



April 2018 Issue

Prime Minister of Ireland Visits Durant Taoiseach Varadkar Announces Scholarship Partnership



Irish Prime Minister, or Taoiseach Leo Varadkar addresses the audience during his visit to the Choctaw Nation on Monday, March 12, as (seated, from left) Choctaw Chief Gary Batton, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. and Lillie Roberts looks on. The Choctaw Nation was a stop on Taoiseach Varadkar's 10-day St. Patrick's tour. In addition to the Choctaw Nation, Taoiseach Varadkar visited Austin, Texas, Washington D.C. and concluded his tour in New York City at the St. Patrick's Day Parade.



Choctaw singers sing a Choctaw hymn at the end of the cultural program in honor of Taoiseach Varadkar.



Chief Gary Batton introduces Miss Choctaw Nation BreAnna Jefferson to Taoiseach Varadkar as (from left) Lillie Roberts, Little Miss Mya Thomas, Junior Miss Jade Cossey and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. visit.



Chief Gary Batton and Taoiseach Leo Varadkar try traditional Choctaw foods.

Photos by Stacy Hutto and Deidre Elrod

by STACY HUTTO

Three years ago the Choctaw Nation stepped onto the National stage with the visit of a sitting United States President.

On Monday, March 12, the Choctaw Nation stepped onto the world stage by hosting Ireland's Prime Minister, or Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar.

Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. started the program and welcomed special guests in the audience.

Guests included the Choctaw Nation Tribal Council Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin, Bryan County Commissioner Ron Boyer, Durant Mayor Jerry Tomlinson, Durant City Manager Tim Rundel, Durant Chief of Police David Houser, Durant Fire Chief Roger Joines, Durant Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Janet Reed, Durant Industrial Authority Interim Director Paul Buntz, City of Durant Attorney Tom Marcum, Southeastern Oklahoma State University President Sean Burrage and United States Attorney Eastern District of Oklahoma Brian Kuester.

Assistant Chief Austin then introduced the 47th Chief of the Choctaw Nation, Chief Gary Batton.

Chief Batton and Taoiseach Varadkar met privately when Taoiseach Varadkar arrived at the Choctaw Nation.

When Chief Batton took the stage he mentioned Taoiseach Varadkar had traits similar to the Choctaw people. "He is very humble, he is very quiet, but yet he carries himself well," Chief Batton said.

"Our nations have shared a similar history of tragedy, perseverance and strength. That is why I believe we have the kindred spirit of caring for others and the hope and belief we can make a positive difference in our people and in the world," said Chief Batton.

He then thanked Taoiseach Varadkar for making the journey to the Choctaw Nation and said the nation was honored to have him as a guest.

Chief Batton then welcomed Taoiseach Varadkar to the podium.

Taoiseach Varadkar began by saying, "Halito Miko Batton. Durant e la ka pikanvt hvsh piaiokpachi ka, chj yakoke li," which means "Hello Chief Batton. I thank you for your warm welcome to Durant."

He then thanked the Choctaw Tribal Council and the ladies and gentlemen in the audience for the warm welcome he and his team received and for making them feel so much at home.

"It's such an honor to be here on my first St. Patrick's trip to the United States as Taoiseach," Varadkar said.

He went on to explain Taoiseach is the Irish word for chief and is the term they

use to describe the head of their government, as do the Choctaw.

Taoiseach Varadkar spoke about the ties between Ireland and the Choctaw Nation.

He said he was captivated by the story and that it was one of the oldest connections the Irish have with America. He also said it is memorialized in Irish history books and has been commemorated on many occasions.

"For me, I think the story of our two peoples, the Irish people and the Choctaw people, symbolizes the spirit of St. Patrick, our patron saint, perhaps better than anything else," Taoiseach Varadkar said.

He continued, "Back in the 19th century, when the Irish people were oppressed, abused, neglected, degraded and starving, when we were at our lowest point your spirit of generosity was at its highest. You showed compassion to a starving people who were dying in the hundreds of thousands, about to embark on their own Trail of Tears across the Atlantic Ocean to seek a new life in the United States or in Canada."

Taoiseach Varadkar said a Choctaw visitor to Ireland a few years ago called the support of the Irish a sacred memory. Taoiseach Varadkar felt it was that and more.

He said it was a sacred bond that joined our people together, he hoped for all time.

Taoiseach Varadkar said the impact goes beyond the lives saved those many years ago.

