and in the memories of Choctaws who studied there.

### Jones Academy alumni planning October reunion, seeking grads

Halito Alumni,

Our elected officers for this year are, President (JMA) & Coed: Tully Choate, '49  
First Vice President: Randy Jacob, '54  
Second Vice President: Coleen Larney, '60  
Secretary: Lucina Choate  
Sergeant-at-Arms: Robert Allen, '70

Well wishing to all for a good turn out at the reunion and renewing acquaintances at the place of learning.

A "thank you" and a word of gratitude for the officers of last year.

Our upcoming Annual Reunion will be the third week-end in October. That is October 17, 2015.

I'm looking for some of your suggestions that would make everyone happy. You can write me, call me (918-455-7255), or e-mail to (tullychoate@cox.net) and we will do our best to make it happen. Also, you may have some suggestions on a menu for lunch and/or supper.

I am sincerely looking forward to seeing all of our alumni and to do some reminiscing about the times we all had at Jones; also things to come in the future of our Alumni's Association. It will take input from everyone. So buckle up and let the gray matter work it all out.

Do not forget that we will be electing Officers for next year. Look around to see who would be good officers and don't forget those who have served. We need to keep this reunion going.

If we are lucky we may have a visit from Chief Batton. You may want to thank him for getting our new Choctaw Auto Tags. They sure look good on that car.

Don't forget if you know of some Jones Academy people out there that needs to know about our reunion here, pass the word.

Tully (Tali) S. Choate, Class of '49  
President, Jones Academy, Alumni Reunion

### Marris Family Reunion

October 1, 2, 3, 2015  
Camp Bond  
Tishomingo, OK

Friday Supper, 6 p.m.  
Hamburgers and Hot Dogs  
Saturday Dinner, Noon  
Pot Luck

Those attending are asked to bring cookies or cake, etc. for the Cake Walk & prizes for Bingo.

Information:  
Harry Marris  
P.O. Box 1821  
Ardmore, OK 73402  
580-504-1017  
or Carl Marris, 580-263-0663

### Family Reunion

Samuel Johnson/Lucy Ann Frazier

All families of Samuel Johnson and Lucy Ann Frazier are invited to a reunion to be held at Camp Israel Fulm in Bethel, Oklahoma on Oct. 3, 2015.

For information, contact Phyllis Roberts by email at phyllisroberts48@gmail.com.

### Yakoke:



The family of Donald Ray "Joe" Buris would like to thank the Choctaw Nation for the help in laying our loved one to rest.

Dear Choctaw Nation,  
Words cannot express my gratitude for the financial assistance I received to help further my education. I would like to thank Chief Gary Batton, Tribal Council and all staff that work for Higher Education for making it possible for me to achieve my goals.  
Now that I have obtained my education, I have the honor to give back to my tribe by serving our tribal people. Choctaw Nation had a dream to educate their people, and through that dream I have obtained a bachelor's degree in Human Resources Counseling with a concentration in Services to the Deaf, a bachelor's degree in psychology, a master's degree

in Human Resources and I am currently under supervision for licensed professional counselor.

Choctaw Nation's dream has become a reality for me, my career and my family. This gift will be carried out for generations to come. Again, Yakoke, Amber Madume (Magby)

## EVENTS



**School of Choctaw Language**  
Durant Community Choctaw Language Class

Ann Kaniatobe ◆ Instructors ◆ Dora Wickson  
Beginners Class  Children's Class

**School of Choctaw Language Building**  
Classes begin Tuesday, September 15, 2015  
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Lasts 16 weeks - Instructional material provided  
Fun & Engaging teacher/student interaction

**Free and open to anyone wanting to learn the Choctaw language.**  
Classes will be held at the **School of Choctaw Language building conference room located just off Enterprise Blvd at 3588 Tom Smith Rd., Durant, OK.**  
For more information: (800) 522-6170 ext. 2487

## 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.*

### SULPHUR SPRINGS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FIRST 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

### Change of Program Name Notice

In an effort to better assist our tribal members, the Choctaw Nation Making A Difference Program has officially changed their 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

### Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation

October 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	3
4	5 Durant 8:00-4:30	6 Talihina 10:00-2:00	7 Antlers by appt.	8	9 Wright City by appt.	10
11	12 Durant 8:00-4:30	13 Poteau 11:30-1:00 Broken Bow & Idabel by appt.	14	15	16	17
18	19 Durant 10:00-2:00	20	21 McAlester 10:00-2:00 Stigler by appt.	22	23 Atoka by appt. Coalgate by appt.	24
25	26	27 Wilburton by appt. Broken Bow & Idabel by appt.	28	29	30	31

Gary Batton  
Chief

Jack Austin Jr.  
Assistant Chief

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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.

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



# HEALTH

## Small changes to beat childhood obesity

By ERIN ADAMS

Choctaw Nation  
Halito,

One in 3 children in the United States is overweight or obese. Childhood obesity puts kids at risk for health problems that were once seen only in adults, like type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease.

The good news is that childhood obesity can be prevented. In honor of National Childhood Obesity Aware-

ness Month, The Choctaw Nation Diabetes Wellness Center encourages your family to make healthy changes together.

- Get active outside: Walk around the neighborhood, go on a bike ride, or play basketball at the park.
- Limit screen time: Keep screen time (time spent on the computer, watching TV, or playing video games) to 2 hours or less a day.
- Make healthy meals: Buy and serve more vegetables, fruits, and whole-grain foods.
- Taking small steps as a family can help your child stay at a healthy weight.

Here is a wonderful way to add more vegetables with this fun and tasty recipe for hands on cooking for the kids.

### Recipe of the Month

#### Crispy Baked Zucchini Fries

Recipe by the Brewer and the Baker

#### Ingredients

- ¼ cup whole wheat flour
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups Panko bread crumbs
- Salt
- Pepper
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 lb zucchini, cut into 4-5 inch sticks

#### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees and line baking sheet with parchment (or whatever non-stick method you prefer)
2. Place flour in a large zipper bag
3. Whisk eggs with 2 tbsp water and place in a shallow dish
4. Place Panko, salt, pepper, garlic powder, and cayenne pepper in a shallow dish and mix to combine

5. Place zucchini in the bag with the flour and shake until well coated. Dip the zucchini into the egg and then into the Panko, turning to coat well.
6. Place breaded zucchini on the baking sheet.
7. Bake 18-20 minutes, until golden brown
8. They're best the first day, but to store leftovers, store in a single layer on a plate, wrapped with Ziploc. Reheat at 375 degrees for 5-7 minutes, until heated through.

Yields: 6 servings (8 pieces)

Estimated time: 30 minutes

#### Nutrition Facts

Calories: 108.8; Fat: 2.4; Fiber: 1.7; Protein 5.2; Carbs 16.3

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.

## NURSERY NEWS

### Gabryelle Love Valliere

Gabryelle Love Valliere was born on July 13, 2015, in Durant. She weighed 7 lbs 4 ozs and was 20 1/2 inches long. Proud parents are Chris and Crystal Valliere of Durant. Big brother Malachi and big sister Jazmyn, were overjoyed with Gabryelle's arrival. Grandparents are Olin and Bernice Williams of Bennington and Robert and Cynthia Valliere of Lafayette, Louisiana.



### Choctaw Nation WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counseling



Many moms think that breastfeeding may be too hard for them to do, but most mothers and babies can learn to breastfeed with just a little practice and patience.

Breastfeeding is definitely worth the effort!

Call 1-800-522-6170 extension 2507 or text 580-380-2515 if you have questions about breastfeeding, or to find a breastfeeding class near you.

### Choctaw Nation Breastfeeding Classes

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

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

#### Sponsored by Choctaw Nation WIC

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

## Parenting Classes

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

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

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

Contact: Hayley McIntyre, Phone: 580.924.8280 x2551  
Cell: 580.775.5523  
Email: hmcintyre@choctawnation.com

Website: Choctawfamilyservices.com

### Choctaw Nation 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

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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 October 1-31, except for:  
**October 7:** Idabel 9-11:30 a.m.; Broken Bow 1-3:30 p.m. (market open)  
**October 14:** Bethel 9-10:30; Smithville 12-2 (market open)  
**Closed:** October 29 & 30 for inventory  
**Cooking with Carmen:** October 6, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

#### DURANT

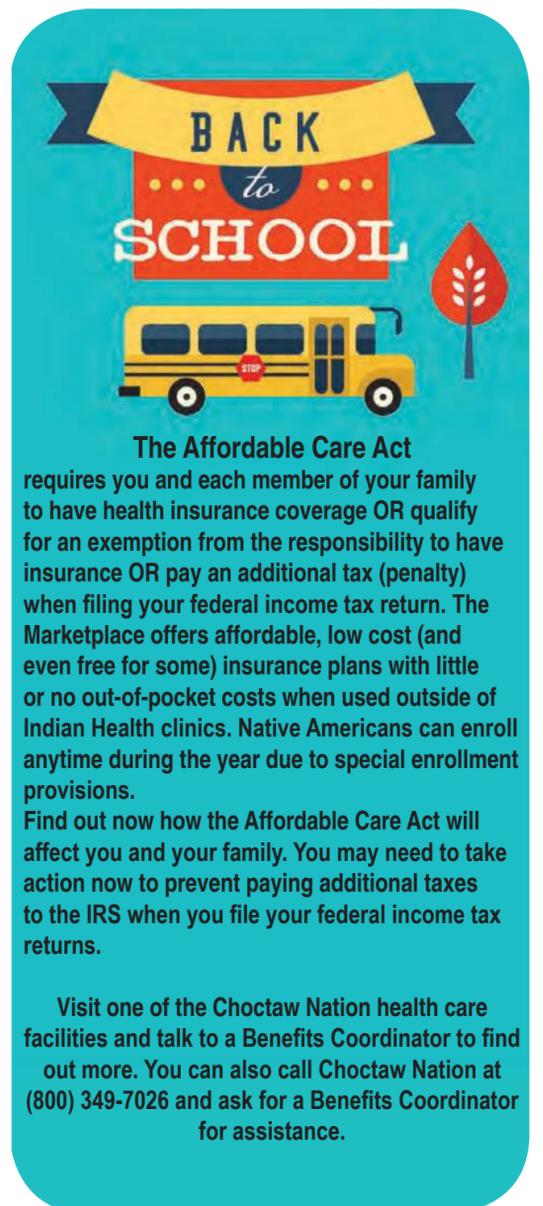
Market open weekdays October 1-31, except for:  
**Closed:** October 29 & 30 for inventory  
**Cooking with Carmen:** October 15, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

#### McALESTER

Market open weekdays October 1-31, except for:  
**Closed:** October 29 & 30 for inventory  
**Cooking with Carmen:** October 13, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

#### POTEAU

Market open weekdays October 1-31, except for:  
**Closed:** October 29 & 30 for inventory  
**Cooking with Carmen:** October 8, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.



#### 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.

# PEOPLE YOU KNOW

## Vargas-Whale becomes medical doctor to care for victims of child abuse



Raquel Vargas-Whale completed a three-year pediatrics fellowship in Safe and Healthy Families at the University of Utah, equipping herself to work in child abuse pediatrics.

She now diagnoses and treats children and adolescents who are suspected victims of child abuse.

"You just get a joy from working with kids, even when they're down and out," Vargas-Whale said.

Her mother is Choctaw and her father is Quechua of the highland tribes in the Peruvian Andes.

Vargas-Whale served as a cultural mentor in the Native American Research Internship, a summer program aiding undergraduate Native American students interested in health sciences.

"Because I now have the research background, I would like to be able to meaningfully contribute to the child abuse pediatrics field," Vargas-Whale said. "It's a newer field. It has only been board-certified since 2010, and there is still a lot of research that needs to be done to continue to lay the scientific foundation for this field, and I would like to participate in that."

## Willey inducted into NAPW Professional Woman of the Year Circle



The National Association of Professional Women (NAPW) honored Lourinda Willey as a 2015-2016 inductee into its VIP Professional Woman of the Year Circle.

Willey was recognized with this prestigious distinction for leadership in safety, environment, health, and emergency response.

She has more than ten years of experience as a project safety professional,

and has spent most of her safety career working in the oil and gas industry.

Willey owns a business which aims to empower workers and organizations to be the best informed leaders in safety, environment, health, quality, and security.

## Absher celebrates 85th birthday



Lucille (Taylor) Absher celebrated her 85th birthday on May 26.

Absher is the daughter of original enrollee Beulah (Platt) Taylor.

She attended school at Moyers, Oklahoma, and has resided in Modesto, California since 1947.

Absher retired as a librarian for the Modesto junior college.

## Hutchins goes to science camp



Mikaela Hutchins, 6th grader from Calera, was honored to be invited to participate in ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Summer Science Camp at the University of Oklahoma.

She earned the chance to attend the camp by writing an application essay.

Mikaela and other young scholars from across the state participated in a two-week, live-in camp focused on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

## Bohanon finds favorite sport, earns "most improved" trophy



Dakota Wayne Bohanon, 6, found a sport he excelled at when he joined an El Reno soccer league, with the Tigers.

He said his favorite thing to do is to run and block the other team from scoring.

At the end of the year, he received the "most improved" trophy, because he had just started, but ended the season as one of the team's most valuable players.

His grandmother, Darlene Bohanon, said Dakota loves his family, magic, the outdoors, and being silly. He wants to be a Cowboy when he grows up. He descends from the Anderson/Bohanon family.

## Wilson and Bailey lead fundraiser

Ida Wilson and Robert "Tamaka" Bailey, both Choctaws living in California, were honored for their donations to Friendship House Association of American Indians Inc.

Tamaka, son of Dorothy Durant, formally from Broken Bow, said he accepted a plaque on behalf of the Choctaw Nation, since they helped with his fundraising, which produced over \$10,000, with donations to the production cost. They wished to thank the Choctaw Nation.

## Tribal alliance members make quilt



Women with the Oklahoma Choctaw Tribal Alliance (OCTA) volunteered their time to produce a quilt showing gourd dancers. The design was planned by Wanna Moore, one of the OCTA members who also makes dolls.

The group entered the quilt in the Choctaw Nation Labor Day quilt contest.



## Tulsa community Choctaw language class graduates

The Tulsa Community Language Class graduation was held on June 22. Not in order: Abe Frazier – Instructor, Berie Gibson, Francine Thornton, Ray Thornton, Betty Zimmerman, Colin Kelly, Wayne Stewart, Jon Kegans, Angela Melrose, Bill and Pat Hoover, Sophia Abbot, Mark Abbott, Lucille Abbott, Cora Stewart and June Slape.



## Calvert releases first book at age 90

Robert "Mahata" Calvert of Wards Chapel (near Atoka, Oklahoma) has released his first book of home-spun stories. Many were originally published in the Atoka County Times, where Calvert served as a columnist for years.

"Cowboy Journey" details the experiences of Calvert, now 90 years old, in southeast Oklahoma. He is well-known as a rancher in the Ward's Chapel area, and developed an audience of readers through stories of notable Atoka County residents.

A book signing event was held in July at the Elk's Lodge west of Atoka. More than 100 people attended the come-and-go event, and the initial order of 75 books sold out before the day was over.

Calvert is a descendant of Choctaws who made the journey to Indian Territory via the Trail of Tears, a story passed down to him and shared in the prologue of Cowboy Journey.



## Manuel and troop build for Eagle Scouts

Caden Manuel, of Ada, chose the project for his Eagle Scouts group, Troop 13. In August they finished building three wooden wheelchair-accessible planters placed in front of Proverbs Assisted Living Facility at Ada Baptist Village.

Scouts From left to right, Canaan Emrich, Caleb Emrich, Ben Hudgens, Westin Cunningham, Brian Cunningham & Caden Manuel.

## Taylor aids those impacted by flooding



Choctaw tribal member Bob Taylor is part of a group called The Missions Chapel and Disaster Relief Distribution Center that is taking disaster preparedness and response to a whole new level.

Taylor is a firefighter with the Little Axe Fire Department, a lake-side community nestled between Norman and Tecumseh.

The group received an overflow of material donations after tornadoes swept across Moore and other communities. Seeing the flood-ravaged Choctaw Nation, they were moved to action and delivered some of those donations to the tribe on July 28.

"It's great to help my own people," said Taylor. "I wanted to give back to the tribe, for all they have given to me."

## Billie continues basketball success



Lauren Billie has made leaps and bounds forward in her time as a student athlete.

She went with her team to state finals in basketball three out of four years in her high school career.

She played for the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) for Team Spirit, travelling across the U.S.

Billie and her team took First Team All Tournament for the Turkey Jam competition in Franklin,

Tenn. The team also took 1st in the Adidas National Championship.

She recently received a full ride scholarship for basketball with the University of Texas at Arlington.

## Cotner earns Eagle Scout Award



Connor Cotner, of Broken Arrow, earned the highest advancement award the Boy Scouts of America offers to Scouts, the Eagle Scout Award on May 21.

A member of Troop 999, Cotner is one of approximately 4 percent of all Boy Scouts who attain the Eagle rank, according to the Scoutmaster David Conder. Each candidate must earn 21 merit badges and successfully complete a community, church, or synagogue-related service project. Connor chose the Tulsa Women and Children's Center in Tulsa. He organized and raised money to make needed repairs and to paint two day rooms that were used by the residents. He has served as Senior Patrol leader and Assistant Senior Patrol leader and received many honors.

Connor has attended various Scout summer camps including Philmont in New Mexico, Island Park in Wyoming and Sea Base in Florida. He is a member of Northside Christian Church and is active in the youth group.

Connor, 15 years old, is homeschooled and will be in the 10th grade this year. He has been involved in Scouts since 2011.

He is the son of Kevin and Crystal Cotner; grandson of Richard and Linda Cotner of Broken Arrow and Royce and Kitty Halcomb of Boswell, Oklahoma.



## Venita Sanders celebrates 83rd birthday

Venita Sanders celebrated her 83rd birthday on June 6th at the rocket park in Durant. Five generations of her family attended the celebration.



## Winship joins U.S. Army

Seventeen-year-old Alexander Winship of Bethany recently joined the U.S. Army. He was sworn in (delayed entry) on July 10, 2015. Winship will head off to boot camp in May of 2016, training to become an Airborne Cavalry Scout. Alex is following the footsteps of his great-grandfather James Winship, who served in WWII. Alex is the son of Tasha Winship, and grandson of Connie Winship.

## Bohanan earns spot at arts academy



Angelica "Cricket" Bohanan, 15, of Broken Bow earned acceptance to the Interlochen Arts Academy, the world's premier fine arts boarding high school.

Bohanan, the daughter of Greg and Jeanette Bohanan, will study visual arts at the academy. Previously, Angelica, a home-schooled student, attended the Oklahoma Arts Institute at Quartz Mountain.

Angelica has produced award winning art for several years. Most recently, she won first place at the Cherokee National Holiday Art Show (2014) with her traditional river cane Choctaw basket. She is very active in her church's youth worship and drama ministries, where she plays the bass and performs at various churches throughout Oklahoma and Texas.

# OBITUARIES

## Larry Allen Hayes

Larry Allen Hayes, 63, passed away at home on Aug. 5, 2015. He was born on May 30, 1952 to Sam and Juanda (Gould) Hayes in Prineville, Oregon.

Larry was raised in Tygh Valley, Oregon, graduating from South Wasco County High School in Maupin in 1970. He married Lillus Darlene on April 8, 1988 in The Dalles, Oregon. He worked for many years as a logger and heavy equipment operator. Larry enjoyed rodeos, volunteering, fishing, camping and watching baseball.

He is survived by his wife Darlene of Tygh Valley; daughter Bobbie Collins and her husband Clay of Webb City Missouri; brother Dan Hayes of Tygh Valley; nieces and nephews Jamie LeCuyer, Travis Cox, Wacey Hayes, Marti Hayes-Frederick and Angie Dankenbring. Many great nieces, nephews, family and friends from the Midwest to the West Coast, and two Chihuahuas that loved him dearly, Missy D and Bubba S.

Larry was preceded in death by his father Sam Hayes, mother Juanda Taylor, brother Ed Hayes and other friends, family and pets.

Arrangements were made under the direction of the Spencer Libby & Powell funeral home in The Dalles, Oregon. Interment was at Tygh Valley Cemetery.



## Ronald (Ron) E. Hood

Ronald (Ron) E. Hood, 73, passed away on June 29, 2015 in Plano, Texas. Ron was born on April 3, 1942 to H. Leroy and Avie Emeline Hood in Wichita, Kansas.

Ron Hood passed away after a short battle with liver cancer, the presumed cause, Agent Orange poisoning during his service in Vietnam from 1965-1966. He was a sergeant in the U.S. Marines from 1962-1966. He also spent time in Okinawa and El Toro Marine Base in California. Ron was a very proud veteran and honored to serve our country.

Ron was an avid lover of movies and music. He acted in multiple theater productions and was best known for his character Squinty the Pirate at various Renaissance Fairs and his pirate stories on his blog. Ron retired from L3 in Waco, Texas in 2008 and was an aeronautical design engineer for 41 years. During his 41-year career he worked a short time for Beech Aircraft in Wichita, Kansas as well as 19 years for Cessna Aircraft. His most notable projects were his contributions to two Air Force One jets and various fighter jets for the military. He also worked on aircraft for various Royal families for multiple international countries. Ron was also a lover of world historical art. He attended Baylor University after retirement studying for his second degree in the arts.

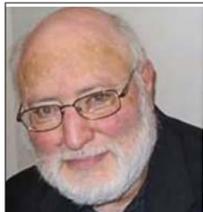
Ron was a hopeless romantic! He caught his wife's eye for the first time in the early 1960's when he was a rink guard at Skate South Skating Rink in Wichita. They were later united on a blind date and married in June 1966 while Ron was on leave from the Marines. They got to know each other through letters, while Ron was in Vietnam.

Ron's greatest legacy was the love he gave to his wife. Caring for her when she was diagnosed with lupus in 1975 and again beginning in 2012 when she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. He was also passionate about anything he did.

Ron is preceded in death by his parents, multiple aunts, uncles, and many friends.

Ron is survived by his wife of 49 years, Dianna Lynn Hood; daughter, Christina Quick (Jeffrey); daughter, Cynthia Wortham (Daniel), grandchildren Kayla White and Ryan, Kiera Wortha; brother Gary Hood (Linda); nieces Bethina, Carina, and Denea; nephew Allen, and multiple great nieces and nephews.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Stonebriar Funeral Home and Cremation Services in Frisco, Texas.



## Linda Maxwell

Linda Maxwell, 65, of Poteau, passed away on July 27, 2015, in Tulsa. She was born on March 6, 1950, to Lester Frank and Annie Mae (Morris) James in Calhoun. She was a homemaker.

Linda is survived by son, Donald Lee Maxwell of Poteau; daughter, Tammy Lee Legitt of Poteau; adopted son Jay Dakin of Poteau; sister Mary Corinne Kelly; grandchildren Tamara and Tara Legitt, Johnathon, Donald Paul Kristin, Justina and Alysia Maxwell, as well as a host of other family members, friends and loved ones.

She is preceded in death by brothers, Adam, Benny and Roy James; sisters Easter Buckner, Christine James, Flora Mae James, and Starla James.

Interment was at Oakland Cemetery in Poteau. Arrangements were made under the direction of Grace Manor Funeral Home of Poteau.



## Sisteline Lucy Kusler

Sisteline Lucy Kusler, 67, passed away July 30, 2015 at her home in Oakland, Oklahoma. She was born on May 17, 1948 in Madill to Sylvester Emil Scott and Lonie Wilmond Scott.

Sisteline was raised and lived her entire life in the Oakland area. She married James Phillip Kusler on Sept. 30, 1983 in Madill. Sisteline retired after 34 years of working at the Madill Public Schools and she was a member of the Pickens Baptist Church. She enjoyed watching the Gaither Brothers, football, basketball, baseball and shopping.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Sylvester and Lonnie; husband, Phillip; three brothers, Gary, Quincy and Roy Scott.

She is survived by sons, Randy Tate and wife Carla of Durant, Greg Tate of Oakland; daughter, Cheree Lindamood and fiance' Mike Dial; grandchildren Kyle, Kyliya, Josh, Lexus, Zakk, Benny Joe and River; great-grandchildren, Jax Addie, Holden and Cord; Patricia Cly of Madill; Earlene Marris of Dickson, Jeanette Torres of Tulsa; and Bobbi Scott of Ada.

Services were held under the direction of Watts Funeral Home in Madill. Interment was at Oakland Cemetery.



## John Charles 'Buddy' Campbell

John Charles "Buddy" Campbell, 51, passed away on July 19, 2015 in Hugo. He was born on Jan. 22, 1964 to John Albert "J.A." and Judy (Hunter) Campbell in Hugo.

Buddy was a lifelong resident of Hugo and was a 1982 graduate of Grant High School. He worked as a heavy equipment operator.

Buddy is survived by his daughter, Amanda Campbell of Hugo; son, Brandon Douglas Campbell of Oklahoma City; mother, Judy Campbell of Hugo; sister, Paula Sue Campbell Lopez of Hugo; brothers, Bobby Joe Campbell and James Albert Campbell, both of Hugo; grandchildren, Shayna Mitchell, Maddison Campbell and Haley Campbell along with many other relatives and friends.

Buddy is preceded in death by his father John Albert "J.A." Campbell.

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



## Ashlea Breanne Chapman

Ashlea Breanne "Breezy" Chapman, 34, went to be with her Lord and Savior on July 24, 2015. She was born on April 22, 1983 to Laquita Chapman and Guy Rorie in San Diego.

She was a humble and sweet soul that loved life, family, friends, animals, children and helping others in their time of need. She believed in quality over quantity when it came to her friends and her taste in clothing.

Her life was lived to be an example for others. She taught many to have faith; that miracles can and do happen; and that kindness and compassion can make anything better. A champion for those that didn't have the strength to use their own voice; she would encourage and inspire, even from a distance. She loved with action and not just with words. She had the ability to make you feel loved, important, and that you were a precious gift in this world. People can look at you all day and never truly see you. This was not the case with Ashlea. You could feel the glow of her presence as she entered the room and her sweet smile would help you forget all of your worries.

Thirty-two years is not much time on this Earth. Some waste their time they are given; while others, like Ashlea, make a lasting positive impression on the hearts of all they encounter. She was a teacher of life, compassion, loyalty, kindness, as well as strength and courage. She never complained through all of her trials and tribulations. She maintained a positive attitude when many would have given up years ago. It has been said that friends teach us things that books could never. She has taught well.

Ashlea is survived by her parents, Laquita Chapman of Bokchito and Guy (Jeanne) Rorie of Hugo; grandmother, Shirley Edmunds of Hugo; brother, Tyler Rorie of Hugo; aunts, Joyce (Russell) Lawrence of Hugo, Jimi Lynn Demo of Henrietta; uncle, Mike Rorie of Hugo; numerous cousins, and friends that were family, as well.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Holmes-Coffey-Murray Funeral Home in Durant. Interment was at Soper Cemetery in Soper.



## Lester Delroe Jim

Lester Delroe Jim, 68, passed away on July 2, 2015 in Stringtown. He was born on Jan. 18, 1947, to Abbott and Virgie (Peters) Jim, in Bentley, Oklahoma.

Lester attended grade school in Bentley, and graduated from Atoka High School. He was an ironworker in the construction business. Lester was of Baptist faith. He enjoyed hunting raccoons, watching and playing basketball, and watching bull riding. Lester married Sally Sue (Voice) on Sept. 15, 1965 in Oklahoma City.

Lester is preceded in death by parents, Abbot and Virgie (Peters) Jim; son, Kerry Jim; sister Joann Taylor; cousins, Brenda Samuels, Stephanie Taylor and Debbie Taylor.

He is survived by wife Sally Sue Jim of Stringtown; son Gary Jim and wife Annette of Coalgate; daughters, Donna Contreras of San Jose, California; son, Jason Jim of Stringtown; sister, Rosie Simon of Paramount; brother, John Jim of Seminole; special niece, Lisa Mitchell of Norman; 11 grandchildren; along with numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and many loved friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Brown's Funeral Home in Atoka. Interment was at Bentley Indian Cemetery.



## Claudia Elizabeth Flowers Blythe

Claudia Elizabeth Flowers Blythe, 94, of Amarillo, Texas died on July 14, 2015, in Flower Mound, Texas. Claudia was born April 14, 1921, in Hobart, to Ben and Bessie Flowers.

She moved to Hereford, Texas, and soon met the love of her life, H.D. Blythe, Jr. H.D. and Claudia were married for 72 years. They raised four daughters and Claudia was a homemaker until they began managing the T-Anchor Flea Market for 24 years, retiring in 2002. She was very proud of her Choctaw heritage. She especially loved spending time with family, watching the Texas Rangers, and going to the casino in Ruidoso, New Mexico. Claudia was a member of Oakwood Baptist Church in Lubbock, Texas.

Claudia was preceded in death by her husband, two infant daughters, her parents, five sisters and one brother.

She is survived by four daughters, Gale Sanford and husband Dennis of Plainview, Texas; Donna Hudson and husband Dean of Arlington, Texas; and Liz Sebastian and husband Eddie of Lubbock; nine grandchildren, Tim and Cherilyn Malone, Tammy and Russ Owens, Kelley and Heath Bozeman, Kaycee and Jeff Buckley, Kristi and Brock Allen, Danene Hudson, Drew and Linda Hudson, Jody and Ginger Sebastian, and Jennifer and Chris Guilkey; 16 great-grandchildren, four great-great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces, nephews, and friends.

She will never be forgotten as her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren hold many happy memories in their hearts spent with the woman they lovingly knew as "Mom," "Ma," "Great Ma," and "GG Ma."

Services were held under the direction of the Wade Family Funeral Home in Arlington, Texas. Burial was at Llano Cemetery East in Amarillo.



## Misty Renee Taylor

Misty Renee Taylor passed away on July 28, 2015 in Talihina, Oklahoma. She was born on Oct. 15, 1980 to Jessie Harold and Rama Lynette (Cain) Taylor in Talihina.

Misty enjoyed spending time with her two children, swimming and being with her family and friends.

She is survived by her sons, Trevor and Trace Malakowsky both of Talihina; mother, Rama Cain of Talihina; brother, Raymond Taylor and wife Kendra of Hugo; half sisters, Amanda, Samantha and Baylyn Taylor all of Broken Bow; grandparents, Raymond and Wanda Cain of Hugo, and Joyce and Bart Rector of Atoka; nephews, Ethan Taylor and Anthony Chandler both of Hugo; as well as many other relatives and friends.

Interment was at Mount Olive Cemetery.



### 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

## Mary Sue McKim

Mary Sue McKim, 77, passed away on Aug. 2, 2015 in Chouteau. She was born on April 17, 1938, to Albert and Helen (Byington) Englebright in Peggs.

Growing up, Mary attended schools in the Peggs area. She and Joseph Stanley McKim were united in marriage on May 13, 1987. Mary was a homemaker and had lived in Locust Grove area most of her life, but had lived in Chouteau since 2007.

Mary attended the Full Gospel Tabernacle in Locust Grove. She liked to can vegetables. Mary also enjoyed knitting and crocheting. She will be missed by all that knew and loved her.

Mary was preceded in death by first husband, James Grimes; husband, Joseph Stanley McKim; both parents; two infant children, Terry Grimes and Jerry Grimes; sister, Janet Englebright; four brothers, Talbert, Dean, Kenneth and Richard Englebright.

She was survived by six sons, Patrick, Timothy, Billy, Teddy, James and Jessie Grimes; daughter, Deborah Kruger; brothers Johnny, Delbert, Joe, Lloyd, Ronnie Englebright; four sisters, Jackie List, Kay Jenkins, Faye Butler, Sherry Martin; and numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, other relatives and a host of friends.

## Bobby Dale Metcalf

Bobby Dale Metcalf, 79, passed away on July 8, 2015. He was born on Nov. 6, 1935 to Irby Gazzy and Lennie Brackett Metcalf, in Bokchito.

Bobby was honorably discharged from the National Guard of Oklahoma. He worked for Diamond Shamrock in Dumas, Texas and was president of the Borger Trap Club. He lived in Durant for the last 26 years. Bobby enjoyed hunting, fishing, working on lawnmowers and having coffee and donuts with Stacy Percell and friends. He treasured hunting trips with James and Zachery at the cabin, a special place that he helped build.

Bobby was a member and deacon of the Kenefic Baptist Church. Bobby gave his life to the Lord and changed his life, after meeting his wife, Mary Helen Harrelson 17 years ago. Bobby was loved by his family, friends and his church family.

He is preceded in death by his first wife Gwendolyn Metcalf; son Michael Metcalf; granddaughter Malea Metcalf; both parents; one sister; three brothers, and other family members.

Bobby is survived by his wife of the home Mary Helen Metcalf of Durant; son James Metcalf and wife Cyndee of Hot Springs, Arkansas; like a "son" Anthony Kinnett and wife Della of Frisco, Texas; step-daughters Sherri Eastwood and husband Stacy; Shelly Childree, Starla Whitmire and husband Jerry, all of Caney; step-son Stacy Percell and wife Lori of Durant; grandchildren Zachary Metcalf, Mindy Whitmire, and Derrick Whitmire and wife Kristen, Justin Eastwood and wife Kristen, Justin Eastwood and wife Kash, Matthew Percell and wife Jordan, Chris Eastwood, Clayton Childree, J'lyn Adair and husband Tyler, T.J. Childree, Beth Deanda, Livie Deanda and Adrian Deanda; great-grandchildren Treilyn Henderson, Landon Cypert, Jude Seay, Jady Eastwood, Kaselee Adair and Elaina Percell; along with numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and in-laws.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Cunningham Funeral Home in Caddo, Oklahoma. Interment was at Bokchito Civic Cemetery.



# OBITUARIES

## Helen B. 'Bea' Billy

Helen B. "Bea" Billy, 84, passed away on July 13, 2015 in Paris, Texas. She was born on June 6, 1931 in Wright City, to Louie Lee and Wren Harrington Langston.

Helen was a homemaker and a member of First Baptist Church in Roxton. She married Jessie Billy on Jan. 28, 1945.

Helen is preceded in death by Husband Billy; and brothers JD, Jimmy, Herman, Glen, GB and Alvin.

Helen is survived by daughter Jean Martin and husband Gerald; grandchildren Michele Bush and husband Michael; Cathy Reed and husband Jeff; Joey Barker and Tammy Hope; great-grandchildren Tyler Bush and wife Courtney, Cammie Bush and fiancé Dustin Womack, Dane Reed, Daniel Reed and wife Olivia, Jessie Barker, Daltry Barker; great-great-grandchildren Koler and Aria Bush, Clayton and Chasen Reavis and Dax Reed; brother James (Chuck) Langston and wife Nela; sisters Birdie Childers, Doris Humphries, Linda Schultz and husband Randy; several nieces and nephews and a host of friends.



## James Daniel Wood

James Daniel Wood, 89, passed away on Aug. 6, 2015, in Claremore, Oklahoma. He was born on July 20, 1926 in McCurtain, Oklahoma to James Lewis Wood and Martha Lou-zena (Boatright) Wood.

James was a loving son, husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, great-great-grandfather, brother and friend.

James is preceded in death by his parents, James and Martha Wood; brothers, William Wood, Sam Wood, TJ Wood and Glen Wood; and sister, Hazel Downey. He is survived by his wife, Mary E. Wood; sons, Daniel Wood (Mary) and James Larry Wood (Diane); daughters, June Bateman (Donald) and Kay Clyma; brothers, John Wood (Pricilla) and Herman Wood; sisters, Gerry Crawford (Raymond), Corene Rouell and Willene Tahkofper; eight grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandson. He will be greatly missed by his family and many friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Moore Funeral Homes & Crematory. Interment was at Oakhaven Cemetery in Claremore.



## Roger D. (Whitman) Bratcher

Roger Don (Whitman) Bratcher, 67, passed away on Aug. 18, 2015. He was born Feb. 9, 1948 in Oklahoma City.

During his life, Roger attended U.S. Grant High School, where he met his beloved wife, Linda. He served four years in the U.S. Air Force and was stationed in both Korea and Vietnam. Roger joined the Oklahoma City Police Department in 1971 and retired in 1999, after 28 years. He enjoyed fishing, and riding his motorcycle as a member of the Blue Knights.

Roger was a descendant of the Whiteman, Harris and Pictchlynn families.

Roger is preceded in death by both of his parents.

He is survived by his wife of 48 years, Linda; children: Roger and wife Nina, Kenny and wife Rachel, Clinton and wife Connie, and Cody and wife Bobbie; 17 grandchildren; brothers: Rick Bratcher, and Tommy, Herbert Jr., and David Whiteman; sisters: Diane Willbrant, Jeannie Hodgins, Rita Myers and Mary Skaggs.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Resthaven Funeral Home in Oklahoma City. Interment was at Resthaven Memory Gardens.



## Donald O. White

Donald O. White, 76, passed away on Aug. 15, in Oklahoma City. He was born on Sept. 8, 1938 to Edd E. and Juanita (Paddock) White.

A veteran of foreign war, serving in the Army for 26 years in the medical field, Donald was awarded the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart for his dedicated service and bravery.

Living in Bryan County, Oklahoma for most of his life, Donald graduated with a master's degree in business administration. After serving in the Military, he worked for Indian Health Services for 10 years. Donald was also an entrepreneur in many businesses including farming, ranching and breeding animals.

On June 18, 2001 Donald and Diana Phillabum were united in marriage, in Oklahoma City. Donald was a member of the Masonic Lodge, 32nd Degree Scottish Rite, Shriners, Gideon and the Veterans of Foreign War.

In his free time, Donald enjoyed the outdoors, meeting new people and spending time with his family and friends. He was a member of the First Baptist Church of Durant.

Donald is preceded in death by his parents, Edd E. and Juanita White; grandparents, E.O. and Kitty Pound White, William H. and Gertude Long Paddock.

Donald is survived by his loving wife Diana of the home; children, James Owen White and wife Cindy of Piedmon; Richard Edd White and wife Celeste of Troy, Montana; Sheri Lynn Neale and husband David of Salt Lake City, Utah; Jennifer Lynn Crane of Durant; sister Geneva Shults and husband Joe of Durant; grandchildren, Whitney Rose White, Jordan James White, Conner Owen White, Skylar Don Neale, Ciera Nichole Neale, Kailey Nicole Crane; along with numerous nieces, nephews and other family and friends.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Brown's Funeral Home of Durant. Interment was at Gethsemane Cemetery in Caddo.



## Ruth Carnes (Emma Ruth Queen)

Ruth Carnes (Emma Ruth Queen), 85, passed away on March 3, 2013 in Watsonville, California. She was born in Loving, Oklahoma and moved to Watsonville in 1945. Ruth was an entrepreneur ahead of her time, starting a trucking company in Watsonville in the late 1940s, and a second trucking company, "Little Choctaw Trucking," in 1975. Ruth was involved in real estate, both in California and Nevada.

Ruth met her future husband, Harold Carnes, in 1946 and the couple married in 1949. The Carnes' had four children that they raised in Watsonville, until moving to South Lake Tahoe in 1959. The couple owned and operated "Economy Lumber Company" during the 1960s in South Lake Tahoe. Ruth loved to travel and many of her traveling adventures took her all over the world, and to every state in the United States. She was also an avid photographer and loved sharing pictures of her trips and adventures. Ruth also enjoyed genealogy and spent many years researching her family roots, as well as her husband's. Ruth was a member of The Choctaw Nation, and was very proud of being half-Choctaw and a quarter Cherokee. She understood and spoke some Choctaw language and encouraged her children and grandchildren to learn it as well. Ruth's Native American name was Mee-ka, which means Queen, and coincidentally her maiden name, too.

Ruth will undoubtedly be remembered for her love of her family, her kind heart, caring personality and insatiable sense of adventure. Ruth was preceded in death by her parents, Andrew and Pearl Queen, her husband Harold, their son Ronald as well as her three brothers: Vester, Clifford and Jimmy Queen.

Ruth is survived by her son Gary and wife Susan (Eastman) Carnes of Gilroy, California; daughter Regina (Carnes) and husband Rick Stephenson of Genoa, Nevada; daughter Rita and husband Don Martin of Watsonville; Daughter-in-law Christine Carnes of Mi wuk Village, California; 10 grandchildren; Brian Carnes, Lance Horton, Sherry (Stephenson) and husband Steve Bruce, Jennifer (Carnes) Wescott, Jennifer Campbell, Aaron Carnes and wife Amy, Thomas Campbell and wife Mia, Nathan Jelken and wife Vanessa, Shenea (Stephenson) and husband Christopher Strader, Matthew Carnes; 10 great grandchildren; Sara, Emma, Caleb, Luke, Jenna, Brandt and Bryce; as well as numerous nieces and nephews in addition to her long time friend and companion, John Colburn, of Watsonville, California.



## Jodie Darin

Jodie Darin, 69, of Idabel, passed away on July 8, 2015 at McCurtain Memorial Hospital in Idabel. She was born June 1, 1946 to John Diaz and Josephine (Phillip) Carrey.

Jodie enjoyed reading her Bible, watching religious shows and DIY programs on television, decorating homes, yard work, taking care of her flowers and making her home beautiful from the outside.

She was preceded in death by her parents; sister, Louise Benedict; son Wesley Beam.

Jodie is survived by her children, David Beam and Jackie Harris Wright; brothers, John Carrey and wife, Teresa of Durant, Julian Phillip Carrey of Houston, Texas; numerous nieces, nephews and friends

Arrangements were made under the direction of Brumley Funeral Home in Idabel. Interment was at the Redland Cemetery, in Redland.

## Suzanne Marie Deichler

Funeral services for Suzanne Marie Deichler were held on Aug. 28, 2015. Suzanne passed away in Antlers, Oklahoma.

She was born on July 5, 1969 in Kansas City, Kansas to Calvin M. and Jeanette (Colbert) Hudlin.

Suzanne grew up with her brothers in the Kansas City School District, where her father worked. Suzanne studied diligently and became a registered nurse. She worked in hospitals in Texas. Suzanne moved back to the Choctaw County area five years ago and attended Victory Assembly of God Church.

She was preceded in death by her father, Calvin M. Hudlin.

Suzanne is survived by her children, one son, Julian Robert Deichler and wife, Shanny, of Norfolk, Virginia, and one daughter, Rhiannon Layne Deichler of Kansas City; mother, Jeanette Hudlin of Soper, Oklahoma; brothers, Jeffrey N. Hudlin and wife Cynthia, of Strafford, Missouri, Randall Lee Hudlin of Overland Park, Kansas.



## Bess Zoe (Luce) Brough

Bess Zoe (Luce) Brough, 86, passed away on July 8, 2015 in Grants, New Mexico. She was born on Dec. 21, 1928 in Durant, to Richard and Vera Hill Luce.

Bess met her husband Don in California and they provided a loving home for their children first in Lynwood and later Garden Grove, California. Bess was very proud of her Choctaw heritage, a pride she shared with her family.

She was preceded in death by both parents, her husband of 43 years Don, sister Georgia Seabourn, née Luce of Westminster, California and most recently her son Robert of Moreno Valley, California.

Bess is survived by her son Richard of Gallup, New Mexico, his wife Nene, their sons Justin of Albuquerque and James also of Gallup, New Mexico; daughter Julie of Mission Viejo, California, her daughter Vera Beatty (Bryan) of Hesperia California; her daughter-in-law Laura Brough, née Whitmore of Moreno Valley, her son Robert (Marisa) of Riverside, California and daughter Shelley (James), also of Riverside. She is survived by seven great grandchildren Nicholas, Isabella, Emerson, Evan, Daniel, Lilliana and Megan. Bess is also survived by in-laws Esther (Richard), Bill, nieces Cathy, Sandy, Nancy, Zoe and nephew Richard.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Preston and Simons Mortuary in Riverside. Interment was at Olivewood Cemetery Riverside.

## Betty Jane Sullivan

Betty Jane Sullivan, known as "Aunt Betty" by so many, 87, died May 26, 2015 in Oklahoma City. She was born on Dec. 7, 1927 in Allen to Thomas and Bettie (Wilson) Bell.

She married Donald Lynn Sullivan on May 10, 1947 in Holdenville. She was a lifetime member of Adorum Temple No. 95, Daughters of the Nile, serving as Queen in 1998. She belonged to the En Ami Book Club since 1968, holding every office. She spent many years as a Brownie and Girl Scout leader, and was an active member of the PTA and Band Boosters. A star-left handed softball and basketball player, she was a faithful and loud fan of her grandson's sports.

She served as Hostess at the Governor's mansion during George Nigh's term as Governor, and was a member of the Sooner Dinner Club. She was always proud of her Choctaw heritage. A devoted member of the Northwest Baptist Church for 44 years, she was active in the Woman's Missionary Union and Baptist Women.

Betty is survived by her loving husband of 68 years, Don; daughters, Cindy and Carla Sullivan, both of Oklahoma City; grandson, Kennedy Sullivan; sister, Mary Frances Olivo of Allen; sisters-in-law, Letha Jo Sparks and Betty Bell; and several special nieces and nephews.

Arrangements were made under the direction of Mercer Adams Funeral Services in Bethany. Interment was at Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens.



## E. William Sockey Jr.

E. William Sockey Jr., 94, passed away on Aug. 2, 2015.

He was born in LeFlore, on Aug. 21, 1920, to the late Eli William Sockey Sr. and Kathryn Myrtle Snowder Sockey.

William graduated from Red Oak High School. Continuing his education he attended Draughans Business College in Fort Smith, Arkansas.

A proud veteran of the U.S. Navy, he served from 1941, until he retired as Chief Petty Officer in 1963. During his service, he was awarded a Letter of Commendation from the Commander in Chief of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet. Other honors and commendations include: WWII Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, American Defense Medal, and the American Campaign Medal.

After retirement from the military, he worked for many years as an insurance salesman, automobile salesman and was also a licensed real estate broker.

William was a communicant of St. Charles Church, where he served as a Eucharistic Minister. He was also a member of the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima, Catholics United for Faith, Fatima Circle, Catholics for the Unborn, the American Legion Post 68 in Pittsfield, and a 4th Degree Knight in the Monsignor Marshall Council 103 Knights of Columbus.

He and his wife, Joan Clare Gear married on Dec. 26, 1942.

He was preceded by wife Joan; brother, Paul Sockey; sister, Wandaleen Sockey; nephew, Ronald Sockey, and grandsons, Brian Sockey and Gregory Six.

He is survived by his children, Joan Dawn Sabato of Scottsdale, Arizona, Eli William Sockey III of Venus, Pennsylvania, Stephen P. Sockey of Kirkland, Washington, Dennis J. Sockey of Tyngsboro, Massachusetts, Linda A. Burch of Otego, New York, Gail J. Six of Northford, Connecticut, Paula M. Laurin of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and Glenn P. Sockey of Tewksbury, Massachusetts; brothers, Bernie and Gerry Adams; sister, Ilene Wilson, all of Red Oak; 42 grandchildren, 53 great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren.

Burial with full military honors was held at St. Joseph Cemetery. Arrangements were made under the direction of Dwyer Funeral Home in Pittsfield.



## Nixon 'Happy' Charles Nelson

Nixon "Happy" Charles Nelson, 99, passed away on Aug. 15, 2015 in Hugo. Nixon, fondly known as "Hap", was born March 6, 1916 in Hugo, to Julius Jethral and Josie (Locke) Nelson.

His mother was an original enrollee of the Choctaw Tribe and Hap was very proud of his Indian heritage. His grandmother, Susan Allison was Choctaw and Chickasaw.

His grandfather, Benjamin Franklin Locke, brother of Victor Locke, came to Indian Territory about 1870 to join his brother. He was a physician and pharmacist and reportedly one of the first servicing the territory in the Antlers and Hugo area.

It was interesting that most of his siblings had and went by nicknames. Starting with the birth order, Harold "Mutt" Nelson, Richard "Dittum" Nelson, Nixon "Happy" Nelson, June Collins, Mary Nelson King, Elaine "Tookie" Nelson Smith and the only surviving sibling, Michael "DJ" Nelson.

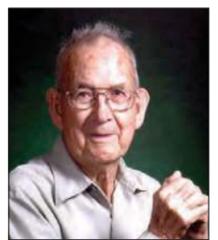
He lived in Espanola, New Mexico for 30 plus years. Hap worked in the oil field as a driller for Dalton Geo Physical Seismograph Company and Steinberger Drilling Company.

Hap married Erile "Bill" Baggett on Nov. 20, 1993 in Nine Pines.

He was preceded in death by his wife Erile "Bill" Nelson; brothers, Harold Nelson and Richard Nelson; sisters, June Collins, Mary King and Elaine Smith.

Nixon is survived by his step-children, Charles Baggett and Peggy Kaley both of Hugo; brother, Mike Nelson of Showlow, Arizona; numerous cousins, nieces, nephews and his long time caregiver, Carolyn Jackson.

Funeral Mass was held at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church. Interment was at the Spring Chapel Cemetery in Hugo. Arrangements were made under the direction of Prater-Lampton-Mills & Coffey Funeral Home in Hugo.



# EDUCATION

## Miller earns bachelor's degree



Autumn Miller graduated from Fort Lewis College in Colorado with a bachelor's degree in accounting.

Miller was vice president of Beta Alpha Psi organization, and a member of the international honor organization during college.

She is involved with Engineers without Borders and recently traveled to Laos and Ecuador to help build water systems for impoverished communities.

Miller is the granddaughter of C.J. Bryan, son of original Choctaw enrollee "Sissie" Pitchlyn Bryan.

She wishes to thank the Choctaw Nation for its support and encouragement as she pursued her degree.



## Micahla Akers earns diploma

Micahla Akers graduated from West Craven High School in Vanceboro, North Carolina.

## Tushka excels as student and volunteer



Trajan D. Tushka received an award for the A-B honor roll, a scholarship from an art institute, and was featured on a Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) special covering Mission Hope for Kids, a student volunteer program.

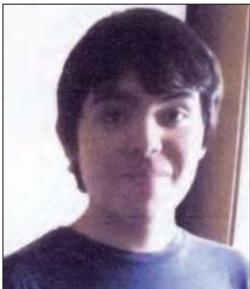
The Up with People student ambassador program invited Tushka to spend the summer in Europe, specifically Switzerland and Greece.

He is a junior at Central Hardin High School in Elizabethtown, Kentucky.

His parents, Ron and Mary Tushka Wood, and grandparent Otis Tushka, said they are proud of Trajan's accomplishments.



Kevin Hudlund



Cameron Hudlund

## Hedlund brothers find academic success

Lavada Jacobs Duncan, granddaughter of original enrollee Salina Jacobs, submitted her grandsons Kevin and Cameron Hedlund as exceptional students.

Kevin is an 8th grader at John E. Albright Middle School in Villa Park, Illinois. His grades are A's and B's, and received high scores on math and reading on his student progress report.

Cameron is a student at Willowbrook High School. He earned a composite score of 28 on the ACT and maintains a 3.33 GPA.

## James excels at academics



Zachary James finished 8th grade after maintaining five semesters as an Outstanding Scholar. He placed first in the National Science League, earned the President's Education Award for outstanding academic excellence, and made perfect attendance.

James is involved with the Choctaw Nation Success Through Academic Success (STAR) program.

His family, including mother and father Shelly and Gary, brother Anthony, sisters Valerie and Vanessa, and grandparents all expressed pride in his academic success.

## Fobb graduates high school



Ryan Jack Fobb graduated with honors from South Dade High School. He plans on attending college in the fall.

## Haynes graduates, writes first book

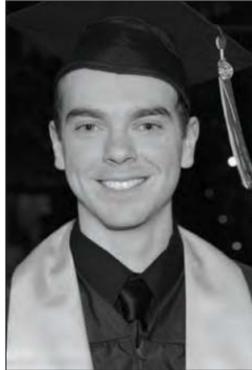


Jesse Haynes graduated from Skiatook High School (SHS) as president and valedictorian of his class, with a 4.36 GPA.

Haynes received several honors this year, which included Oklahoma Coaches Association Region 7 Scholar Athlete of the Year, Oklahoma Basketball Coaches Assoc. All State Academic First Team, OSSAA Academic Scholarship recipient, Skiatook Chamber of Commerce Student of the Year, and Scholastic Arts Gold Key Recipient. He was also SHS Academic Male Athlete of the Year.

Above all, Haynes considers his greatest academic accomplishment to be publishing his first novel, which he wrote after his sophomore year of high school. His debut work, a young adult Sci-Fi novel entitled Creepers, has been available through bookstores nationwide for over a year now, and the sequel, Creepers 2, is set to release in early 2016. You can keep up with his progress on [www.jessehaynesauthor.com](http://www.jessehaynesauthor.com).

## Byrne graduates from Arizona State



Michael John Byrne graduated from Barrett Honors College at Arizona State on May 12. John earned both a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biochemistry and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Mathematics. He will begin graduate study in Applied Mathematics in the fall.



(L-r) Eleanor Caldwell, Mary Edna Watson, Howard Phillips, Greta Slaton, and Doretha Bowen display their new graduation certificates. Not pictured: Paula Griffith, Whitney Griffith.

## Millerton language class graduates

The Choctaw Language class in Millerton graduated from phase II/III. Eleanor Caldwell taught the community class.

## Mooers becomes LPN, begins career



Kaylin Mooers finished the 11-month Licensed Practical Nurse program at the Kiamichi Technology Center in Poteau, graduating on June 11.

Mooers began work assisting doctors at a pharmacy in Poteau. She is a proud mother to a three-year-old daughter.

Grandfather Woodrow Morris and family said they are proud and wish her luck in her career.

## Brittani Leigh Blankenship graduates



Brittani Leigh Blankenship graduated as valedictorian of her 2015 class in Fort Towson. She finished with a 4.0 GPA. She said she enjoys basketball, as well as her classes at Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

Blankenship said her faith is very important to her. She plans to teach math to high school students after she earns her college degree.

## Hutchins takes 2nd Place in essay contest



Fisher Hutchins of Calera received 2nd place awards after sending his essay, "Why I Appreciate American Veterans" into the local Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3916 for their annual Patriot's Pen youth essay writing contest.

Hutchins received 2nd place at both the post and district levels. He graduated from the 8th grade and was salutatorian of his class.

## Smith named Millennium Scholar



Bailee Smith, 17-year-old from Tahlequah, was one of five Sequoyah High School seniors to be named a Gates Millennium Scholar, a title which grants Smith up to \$250,000 in college scholarship funding.

To earn the title and opportunity, Smith had to maintain a 3.5 GPA, be involved with community service, show leadership qualities, and write eight essays for consideration.

Smith plans to attend Northeastern State University in Tahlequah to study elementary education.

She is the daughter of Jarryd and April Smith.

## Anderson earns doctorate from OU



Lydia Rae Anderson graduated from the University of Oklahoma's College of Law with a juris doctorate degree on May 9.

Anderson is the great-granddaughter of original enrollee Clarence J. Anderson and wife Flossie (Sturgeon) Anderson. She is the daughter of Kirk and Jessie Anderson of Yanush, and Roni Anderson of Mustang. She is the granddaughter of Tobe

and Rowletta Anderson of Buffalo Valley, and Lydia Sun of Oklahoma City and Wyatt of Shawnee.

Anderson received the Lindy Foley Award. The faculty selected her for exhibiting passion, competence, determination, and commitment in the representation of clients.

She is now working for the Office of the Public Defender in Oklahoma City.



## Dodd inducted into honor society

Harley is pictured with his family. Harley is the great-grandson of original Choctaw enrollee, Edmund C. Noel. His grandfather, Lawrence C. Noel and family, who proudly attended his induction ceremony, are shown in this picture.

Harley Dodd, senior at OKC University, was inducted this year into the Oklahoma City University chapter of the National Society of Leadership and Success, while working to complete his studies of kinesiology.

Dodd's former English department head, Dr. Clemens-Fox, nominated him.

Students receive this honor by possessing qualities of being able to balance leadership and participation in many different campus courses and activities, as well as showing balance in scholar studies while on campus by being an example student and maintaining a high GPA.

Harley is grateful to have received scholarship assistance from his tribe, and is the first in his family to attend college.

## Shook graduates from East Central



Carson Shook is a Choctaw living in the Cleveland area. He said he would not have been able to pay for college without the Choctaw Nation's help.

"I attended East Central University to earn my bachelor's in computer science, and I graduated with high academic achievement as a member of Alpha Chi," Shook said. He graduated in May 2015, and now holds

a steady job in his field. He said he is enjoying every minute of it.

"Thank you so much for all the financial support that you have granted me throughout my academic career. I am proud to be a Choctaw," Shook said.

## Erwin earns second bachelor's degree



Denise Erwin recently graduated from Texas A&M, Corpus Christi on August 8 with her second Bachelor of Science in nursing.

Erwin plans to work as a medical surgical/labor and delivery nurse, and then obtain her master's degree in nurse anesthetist or nurse practitioner.

Recently, the Texas House of Representatives asked Erwin to speak on behalf of the nursing

program.

She would like to thank Choctaw Nation for their educational support.

# EDUCATION



## Grace plans to serve southern Oklahoma

Jessica Grace, graduated May 9 from Oklahoma State University (OSU) with a bachelor of science in communication sciences and disorders.

Grace, recipient of a Choctaw Nation scholarship, is excited to continue her education in graduate school at Oklahoma State University. She enters the master's program of communication sciences and disorders to pursue the occupation of speech-language pathologist. After the completion of graduate studies, Grace plans to return to and reside in southern Oklahoma and offer professional services in rural communities.

As a student at Oklahoma State, Grace was involved in several extra-curricular activities such as Greek life, National Student Speech Language Association, Orange Pride, and mortar board.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Choctaw Nation for their continued support of my education. With a college degree, my life and the life of my future family will be impacted in such a positive way," Grace said.



## Ykema takes on Fulbright Scholarship

Matt Ykema, of Chandler, Arizona, recently graduated from Barrett Honors College at Arizona State University (ASU) with double bachelor's degrees. He also accepted a Fulbright Scholarship to the Netherlands.

Ykema majored in molecular biology and economics. He said he was able to make many personal and professional contacts and enjoyed his time at ASU.

"As a Fulbright scholar, I will be comparing two different viral vectors for using them in gene therapy. The Netherlands has some of the first trials for curing genetic diseases by treating people with viruses that have been engineered to be therapeutic instead of harmful."

After graduating, Ykema, will enter a Ph.D. program in cellular biology at Rice University in Houston.

"I have been aware of my Choctaw culture from very early on in life, probably around 4 or 5 years old, through my grandmother," Ykema said. "Being a member of the Choctaw tribe gives me a strong cultural connection in both my personal and professional life. I know that the kinds of developments I generate through my scientific research can come back and benefit the tribe as a whole."

## Seagraves completes practical nursing



Amanda Seagraves graduated from the Kiamichi Technology Center Practical Nursing Program with the class of 2015.

She is the daughter of Lester and Jenise Seagraves of Poteau, and the late Cheryl Seagraves. She is the granddaughter of Mary C. Kelly of Poteau, and Pat and Elton Johnson of Wister.

## Hamilton becomes seasonal firefighter



Sean Hamilton recently started work as a seasonal firefighter for Cal Fire, graduating fourth in his class from the Butte Community College Fire Academy in California.

He completed his emergency medical technician (EMT) training, and earned an associate of science degree in fire technology from Butte Community College.



## Molina earns master's degree from OU

Kelly Molina graduated at the top of her class with a master's degree from Oklahoma University (OU), having maintained a 3.9 GPA. Her degree was in museum history.

She graduated twice at the University of Central Oklahoma, on the Dean's Honor Roll in psychology and again with a degree in journalism photography.

Molina is currently employed by the Department of Mental Health for the State of Oklahoma.

## Bush graduates from Oklahoma State



Stacy Rae Bush graduated from Oklahoma State University with a bachelor of arts in art history. She graduated as 2014-2015 Outstanding Senior for the art history program.



## Ash earns doctorate degree

Kurt Taylor Ash earned a doctorate degree in biological sciences on Aug. 8 from the University of South Carolina. Pictured with Ash is the program director, Bert Ely.

Ash is an Ardmore native and received his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Oklahoma.



## Tekobbe earns doctorate degree

Cindy Tekobbe received her Ph.D. with distinction in rhetoric and linguistics from Arizona State University (ASU) in May. She also studied at Cambridge University in England.

She was awarded a doctoral fellowship as the ASU College of Liberal Arts & Sciences and graduate teaching associateship in the ASU Department of English.

Tekobbe has legally changed her last name in honor of her maternal great-grandmother, Susanna Tekobbe, an original enrollee in the Choctaw Tribe.

She has accepted an assistant professorship at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, Alabama where she will be teaching this fall.

## Columbus earns associate's degree



Michael Columbus received his Associate of Applied Science degree in integrated studies from Central New Mexico Community College (CNM).

Columbus is also pursuing an Associate of Science degree in electrical engineering at CNM and plans to transfer to the University of New Mexico this Spring.

He is the son of Michael and Luanna Columbus of Kiefer.



## Hornbuckle earns college scholarships

Hallie Hornbuckle graduated in May from Lake Dallas High School in Corinth, Texas. She was a Highstepper on the drill team and participated in the science club as well as the Renaissance Honor Roll.

She volunteered at Presbyterian Hospital in Denton, Texas her junior and senior year, which clarified her decision of becoming a registered nurse.

Hornbuckle was accepted into several colleges and made the decision to attend Texas Woman's University (TWU) in Denton. She was accepted into the Honors Program at TWU and awarded the \$40,000 Helen Mentor Scholarship and a \$3,500 per year academic scholarship. She has also received an \$800 scholarship from Choctaw Nation Higher Education. With these scholarships, and the \$5,700 grant she received, she will graduate in 2019 with little to no debt.

Her parent Cindy Chavez from Corinth, along with all her aunts, uncles, and cousins, are all extremely proud of her.



## Jackson earns bachelor's degree

Makenzie Jackson, a 2015 graduate of Texas Christian University (TCU), was recently honored at the May graduation ceremony in Fort Worth, Texas.

Jackson was recognized by Chancellor Boschini for maintaining a 4.0 GPA during her four years as an undergraduate educational major. Out of 1,873 students, she was one of six honored for this accomplishment.

She has worked with Lauren English, her career development counselor as well as former TCU graduate, throughout her undergraduate degree.

Jackson is working a teaching assistant at TCU while pursuing a master's degree with additional teaching credentials.

## Parrish earns two degrees



Tori Parrish graduated from Southwestern Oklahoma State University in May with a bachelor's degree in exercise science and a minor in allied health. She also graduated in June from Caddo/Kiowa Technology Center in Fort Cobb with an associate degree as a physical therapist assistant.

Parrish is the daughter of Larry and Darla Parrish of Canute, and niece of Jim Parrish, Director

of Education for the Choctaw Nation and the Choctaw Language Department.

"I would like to thank the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma for helping me reach my educational goals," she said. "Chahta sia hoke. Yakoke!"



## Pankowski earns honors in high school

William Pankowski finished his sophomore year with high honors at Fountain-Fort Carson High School in Fountain, Colorado. He is the 16-year-old, great-great-grandson of original enrollee Chick Freney.

## Roshala graduates, plans on college

Justice Roshala graduated with honors, holding a 3.9 GPA, from San Dieguito High School Academy in Encinitas, California.

He played water polo all four years as goalie and was captain of the team his senior year. He was also member of Young Leaders in Healthcare. He will be entering the University of California, Los Angeles in the fall as a freshman majoring in biology.

Justice is proud to be Choctaw and is grateful to Chief Batton and the Choctaw College Connect Program for their inspiration and continued support.

## Over 18 years old?

Don't forget to update your membership card.

If you have recently turned 18 or will be turning 18 within the next 60 days and have not yet obtained your Adult Membership card please complete a new Tribal Membership application and return to the Choctaw Nation Tribal Membership Department. The application can be found online at [www.choctawnation.com](http://www.choctawnation.com) or by contacting the Tribal Membership office at (800) 522-6170 or (580) 924-8280.

# Spotlight on Elders

with  
**John Hooser**



Photo by Brandon Frye

John Hooser laughs while walking the yard of the house he was born in, and in which he currently resides. He decided to come home to Clayton, Oklahoma in retirement after a long career as an educator and dedicate his time to serving his community and his tribe.

By **BRANDON FRYE**

Choctaw Nation

John Archie Hooser grew up in a simpler time in the heart of Choctaw country, in Clayton near the Tvshka Homma capitol grounds. He is the youngest child of the late Newt Hooser and late Helen (Hudson) Hooser.

He said, in his 90 years, he has lived a life where you would just had to have followed him around to fully understand. He would tell you about it anyway.

Hooser was born on Aug. 22, 1924, in a house still important to him.

"If you come down that road about a mile and a quarter," Hooser said recently, pointing out from his seat at a local Clayton diner, "Make two 90-degree turns, and the white house up there on the left with the reddest roof you could ever imagine, that's where I was born. That was my momma's Indian-allotted land."

Hooser recalled his mother telling him he was born on the hottest day she had ever seen. His mother also explained a local, Dr. Huckabee, came out to the house in a buggy to perform the delivery when there wasn't much road for the trip.

Hooser said he grew up when bread was a dime and you rode horseback, because that's all there was—there were



Photo Provided

John and Lucille Hooser pose for a family portrait. The photograph was taken in their younger years, when the two were actively working as teachers.

automobiles, but they were for rich folks. He recalls the tree he used to secure his horse when coming into town, and remembers trips with his family by team-and-wagon.

Speaking of his family growing up, Hooser said they grew a crop to supply feed for the cattle and horses. He had five siblings, three brothers and two sisters. He had spent some free time riding and roping.

"I always had a dog by my side," Hooser said. "Spike, a German police dog, was one of my dogs. I would take the dog with me to get the mail and let the dog put the mail in its mouth to carry home."

The Hooser family was a live-off-the-land sort of people. But his parents also saw education as a very important thing.

"Even though my mother and father did not have a strong education," he said, "they were of the mind that their children should better themselves by having an education."

Education had already played an important role in the Hooser family line, even before John was born. His grandfather, Peter Hudson, was at one point the superintendent of the Tvshka Homma Female Institute. Grandfather Hudson got an early start academically after being handpicked by the chief at the time to travel outside of Indian Territory to

earn an education—a story John Hooser would gladly pass on.

Speaking of his grandfather Hudson, Hooser said, "He got about a sixth-grade education, then the Choctaws decided they needed members of their tribe to be educated so they could help in the days to come. They selected about 10 people, and my grandfather Peter J. Hudson was one of them."

After a horseback ride from Eagletown, Oklahoma to Missouri, his grandfather found his education at an academy now called Drury University.

Hooser would unintentionally mime the academic actions of his grandfather Hudson. After earning a high school diploma from the Tvshka Homma School, serving in the Navy, working in the lumber industry, then attending both Southeastern Oklahoma State University and Oklahoma State University, Hooser made an academic exodus to Missouri.

"I went to Missouri, and it was only supposed to be for three years," he said. "I was there 28 years. OSU offered me a job here teaching chemistry and botany, full fellowship. But the state of Missouri tripled my salary if I led their science education. So I went to Missouri."

Before the big move, however, Hooser met his wife, Lucille. The two had been near each other as strangers since high school. John attended Tvshka Homma and Lucille attended rival school Clayton. They met later while attending Eastern Oklahoma State College in Wilburton. The two moved to Missouri and dedicated their lives and careers to education.

During his long stint as an educator, Hooser's work was noticed and rewarded. He said he got involved in science education nationally and was elected president of the Council of State Science Supervisors. This position had him playing a key role in directing and improving school science programs. He travelled across the U.S. inspecting their science programs and working to make them better.

John and Lucille had three children, each carrying on the torch of education started by their great-grandfather Hudson. Daughter Hoitema went to Missouri to study and become a nurse, taking similar steps to her father and great-grandfather. Son Paul is now a professional golfer. Son Philip is a professional actor, playwright, and director.

In 1991, once John and Lucille Hooser reached the time of retirement, they wanted to come back home.

"Our daughter didn't see why we would come back at the time," Hooser said, "but I told her, Hoitema, that's home."

By home, he meant on his mother's allotted land, at the white house up on the left with the reddest roof you could ever imagine—where he was born.

Now, Hooser spends his time caring for his land, talking the ears off Clayton locals, and working to make his community and his tribe better.

"I volunteered my time when I retired, I'm 90 years old," Hooser said. "I told both chiefs [Pyle and Batton] I was going to give the rest of my life to my tribe. So whatever I can do, I'll do."

Dedicating his time to serve others is a trait Hooser picked up from his parents, and it has been with him his entire life. He said he keeps a particular lesson his parents taught him close.

"Both of my parents were honest, and they taught us to be helpful. My dad taught me the best lesson," Hooser explained from the corner table of his hometown diner. "He never refused anyone in need. My father gave to people when he hardly had anything to give, but that's the kind of fellow he was. And I live by that... Now, I'm going to have a piece of cake."



Photo Provided

Pilots of Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's Flight Operations, from left, John Wesley, Al Cherry and Quentin McLarry, accept the 2015 Beacon Award.

## Choctaw Nation honored for aid efforts to wounded heroes

### Beacon Award presented to Flight Operations

By **LISA REED**

Choctaw Nation

Eighty missions ...more than 97,000 miles ...the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's Flight Operations team has spent hundreds of flight hours on journeys to help wounded heroes. Four years ago, the Choctaw Nation joined Veterans Airlift Command (VAC), a nonprofit organization that provides free air transportation to wounded veterans and their families.

The Choctaw Nation was recognized for its charitable influence on July 16 with a 2015 Beacon Award during a ceremony at the Skirvin Hilton Hotel in Oklahoma City. It was among five other category winners who were honored for continuing to embody the spirit of giving.

"People and companies who give of their time and money to nonprofits don't do it for the recognition. That's why the Beacon Awards are so important; it's an opportunity to salute companies who are making a significant difference, allowing and encouraging their employees to become involved in their communities," said Joni Brooks, president and publisher of

the Journal Record.

"I am so proud of our pilots for showing their heart and compassion for our veterans by assisting them through the Veteran's Airlift Command," said Chief Gary Batton. "They go above and beyond the call of duty to help and I am so thankful that the Choctaw Nation and our pilots are able to help those who have served God and country."

It's often nearly impossible for some veterans to travel on commercial airlines because of injuries, PTSD, or many other concerns. Veterans Airlift Command provides a free, low-stress environment for traveling to and from anywhere in the United States for medical and other compassionate services.

"Giving back to the community is part of the heart and soul of the Choctaw Nation," said Al Cherry, director of flight operations. "The concern and understanding of Chief Batton and the Tribal Council for the needs of veterans in these situations, and their generosity, are what make it possible for us to make the trips." Cherry, Quentin McLarry and John Wesley are the Nation's three flight operations pilots.

Passengers assisted on the Choctaw Nation's VAC flights have included an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) victim who lost both legs above the knee, one arm above the wrist,

and severe damage to the other arm. The Choctaw Nation flew him and his wife home for the first time since the explosion. Cherry remembers a huge reception waiting for the veteran with Patriot riders, family, friends, and townspeople—a true hero's reception.

Another flight carried a group of six wounded warriors, most who had been injured in different attacks, back to meet their units when their units returned from deployment. They were there for their units, but the town turned out for them.

The Choctaw Nation uses its business successes as a means to continue the missionary work of helping others. The Nation has participated in hurricane and tsunami relief, has an active Meals on Wheels program, has assisted many communities and churches with needs, and has several programs for boys and girls. Many tribal members and employees donate untold hours in helping build a sense of community.

"The Choctaw Nation takes a long-term view of its mission. By assisting with these efforts, we are encouraging our young people to grow and become better partners within their communities," Cherry said. "In turn, they will encourage the next generation to do the same. The end game is that we are better people."

### 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](mailto:abentley@choctawnation.com)

## 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Choctaw Nation BIGFOOT 5k/1mile

October 3, 2015 Honobia, Ok.  
Free Registration Fee



The 2015 Bigfoot 5k will be held at the Honobia Senior Citizen Nutrition Center. See below for information on the Bigfoot 5k/1 mile event:

- On-Site registration begins at 8:00 am and closes at 9:30 am at the Little River Park
- Race Begins at 10:00 am near the Senior Citizen Nutrition Center on Honobia Loop
- Pre-registered participants will receive a T-shirt.
- On-site participants will receive a T-shirt based on availability.
- Awards for 5 k participants only – 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, & 3<sup>rd</sup> place male & female in each age category (5 year age groups). Also, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> place medals for overall male & female.
- Pre-Registration deadline date is September 21, 2015
- After Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> you MUST register on site! NO EXCEPTIONS!!!
- This event is shipped timed with a Gun start.
- Contact: Choctaw Nation for Bigfoot 5k information at (800) 349 7026 ext. 6044 or 6657.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Race day age \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

Email (optional) \_\_\_\_\_ Are you a Choctaw Nation P.A.C.E. club member? Yes NO  
Deadline Date Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>

**1 hr. time limit on 5k course. Circle One:** 5k Run/Walk 1 mile fun Run/Walk  
If you plan on pushing a child in a stroller, list child's name and shirt size \_\_\_\_\_  
(you must start at the back of the line if pushing a stroller)

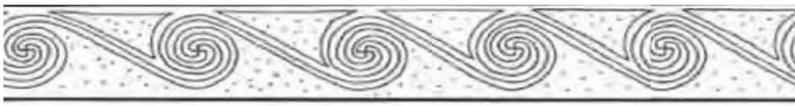
T-Shirt Adult :Sm. Med. Lg. XL 2X 3X Youth: XSM.(2-4) SM.(6-8) Med.(10-12) Lg.(14-16) XLg.(18-20)

Waiver of Liability: I know that the event is held on a road that is traveled on by vehicles and may be hazardous. I assume the risk and responsibility for my safety. I hereby waive all claims that I or my estate may have against any persons or entities involved in organizing, conducting or supporting this event for any injury of loss I might suffer even if injury or loss was caused by the negligence of those parties. I attest that I am physically fit and prepared for this event. I grant full permission for organizers to use photograph of me or my child in the Biskinik or other Choctaw Nation promotional posters, brochures and newspaper articles.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian if under 18yrs. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mail registration form to:  
Choctaw Nation Wellness Dept.  
One Choctaw Way  
Talihina, Ok. 74571





## Iti Fabussa



The Choctaw Nation Capitol Building at Tvshka Homma.

# Tvshka Homma: Capitol of the Choctaw Nation

By RYAN SPRING  
Choctaw Nation

Do you recognize this building? You might have seen it at the Choctaw Nation Labor Day Festival, at Christmas in the Park, or while attending a summer youth camp. This is the Choctaw Capitol Building, also known as the Old Council House. It is located at the center of the Tvshka Homma capitol grounds and has stood there since the 1880's. Tvshka Homma wasn't our first capitol location; in fact, there have been several other locations in the past. This month's edition of Iti Fabussa will explore the history of our Choctaw capitols.

In 1834, just after the Trail of Tears, Choctaw leaders met together in Oklahoma to create a new constitution. This constitution not only reestablished our government in Indian Territory and set forth laws for our tribe, but also created a capitol for the Nation. They named the capitol Nvnih Waiya, after the sacred mound the Choctaw people had to leave behind in Mississippi. The capitol was located just 2 miles south of current day Tvshka Homma and built both a council house in 1838 and a house of representatives in 1843. Despite success at this location, our capitol

was moved less than two decades later.

Fort Towson was one destination for Choctaws along the Trail of Tears. Upon their arrival many Choctaws stayed in the Fort Towson area and as a result, a thriving population grew in the town of Doaksville. Trade along the military road to Fort Smith as well as trade from the Red River brought further growth to Doaksville. By 1850, Doaksville was the largest in Indian Territory. The 1850 Choctaw constitution moved the capitol to Doaksville, now the political and economic hub of the Choctaw Nation. In 1857, the Skullyville constitution changed the location of the capitol to Boggy Depot, over 60 miles to the east. This was highly controversial, however, and a new constitution was quickly written in 1860, moving the capitol back to Doaksville.

In 1854, the U.S. Army abandoned Fort Towson. Doaksville began to steadily decline, possibly due to the lack of goods now traveling on the military road and lack of protection during the American Civil War. After years of uncertainty and decline, in 1863 the Choctaw Nation amended the 1860 Constitution and moved the

capitol to Chahta Tamaha, near current day Bok Chito, Oklahoma. At Chahta Tamaha was the Armstrong Academy for Boys. Because of the war, academy was closed and the building was used as the Nation's Council House till 1883 when the school was reopened.

With the news of a railroad coming through the Kiamichi Valley, and the installation of several new steam powered saw mills, construction began on a new council house in 1879. Four years later, in 1883, what we now know as the Choctaw Capitol Building finished construction. The area was named Tvshka Homma, meaning Red Warrior, in honor of Chief Jack McCurtain. By 1885 over 100 families and businesses had moved to the area. However, the railroad was built 2 miles south and the town resettled at 'New Tuskahoma'. Today, the Tvshka Homma capitol grounds is still used for many activities year round including cultural demonstrations, weddings, family reunions, tours, and gatherings. In the center of the grounds the capitol building still stands; representing the resilience, pride, and success of the Choctaw people.



(left) House of Representatives at Nvnih Waiya.



(right) Armstrong Academy at Chahta Tamaha.

Photos Provided by Oklahoma Historical Society

### Attention: Tribal Members!

We love hearing from you!

But in order to serve you more efficiently, we remind anyone mailing forms, letters, or other correspondence to the Choctaw Nation to include the department or individual where the mail should go.

In the address line, simply use "Choctaw Nation ATTN: (department or individual's name), PO Box 1210, Durant OK 74702"

Thank you for your continued interest in Choctaw Nation services and programs!

# 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

## Chahta Anumpa

### Aiikhvna

◆◆◆ Lesson of the Month ◆◆◆

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

'he-him, she-her, its - im, i.

vm, a - 'my' chīm, chī - 'your' im, i - he-him, she-her, its

'im' or the 'm' form is used before verbs that begin with a vowel.  
im - pronounced 'ihm'

1. Tvli ma im olachi.  
Ring the bell for her.
2. Kvna kia bila im ahukopa hinla.  
Someone might steal gas from him.
3. Katos tuklo hosh im ashwa.  
He has two cats.
4. Vlla nakni himitta ma im olabechi tuk.  
He scolded that young man.

i - or the 'n' form (nasal underline), is used before verbs that begin with a consonant.  
i - pronounced 'inh'

1. Ohoyo ma ibbak pit i fahli tuk.  
He waved his hand toward that woman.
2. Kvta hosh i yukpa tuk?  
Who laughed at her?
3. Kafi i libishli tuk.  
He warmed her coffee.
4. Im abinili i tobla chi ho?  
Will he push her chair for her?

im, i - he-him, she-her, its- them	kafi - coffee	tvli - bell
achi - future tense	olachi - to ring	katos - cat
abinili - chair	mv̄t, m̄q - that	tuklo - two
tuk - past tense	bila - gas	ibbak - hand
kvna kia - someone	kvta hosh - who	ahukopa - steal from
vlla nakni - boy	himitta - young	tbli - to push
ohoyo - woman	fahli - wave	olabechi - scold
pit - in 'that' direction	libishli - to warm	yukpa - laugh
ashwa - two; reside, stay, to be in existence	tbli - to push	

www.choctawschool.com

## Batton Scholar Spotlight: Greg Ferguson



Batton Scholar Greg Ferguson pictured with his wife, Kathy Jo.

(Editor's note: This is fourth 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

Greg Ferguson always knew that obtaining a college degree was important.

His parents urged him to go to college and get a degree. Both of his parents were the first in their families to receive degrees.

"They said, that even if I didn't use my degree, that I could always fall back on it if I needed to," said Ferguson.

With the drive to earn his degree, Greg set out on his higher education journey.

As many know, a college degree can be rather costly.

According to Ferguson, at one point in his college career, he was working two jobs just to make ends meet.

Ferguson was thankful to be chosen as a

recipient of the Gary & Angie Batton Family Scholarship.

"I felt extremely honored and blessed that I was chosen for this scholarship. I'm thankful to the Batton family for their generosity," Ferguson said. "The scholarship allowed me more time to focus on school and study."

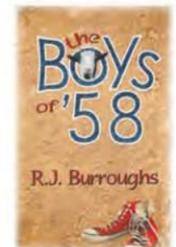
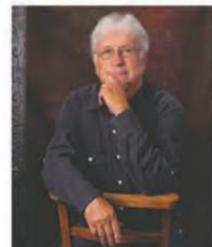
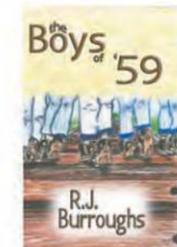
Greg received a bachelor's of science degree in health and physical education.

He is currently working as an employee of the Wood Ranch in Wapanucka.

"I work on the cattle segment of the ranch. I plan to have my own cow/calf operation one day," said Greg. "It's what I have wanted to do since I was a kid."

Greg is the son of Robert and Melissa Ferguson of Tishomingo. He is the grandson of Mattie and Larry Ferguson of Wright City, and Rhonda Howard of Broken Bow.

Greg and his wife Kathy Jo, live in Coleman, and are active members of the Coleman Baptist Church. Kathy Jo is in her last year of nursing school, and plans on working for the Choctaw Nation after graduation.

MEET THE ARTIST

## R.J. BURROUGHS

CHOCTAW AUTHOR

SEPTEMBER 25, 2015

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# New housing for elders opens

By CHARLES CLARK  
Choctaw Nation

A new door opened for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma last month — 10 new doors, in fact. At a ribbon cutting ceremony Aug. 21 in Stigler, Chief Gary Batton declared the Choctaw Nation Independent Living Community open for inspection.

The 10 units for senior tribal members is a first for Stigler. It is the 7th for the Choctaw Nation. Other independent living communities are located in Calera, Harts-horne, Hugo, Idabel, Poteau and Talihina. The Choctaw Nation also has a program that provides apartment living for qualified tribal elders.

More than 50 people from the Choctaw Nation, City of Stigler and Stigler Chamber of Commerce were on hand as a morning of drizzling rain stopped long enough to hear comments from Chief Batton, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., District 6 Councilman Joe Coley, and District 4 Councilman Delton Cox.

Also present was District 5 Junior Miss Choctaw Juanita Gonzalez, 15, wearing her beaded crown and traditional Choctaw attire.

The housing addition is located in District 5. The councilman for that area, Ronald Perry, was introduced by Cox as “the man of the hour.”

Councilman Perry said, that the housing shows “we intend to take care of our



Photo by Brandon Frye

**Tracy Arcey, Service Coordinator for the Choctaw Nation Housing Authority, gives Choctaw elder Mack Barker a tour inside one of the new homes.**

elders.”

Those words and more kept the morning filled with cheer, as well as pride. Everyone present seemed to grasp that a notable accomplishment was being recognized.

“It was his vision,” said Assistant Chief Austin as he brought Chief Batton to the podium.

Chief Batton thanked the Choctaw Housing Authority and other programs and individuals that had a hand in bringing about the new construction.

“The 10 units are just the beginning,” said Chief Batton, as he revealed a total of 32 more units are to be built at future sites. Each property also has its own safe room, he added, noting the importance to safety and sense of security the feature will bring to the new homeowners.

With the snip of an oversized pair of scissors on the lawn of the housing office at the entrance to the addition,

the site was officially opened for tours.

Representatives of builders AIPe, were on hand to answer questions.

The addition is located northeast of downtown, but still inside Stigler city limits. Municipal water, sewer and emergency services apply to the units. Each house is listed as being 750 square feet, has one bedroom and one bath, a laundry area, kitchen/dining area and living room. They are ADA compliant and feature Energy Star appliances.

As tribal officials toured the homes in Stigler, they could be heard discussing plans for the next elder housing construction — in Smithville.

For a complete list of resident application requirements and availability, contact Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Housing Authority, toll free at (800) 235-3087 or online at [kduane@choctawhousing.com](http://kduane@choctawhousing.com).

## Chahta Ohoyo Tikba Hikia CHOCTAW WOMEN LEADERS

The Chahta Ohoyo Tikba Hikia Program is 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.

This program is made possible through a United States Department of Agriculture grant and through a partnership with Choctaw Nation Outreach Services and The Housing Authority of the Choctaw Nation. Chahta Ohoyo Tikba Hikia can serve Native American woman with CDIBs who live in the McCurtain County area.

Participants will receive the following training:

- Entrepreneurial
- Homeownership
- Leadership
- Energy Efficiency
- Traditional Choctaw Cultural Activities

If you or someone you know is interested in applying to the program, just fill out and send in the application attached below or stop by the Choctaw Nation Tribal Services office in Hugo to pick one up. Application deadline is Oct. 31, 2015, for the 2016 year. Women will enjoy the fellowship with each other as well as learn many things to help them in their future. For more information, contact Joey Tom, Senior Director, or Melissa Cress, Director, at (877) 285-6893.

### APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Current address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**Ethnicity:**

- Hispanic  
 Latino

Please list your tribal affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

**Race:**

- American Indian/  
Alaskan Native  
 Asian  
 Black or African  
American  
 Native Hawaiian or  
Other Pacific Islander  
 White

**Gender:**

- Male  
 Female

List three things you expect to gain from being part of this program:

In order to benefit from this program you will be required to attend trainings/coaching sessions in the Broken Bow area. Some of the trainings/coaching sessions may be held during the day. Will your schedule allow time for this? If no please explain.

Is there any other reasons that you foresee that could prevent you from attending the required trainings?

Must provide copy of CDIB.

Applications must be received by: Oct. 31, 2015, to be eligible for the 2016 trainings.

Email or fax applications to: [emailcress@choctawnation.com](mailto:emailcress@choctawnation.com) or fax (580) 326-0115.

For more information contact Melissa Cress, Director, Choctaw Nation Outreach Services (580) 326-8304 ext# 6031.

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Photo Provided

**Members of Kulli Chito Presbyterian Church, Bethel, Choctaw Youth Advisory Board of Clayton, and members of Talihina Seniors Group gathered to construct a 20' X 20' Brush Arbor at In a Good Way Farm in Talihina. Not pictured: Clayton YAB group and Talihina Seniors.**

## Choctaw teamwork builds an arbor

Brush arbors are traditional Choctaw pavilion-type structures that provide shelter from the sun. The brush arbor at In a Good Way Farm will be used as a protective cover for the stage at the farm's annual gospel singing held each year. The arbor will also be available for use as an outdoor class room and for reunions, weddings, meetings, and revivals.

According to Irwin, “In addition to the members of Kulli Chito Church and the Choctaw Youth Advisory Board of Clayton, Talihina Seniors members, In a Good Way would like to thank Scott and Mona Medders, AB and Linda Burris, Monte Moore, Don Faulkner, Con Cusher, Mel Hair, Gregg, Stella, Timber, Allison, and Blake Brown, Terry Stout, District 3 Councilman Kenny Bryant, and former District 2 Councilman Tony Messenger.”

The annual gospel singing will be held this year at the farm on Saturday, Sept. 26, 2015, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. The event is free and the public is invited to come and sing or listen to the music. Local craftsman will be present to sell their crafts.

Additional shade will be available under portable covers but visitors are encouraged to bring a folding chair.

Tina Sims of Boswell will be sell Indian Tacos and drinks.

All arts and crafts vendors are invited to set up a table. No booth rental or commission is charged. All vendors must provide a table and chair and a sun covering. Contact Teddi Irwin at (918) 718-1302 to reserve a space (cell service is not dependable in the area but text and email [inagoodway@gmail.com](mailto:inagoodway@gmail.com) are alternative methods of communication).

### YOU'LL KNOW WE ARE CHOCTAW BY OUR Humanity

OUR ELDERS ARE OUR CULTURE. THEY ARE OUR TEACHERS, THE LINKS TO OUR PAST AND THE INSPIRATION FOR THE FUTURE. THE CHOCTAW NATION HAS SEVERAL PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHOCTAW ELDERS, INCLUDING THE ONES LISTED BELOW.

## Elders

**Nutrition Services:**  
800.522.6170 x 4016

**Farmers Market Nutrition Program for Seniors:**  
580.924.8280 x 2303

**Storm Shelter Program**  
800.235.3087

**Outreach Services:**  
918.567.3009

**Family Caregivers Program:**  
800.522.6170 x 2248

**Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP):**  
800.522.6170 x 2416

**Eyeglasses, Dentures and Hearing Aid Program (EDH):**  
580.924.9704

**Health Services**  
800.349.7026

**Diabetes Wellness Centers:**  
918.567.7000

**Wellness Centers:**

- Atoka: 580.889.1981
- BrokenBow: 580.584.2740
- Durant: 580.931.8643
- Hugo: 580.326.9422
- Idabel: 580.283.7381
- Talihina: 800.249.7026

### 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:

Poteau Community Center • September 25, 2015  
at  
9 a.m. - 11 a.m. & 1 p.m. - 2 p.m.

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma  
[choctawnation.com](http://choctawnation.com)

# Germany Chiropractic lifts off with help of Choctaw Nation

By BRANDON FRYE

Choctaw Nation

John Germany doesn't need much to make someone's life better, just a table and his hands.

He is a trained Doctor of Chiropractic and holds a deep understanding of the human body's skeletal, muscular, and nervous systems. With a little pressure in the right spots, Germany can help with many of the physical ills found in someone's body.

Germany, a 32-year-old Coleman native, spent more than seven years training and earning degrees to be able to open his independent Durant-based chiropractic business, Germany Chiropractic. It has been serving locals since the end of 2014.

"My purpose here is to help people," Germany said. "It's a hands-on approach to health, and I also get to reach a person on a more personal level."

Germany said clients come to him, not only with the common ailments like back and neck pain, but also needing help to be able to brush their hair without a shoulder hurting. Sometimes they want to be able to pick up a grandchild again, or want to be able to play 18 holes of golf without feeling like they ran a marathon.

"Pain impacts people in different ways," he said, "weakness, soreness, heartburn, headaches, a whole host of different sensations." And one of his goals is to help people get rid of such pain for good.

"People realize if they come here first, they can get their problem under control, rather than suppress the symptoms, but do nothing for the root cause."

Fixing bodily problems once they make themselves known is important, according to Germany. But, he believes proactively keeping the body healthy is just as, if not more, important.

This is why his service doesn't end at the table, but extends to include teaching and coaching his clients about living healthfully and mindfully – staying active, drinking enough water, holding themselves well, and so on. It's also why his business draws in athletes as clients, they aim to keep their bodies working at peak performance levels.

While working with a client, he looks for subluxations within the spine and joints—a point of misalignment, interference within the nervous system, like a kink in a water hose. These kinks can be caused by



John Germany pictured with a replica of the human spinal cord, a piece of anatomy at the core of chiropractic knowledge and practice.

daily life choices like bad posture, a sedentary job, or staring down at a phone too much. They can also be caused more noticeably by injuries and trauma.

A subluxation expresses itself in apparent ways, like when clients come in with pain, weakness, and soreness. It can also express itself more subtly with a



Germany gets hands-on, feeling out the spine and working out kinks.

part of the body not functioning properly, like with a lessened range of motion.

Nerves go through every organ of the body, and when a subluxation impedes a nerve, messages don't travel through the body as well and pain can be sent back to the brain.

Germany frees up these interferences and allows the body to heal itself. The body does all of the healing, he said, just like it does after getting a cut. Band-Aids and Neosporin do not heal wounds, they only help the body along. Germany's chiropractic

service similarly helps the body help itself.

To get to where he is now, Germany took advantage of services offered by the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO).

He received financial support as an undergraduate and doctoral student. He received support again when pursuing his certified chiropractic sports physicians certificate, a specialization in treating athletes. He saved money using the Choctaw Asset Building (CAB) service, which returned two dollars for every one dollar he saved in the effort of building up his business. He also worked with CNO Small Business Development Services, which helped him plan his business.

Billy Hamilton, manager of Small Business Development Services, said, "We provided one-on-one counseling, access to business training, marketing development, and access to networking opportunities."

Germany is still working with the Choctaw Nation to be able to better serve tribal employees, and accept their insurance. He said he is also looking for better ways to serve all Native Americans in need of chiropractic care, and is set up to offer a tribal member discount.

Anyone interested in finding better health—or as Germany puts it, "Getting back in the game, no matter what that game might be,"—can call Germany Chiropractic at (580) 380-4960 or visit 116 S. 21st Ave. in Durant, OK 74701.



Billy Hamilton (left) and Boyd Miller (right), both with the Choctaw Nation, stopped Oklahoma Secretary of State and Native American Affairs, Chris Bengé (middle), to hold a quick meeting after his speech during this year's The Gathering.

## Native business owners meet at second annual The Gathering

By BRANDON FRYE

Choctaw Nation

Choctaw entrepreneurs made their presence known at this year's biggest Native American business summit in Oklahoma: The Gathering.

The American Indian Chamber of Commerce of Oklahoma (AICCO) held its second business summit in Norman at the Riverwind Casino, beginning Aug. 9 and lasting three days.

The Gathering gives Native American tribes and businesses the opportunity to come together and share innovative ideas, promoting and enhancing the success of all American Indian people—especially citizens with entrepreneurial intentions.

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO) acted as silver sponsor for this year's event, while representatives from CNO manned booths and lead sessions.

Boyd Miller with the Choctaw Nation Preferred Supplier Program (PSP), and Vice President of AICCO, lead a number of sessions, as did Billy Hamilton with Choctaw Nation's Small Business Development Services (SBDS). And Dale Jackson, Senior Business Analyst with CNO, spoke to attendees to teach them about securing grants.

Miller's sessions focused on what the PSP can do to help both growing and established Native and minority businesses.

"We have valuable people out there we should be utilizing with the Choctaw Nation and other tribal nations," Miller said.

One of the purposes of the PSP is to help tribal nations contract Native businesses first when they need products or services. This is done with an official list of accredited PSP businesses, which tribal nations look to when they are contracting out, as well as a bid board allowing PSP businesses to bid on contracts.

A number of Choctaw-owned businesses made an appearance during The Gathering.

Shane Cessnun, owner of Country Medical Supply, tackled the need for better healthcare for Indian populations, especially for individuals with diabetes. He started his own medical equipment company four years ago, and has aimed it at helping citizens suffering from diabetes to stay healthy and avoid needing amputations due to preventable infections.

Kevin McMillan with Red Sky Total Solutions and Sean Burns with Summit Solar were both also in attendance.

Pam Mahar with Mahar Manufacturing runs two businesses. Creative Colors creates children's furniture kept playful with bright hues—Mahar donated some of her furniture to the CNO after the business summit. Mahar also leads 4Legs4Pets, which specializes in cots for lounging dogs and cats.

Mother and daughter Tami Adams and Sarah Adams-Cornell attended in representation of their family businesses Redland Sheet Metal. As the name implies, Redland Sheet Metal offers clean and simple sheet metal fabrication and installation for restaurants, as well as industrial, commercial, architectural, and residential needs. They are capable of working custom fabrication to fit the desires of their customers.

"The opportunities are in front of us, and we know they will keep coming as we continue to grow," Adams-Cornell said. "The networking opportunities at these events are spectacular. It takes a little bit of something to walk up to someone and stick your hand out, but the benefit of that is so worth it. It is what it takes to find success."

In addition to breakaway sessions, booths, and networking activities, The Gathering featured three key speakers.

The speakers included: Rose Hill, who founded Bank2, a community bank which opened in 2002 and is owned by the Chickasaw Nation; Osage businesswoman Margo Gray, owner of Margo Gray and Associates and active advocate for Native businesses; and Oklahoma Secretary of State and Native American Affairs Chris Bengé.

Bengé focused on building momentum between the State of Oklahoma, tribal nations, and Native American-owned businesses.

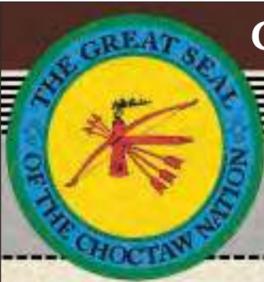
"There is an increasing interest in the Native American culture and history, I think this can build momentum," Bengé said. "As we walk away from this place, when you move on to your businesses, I would like to leave that particular word with you: momentum, which can be developed with the state and tribal nations."

Looking forward, Native entrepreneurs can plan on attending The Gathering next year, which will be held in Tulsa at the Hard Rock.

To learn more about the Choctaw-owned businesses mentioned in this article, visit, email, or call them at: Country Medical Supply, Shane Cessnun, shanecessnun@gmail.com, (903) 327-6515; Redland Sheet Metal, Sarah Adams-Cornell, sarah@redlandsheetmetal.com, (405) 673-7107; Mahar Manufacturing, Pam Mahar, pamla@mahar.net, (800) 224-8268.

Boyd Miller is available to assist Native or minority business owners interested in associating with the Choctaw Nation PSP. He can be reached at bmill@choctawnation.com or (800) 522 6170 extension 2889.

Choctaw business owners looking to start or grow their business are welcome to contact Billy Hamilton with SBDS at bhamilton@choctawnation.com or (800) 522 6170 extension 2901.



**Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma**

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**VETERANS ADVOCACY PROGRAM**

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**Veterans Day**

**November 11, 2015**

**Tvshka Homma**

**Begins at 10 a.m.**

**Includes lunch**

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

## LEARN THE CHOCTAW LANGUAGE

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Please use the available student checklist or call us for assistance.

800-522-6170 ext. 5163 for J. T.  
or ext. 2101 for Lillie

# Gospel Singing



The Bertram Bobb Chapel marked its first year after the official opening in August 2014.



District 6 Councilman Joe Coley leads the congregation during the gospel singing in the Chapel.



Darlene Watashe, Kellyville, and Nathan Benton Jr., Arkansas City, Kansas, take a break from the gospel singing outside the Chapel.

# Contemporary Christian Concert



The praise and worship group, One Day Ministry, performed during the Labor Day singing held at the Amphitheater on Sunday.



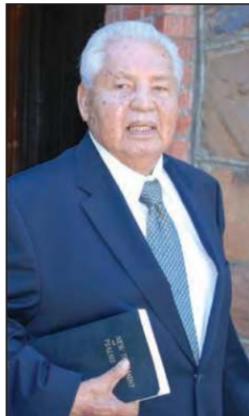
Christian rock band, Changing Lanes, of Soper, performed a few songs during the annual singing at the Amphitheater on Sunday afternoon.

Award-winning singer-songwriter Matt Maher brings his own brand of Contemporary Christian music to the stage Sunday. It was standing room only in the Amphitheater as Maher and his band performed new and classic hits on the balmy summer evening.



## Chaplain's Corner

# Josiah, King of Judah



Rev. Bertram Bobb Tribal Chaplain

We are going to study about the Bible that was lost and found. From the Book of 2 Kings 22:8: "And Hilkiyah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the Book of the Law..."

This text takes us back to the Old Testament kings, and at this particular time Josiah was the king, one of the best of all the Kings of Judah.

Josiah became king when he was only eight years old. The Bible tells us that when he was 16 years old he began to seek after God and at the age of 18, young Josiah began a national reformation, a turning back to God across the whole land, after he finds the long lost Book of the Law.

First, Josiah wanted to restore Solomon's temple at Jerusalem. The temple and its services of worship had been neglected for many years. It is hard to think that the nation would have allowed this beautiful temple to be filled with rubbish and left in a shameful condition.

But this was the case and we know why it was. The case was neglect and finally a setting aside of the Old Testament as the guide Book for the nation of Israel.

Workmen were hired for the cleaning and the repairing of the temple.

In the midst of the cleaning and the repairing, the high priest found a dust covered scroll which was called the Book of the Law - the laws of God given through Moses, in other words, Hilkiyah found the lost Bible of that time.

How could this happen we wonder? For a long-time the rulers, the priest and the people of Judah had no knowledge of their Bible which was called the Book of the Law.

This neglect resulted in the spread of the teaching of Baal throughout the land of Judah. It also caused the neglect of the temple and its services of worship of God. It also resulted in the nation sinking into a low moral condition.

This is going to happen to any individual or nation that forgets or neglects God's Word.

When Hilkiyah, the high priest, found the long lost scroll and saw that it was the Law of God as given to Moses, he brought it to Shaphan, the Scribe. Then Shaphan took the Book at once to King Josiah and said, "Hilkiyah,

the high priest, while he was cleaning the temple, found this Book."

"Read it to me!" commanded the King, and Shaphan began to read. Josiah, the King, was so surprised as he realized from the Word of God that his nation had departed from God in a terrible way. Then Josiah humbled himself in the dust.

"Reformation!" Josiah said, "shall begin with the King. The head of this nation will put himself in the dust and repent in sackcloth and ashes."

And then he said to all his officers and to those close to him, "We must repent for all our neglect, for all our sins, or the nation will be destroyed."

So REVIVAL began in Judah and the King and his people were spared. The lost Bible had been found and read and obeyed.

Josiah assembled leaders from all over the nation and read to them the long, lost Book of the Law. Their reaction was like that of the King. They were astonished, they were humbled and they were repentant when they realized how far the nation departed from the laws of God. They agreed with their young King, and they favored the full restoration of the temple and its worship of Almighty God. Not only did they do this but they decided to back Josiah in his campaign to wipe out every trace of Baal worship in the land and also all other forms of idolatry. Now idolatry means that which you worship, that is anything that comes between you and God. You may worship your earthly possessions, you may think of your wife or husband or children more than you do God, or you may think or depend on your money more than God, this is idolatry.

All of this reformation was brought about because the long, lost Book, the inspired Word of God was found.

This Old Testament record is a lesson of warning and encouragement for us. It shows what happens to people when they lose sight of God's Word and neglect the worship. But it also shows us the blessed results when people give God's Word and worship first place in their lives.

The sad truth is that many people have lost the Bible today even as it was lost in the time of Josiah. The Bible has been lost today through neglect.

Many have gone their ways, looking after their businesses, looking after the concerns and call of daily living and have lost this Book of the Law of God. Yes, the Bible is lost to many and may be lost to anyone by neglect.

The Bible may lie somewhere in the house, on the table or bookshelf, and weeks or even months may pass by and this Book of God is not

read. But neglect is not the only cause of the Scriptures being lost.

How else may the Bible be lost? It may be lost by substitution. That is, we may put other things in its place. Jesus said to the Scribes and Pharisees of His day: "Ye have made the commandments of God of none effect by your traditions."

The Scribes and Pharisees, who were teachers of religion, set aside the Bible, the law of God, the divine revelation of God to man. They set it aside by substituting it with human commandments, human traditions. If we put anything in the place of the Bible, then the Bible is lost.

This is not all. Many have and we all are in danger of losing the Bible by mutilation, by taking out a little here, and a little there. You cannot treat the Word of God like that. Modern theology says that the Bible contains the Word of God. They don't believe that the Bible is the Word of God, but they say it contains it. When they say this, they mean that if you can understand it, it is the Word of God to you, but if you can't understand it, or it doesn't sound rational, then you don't have to believe it. This is the reason the liberals reject the creation of man, the blood atonement, the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, all because they cannot understand it. God says for us to believe Him by faith. Abraham believed God and He counted it to him for righteousness. Hebrews 11:6:

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him"

I believe the Word of God, the Bible, from the very first Book to the last Book - Genesis to Revelation. I cannot understand it all and never will but I know what the Word of God says about Jesus Christ dying on the cross for my sins, and I know what He has done for me and He can change your life also.

The Word of God is the answer to your problems, it is the answer to your questions concerning spiritual or eternal life. Let us in every possible way magnify the Bible in every phase of our life, in our church, in our business and in our home life. Let us thank God continually for the Bible and do within all our power to cause this Book and its truths to go out to the ends of the earth. It is God's Word to a lost and needy world.

If you do not know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, the Bible tells you, "...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

Will you today, even right now, trust Jesus Christ as your own personal Savior, by faith?

Pray for America and our brave men and women in the armed forces.

## 2015 Bow Shoot Schedule

TVSHKA HOMMA CAPITOL GROUNDS

Oct 10

Registration, 10:30 ♦ Competition, 11:00

Long Bow |Recurve Bow|Selfbows |Handmade Bows |No Compound Bows  
CO-ED AGE GROUPS: 5 & under; 6-8; 9-13; 14-16; 17-19; 20 & over

SPECIAL EVENTS: Turkey Shoot, Nov. 14

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

# Youth Advisory Board



Aliyah Tomlinson displays her recycled art (a snail in the sun) with the help of Tyler Campbell and Tristan Gonzalez. The arts and crafts in the Youth Advisory Board tent this year all utilized recycled material collected by the Choctaw Nation.



Kelsey Janway prepares to place a temporary tattoo on the leg of Julia Burchetta, from Checotah.



Mother and daughter Sondra Harris and Jaden Lewis leave the YAB tent with a new rainmaker made with a paper towel roll.



Tyler Campbell places a temporary tattoo on the cheek of Jackson Pollard.

# Terrapin Races



Mother Clever and uncle Charles with Bailyn and Tatum under the YAB tent.



Brinley Mills, who placed 2nd in the age 3-7 competition, and Gracie Mattox, who placed 1st in 8-12, show off their racing turtles.



Jackson Pollard shows off the best dressed turtle this year, and Council Member Perry Thompson shows his support.



Sadie Jackman and Lizzy the turtle pose for a shot after competing in the best dressed turtle competition.



Sierra Williams Judd, 1st place winner in the young turtle races, stands with her father Nathan Williams, mother Alisha Williams, and brother Luke Williams.

# Healthy Living Expo



Raina Sparks, Registered Dietitian, explains the consequences of drinking full sugar soda, while holding five pounds of fat during the Healthy Living Expo.



Demi Moore won a bicycle during the Healthy Living Expo's prize giveaway. Sixteen Labor Day attendees, including children and adults, took home new bikes to help them live healthfully.



Megan Yahola peers out of the bus window during a Buffalo Tour.



Jordan James smiles with excitement during a Buffalo Tour this Labor Day Festival.

# Quilt Show



Peggy Newcomb won the Quilt Show and was honored with a People's Choice Award for her "Chahta Sia" quilt entered in the 2015 Labor Day Festival Quilt Show. Her dad, Jim Stark, passed down her Choctaw heritage to Peggy and her five siblings. Peggy said "The strong family and faith values he taught us has made us the people we are today. My mother, Dollie, always taught us, 'idle hands, encourages an idle mind.' Therefore, we girls would spend our summers learning to embroidery at a very young age, then garment sewing in the summers through 4-H. I did not start quilting until my retirement twelve years ago. I found a pattern while visiting Mt Rushmore, and quickly started designing this quilt, to honor my Choctaw heritage."



Traditionally-dressed dancers perform the Snake Dance.



Young Choctaw dancers head into the audience to grab spectators during the Stealing Partners dance.



One of the more athletic dances, the Raccoon Dance, involves participants chasing each other.

# Choctaw Village & Dancing



Kingston Billy with his dad, Jeremiah Billy, take a break in the Village.



Pat Espinoza and his great-grandson Austin Parks show off Austin's craftsmanship in the pottery exhibit.



Juanita Gonzalez helps young Tatum with a temporary tattoo.



The Village singers prepare to sing another hymn for the audience.

# Tvshka shines in stickball tourney MBCI takes home top trophy

By CHARLES CLARK  
Choctaw Nation

Home field favorite Tvshka Homma made it all the way to the semi finals in the 2015 Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's Labor Day Festival Stickball Tournament. The End.

By all accounts the Oklahoma team performed valiantly and boosted enthusiasm for the sport after a long, bruising weekend in the heat and games that lasted past midnight for the seven teams in the tourney bracket.

On Sunday, Sept. 6, shortly after 10 p.m., warm-ups began as the grandstands and sidelines populated with fans for the championship game between two teams from Mississippi, MBCI and Beaver Dam.

The field, big enough for a college football game, was brightened by moonlight and stadium lighting.

War hoops and drumbeats from nearly 100 players on the field recalled an ancient time.

"They are psyching themselves up," said announcer Olin Williams. Williams was sharing the booth with Folsom White, who resides a half-mile from the playing field. "First place is on the line. In the next hour the championship will be decided for the world's best stickball team."

At 10:35 p.m., the players slapped sticks and the contest was under way.

Less than 10 minutes into the game and MBCI had three points on the scoreboard, thanks to Bill Farmer, Milton Robinson, and Chad Johnson.

The top of a pole was smacked again, this time

by MBCI's Jimmy Fargo. Then, Trey Lilly, 5-0, MBCI.

An injury brought a medic onto the field with three minutes remaining in the first quarter. Within seconds play resumed. Josh Thomas made it 6-0, MBCI's favor as the players headed to the sides.

The fast-paced first quarter ended at 10:54 p.m., a lop-sided score.

"MBCI came to play," said an announcer wryly.

As the second quarter launched, it was clear Team Beaver Dam knew it couldn't hold back. For more than five minutes, Beaver Dam managed to keep control of the ball and had it flying by and bouncing off the post, but could not connect with the top three feet of sky blue paint.

"They got their horn in the game now," came over the speaker.

At 11:11 p.m., the second quarter ended scoreless. The red jerseys of Beaver Dam players were soaked with sweat, as were the camo-shirts of MBCI. But, Beaver Dam knew its game was amped up, and they were clearly anxious for the second half. MBCI felt a chink in their armor.

Shouts of "Keep it up" and "Stay hungry" came from pacing MBCI players.

The teams switched ends and the third quarter began with a ball toss that went the length of the field. The clatter of sticks from a knot of at least 40 players sent the ball shooting straight up, where it was picked up by a player and sent to the other end of the field. The back-and-forth by runners at full-speed was on.

Just over 10 minutes into the quarter, Beaver Dam's Daniel Bell hit the top of the post, for what would be the team's only point. Before the quarter was up, Bell was tossed from the game, a little too much enthusiasm shown on his part, for a flying tackle, sticks in hand.

The rest of the game was all MBCI. Final score, 9-1. MBCI played it tough at both ends of the field, as they say.

"It's been a good night and a good tournament," said an announcer.

"This is the best stickball you'll ever see," said the other.

And some of the best sportsmanship, you'll ever see.

Tvshka Homma presented the winning trophy. The hometown favorites mingled with the two finalists under the lights at mid-field as families and fans came out to congratulate all. Hugs, backslapping and handshakes, and plenty of laughter flowed with the sweat.

Since it was not written down and never stated over the speakers, this sports writer had to ask, "What does MBCI stand for?"

One player in a camo jersey said, with a tone that asked about my planet of origin, "Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians." He was kind enough not to add, "Duh."

But a teammate popped up behind him with, "Mostly Broke Choctaw Indians!"

More laughs. That, and the giant trophy will help make the ride back to Mississippi seem a little shorter.



This year's stickball champions, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.



Wesley Parkhurst keeps the mood light on the stickball field with a smile during one of the daytime games.

Coach Les Williston encourages his team, Tvshka Homma.



Tvshka Homma rally together after coming out of a quarter in the lead.



Kay Jackson and Joey Tom are recognized for their dedication to stickball and Choctaw culture during halftime of the Tvshka Homma vs. Beaver Dam game Sept. 4. From left, Sue Folsom, Kay Jackson, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., Joey Tom, and Chief Gary Batton. Folsom made the beaded medallions given to each.



Two stickball teams enter into a scrum during the stickball exhibition on the capitol lawn.



Meshach Taylor took first place in the youth ringer competition.



Chief Gary Batton watching team Tvshka Homma face off against Beaver Dam.



Tiffanie Burchfield placed first in the women's ringer competition.

## Horseshoes



(l-r) 2nd Place, Phyllis Bohanan; 1st Place, Amanda Ramirez; 3rd place, Kisha Bohanan. Winners of the women's singles horseshoes competition.



(l-r) 2nd Place, Michael Lindsey; 1st Place, Nicky Slaybaugh; 3rd place, Mike Mings. Winners of the men's singles horseshoes competition.

## Fast Pitch



The winning teams of the women's fast pitch softball tournament were the Tribal Sisters, coached by Tiffany Clay. The Tribal Brothers, coached by Michael Clay, won the men's fast pitch tournament.



(l-r) 2nd Place, Rance Lewallen; 1st Place, Meshach Taylor; 3rd place, Issac Simes. Winners of the youth singles horseshoes competition.



Mike Mings and Nicky Slaybaugh took home the first place award in the men's doubles horseshoes competition.



Kisha Bohanan and Tiffanie Burchfield took first place in the women's doubles horseshoes competition.

## Dominos



Jamie Scott took first place at the dominos tournament. Charles Burke placed second.

## Checkers



Jasen Baker placed first in the checkers tournament. Ernest Machorro took second place.

# Bow Shoot



Girls 8 and Under: (l-r) 3rd Place-Neveah Thomas; 2nd Place-Kyra Castaneda; 1st Place-Olivia Ellis.



Boys 8 and Under: (l-r) 1st Place-Riggin Lane Waugh; 2nd Place-Wyatt Kinslow; 3rd Place-Davison Wilson.



Girls 9 to 15: (l-r) 3rd Place-Journey Bell; 1st Place-Legend Bell; 2nd Place-Brandee Ann Talant.



Boys 9 to 15: (l-r) 1st Place-Michael Battinger; 2nd Place-Austin Ryan; 3rd Place-Tristen Ross.



Boys 16 and Over: (l-r) 1st Place-William Breshears; 2nd Place-Chase Zink; 3rd Place-Robert Breshears.



Women: (l-r) 3rd Place-Margaret Santhanam; 2nd Place-Christine Waugh and son Riggin; 1st Place-Ashley Ellis and daughter Naomi.



Men: (l-r) 1st Place-Joey Waugh; 2nd Place-Gary White; 3rd Place-David Edwards.

# Tough Tough



Tough Tough competitor Wayne Terry struggles with the 600-pound tire. Terry completed the full course after lifting the tire twice, the concrete ball, and the farmer's carry.



(l-r) 2nd Place - Roy "Mountain" Rogers; 1st Place Madison Perkins. (Not pictured) William Carter received the Fighting Heart Award.

# Volleyball



Second place - Diggers (l-r) Mitzi Groves-Doster, Leila Kaseca, Donya Battiest, Joe Thomas, Jeri Rice, Josh Carney, Ryan Johnson. Not pictured: Paulette Carney-Groves.



First place - Hit Squad (l-r) Tim Holt, Lori Hamilton, Sean Gentry, Michelle Holt, Micah Jones, and Paul Roberts. Not pictured: Javier Carreon, Jeff Madbull, and Misty Madbull.



Champion team Hit Squad in action, popping up the ball after a high volley.

# War Hoops



Choctaw youth face off on the basketball court on the Tvshka Homma capitol ground courts.



First in the 36+ competition: Tribal Brothers (l-r bottom) Assistant Chief Jack Austin, Jr., Chief Gary Batton, Chad Smith. (Top) Malcolm Smith, Michael Clay.



Sabrina Stanford, 1st place female, from Wilburton, 22:01.

# Fittest Choctaw



RX Male 1st Place: Payton Guthrie, 2nd Place: Caleb Taylor, 3rd Place: Kevin Tsosie



RX Female 1st Place: Meggan Taylor, 2nd Place: Cortney Hamill, 3rd Place: Cassie Tisho



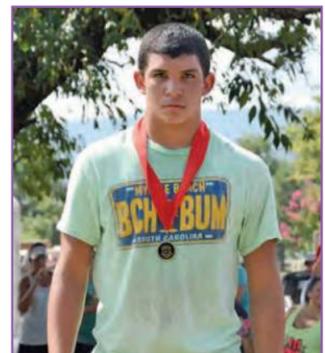
Samuel Young, 1st place male, from Poteau, 18:28.



Left: Masters Male 1st Place: Byron Smith



Right: Masters Female 1st Place: Leta Abbott 2nd Place: Tanna Winship



Teen 1st Place: Tray Pickett



Charlie Bearden of Caddo, poses with Chief Batton in front of the Chevrolet truck Charlie won after the State of the Nation Address.



Brittany Clark, Lena Clark, Sandy Thompson, and Barbara smile, nearing the end of their wait for lunch after the State of the Nation.



Amanda Martin and Edna Roberts wait in line for lunch, hidden from the sun under a tent.



(Top) Mary Dezuani, Donny McGuire, (bottom) Isabella Lewis, Peter Lewis, and Joseph Jones huddle together in line, waiting for lunch to be served.



Roy Kevin Clout and Chief Batton stand behind the new Ford Fusion, that Roy won during the prize drawing after the State of the Nation on Monday.

Labor Day photos by Charles Clark, Brandon Frye, Payton Guthrie, Kendra Germany, Ronni Pierce, Lisa Reed, Vonna Shults, and #ChoctawFest contributors.

# #ChoctawFest



3rd place! @shasha\_bushkahomma #ChoctawFest #brutalfest



Falle @ Senior Miss 2015 #Princess #ChoctawFest #2015



Michelle @MichelleNTucks We got rained on, pushed around, & almost sweat to death but it was worth it to see Reba & Chris Young #ChoctawFest 3:48 PM - 6 Sep 2015 - Oklahoma City, OK, United States



Baby is ready for #ChoctawFest 2015. #chahta



Brad Dorsey @kathybread Bumper cars! Crazy driver #ChoctawFest 4:22 PM - 7 Sep 2015



Finished my first 5k in just under 20 min. Ha more like 36 min but I finished! #5k #choctawfest #run.



#ChoctawFest #Tushkahoma2014 all she wanna do is ride #rides



Another pic from the awesome #ChoctawFest #goodtimes #oklahomafest #oklahomasummer



Kanda cruisin' with Elvis by the pool! #ChoctawFest



Mom & I with The Great Seal of the Choctaw Nation! #ChoctawFest @ Choctaw Nation Capitol Grounds



Malinda Smith @smihmoms #ChoctawFest @choctawnationOK 9:40 AM - 8 Sep 2015