"It is seen in the way it makes them think about fellow human beings when they are suffering and in distress.

It makes them look outward as people and as nations. It reminded them of the value of compassion and encouraged them to become a beacon of hope around the world," he said.

Taoiseach Varadkar said those principles are the principles that guide their foreign policy today. Whether it is their peacekeepers serving with the United Nations or the work of their aid agencies around the world.

"I have not come today to just thank the Choctaw people for their generosity 171 years ago. We are united in wanting a future that is safe and secure, prosperous and equitable, fair and just, where people from different backgrounds and different perspectives can work together to solve problems that cannot be solved alone," said Taoiseach Varadkar.

"Through diversity comes strength. And through unity comes courage. And through endeavour comes hope," continued Taoiseach Varadkar.

"Today we are going to hear Choctaw music and Irish music. Different tradi-

tions reflecting a shared passion for the arts and culture. And also our peoples who share a mutual love of sport. We also share a real commitment to education. As the best means of building a better life for all of our children," he said.

"And with that in mind I am delighted to announce today that we are establishing a new scholarship program. It will be a partnership between the government of Ireland and the Choctaw Nation for Choctaw students to study in Ireland," Taoiseach Varadkar said.

"It is an opportunity for us to learn from you and your culture and you from ours. It is a sharing of knowledge that will enrich both our peoples. The first scholarship will commence in the fall of 2019 and I think it will add a new and lasting dimension to the relationship between our two peoples," continued Taoiseach Varadkar.

"Our ancestors were joined together in a time of tragedy and now their descendants will be joined together in the spirit of learning and hope," Taoiseach Varadkar concluded.

After Taoiseach Varadkar announced the new scholarship and thanked those in attendance Assistant Chief Austin once again stepped up to the podium and introduced Lillie Roberts, who told the story of how the bond between the Irish people and the Choctaw Nation began.

The friendship between the Choctaw Nation and Ireland started 171 years ago in 1847.

A potato famine, which was caused by a series of crop failures due to blight, killed over 1 million people in Ireland and forced millions more to flee the country.

Choctaw families identified with the anguish and heartache of the Irish as they were still rebuilding and recovering from the Trail of Tears 16 years earlier.

Choctaws reached deep and collected \$170 to donate to families in Ireland through a philanthropist named Mynrdert van Schaick, who led the General Irish Relief Committee in New York City.

The money was then given to the Society of Friends in Dublin, Ireland, which had been established in 1846, after the first potato blight.

The Society of Friends worked with the Quakers to provide direct support to Irish families in the form of cash, fuel, seeds, blankets and soup kitchens.

Many religious organizations helping wanted something in return for their donation whether it was labor, school attendance, a verbal conversion, baptism, or other requests. Aid was conditional.

The Quakers helped families in need unconditionally. This unconditional charity likely appealed to the Choctaw people, who had suffered so greatly in

the years leading to removal, during the Trail of Tears and during recolonization.

This single act of compassion to seeming strangers some 4,300 miles across the Atlantic Ocean united two nations, forging a bond to last for generations.

After Roberts told the story of how the Irish and Choctaw Nation forged a lasting bond, Assistant Chief Austin spoke about a scholarship offered through the Chahta Foundation.

The Saint Patrick of Ireland Scholarship was established in 2016 and is the result of donations given to the Chahta Foundation by Allison and Gerald Mulvey. This scholarship was established to commemorate the Choctaw Nation's outreach to the starving people of Ireland in 1847.

"The Saint Patrick of Ireland scholarship is but one more step in remembrance. As educators the Mulveys recognize the power of education and the need for more scientists, engineers and mathematicians. Particularly those resulting efforts are focused on the welfare of the Nation," Assistant Chief Austin said.

"After meeting the first scholarship recipient last year and talking with several tribal members, the Mulveys recognize the mindset of the Choctaw people as focusing on returning value to the nation. They decided it was time to fully fund the scholarship that bares the name of the patron saint of Ireland with a \$50,000 donation."

After the announcement by Assistant Chief Austin the packed audience listened to traditional songs from the Choctaw Nation and Ireland.

Presley Byington played a Choctaw flute he had made, which he then handed to Chief Batton, who later presented the flute to Taoiseach Varadkar.

Ireland and Declan Harbor performed an Irish song, "An Chailín Álainn," accompanied with a bodhrán.

Children from the Choctaw Nation Child Development Center demonstrated the Choctaw words they are learning and the Choctaw social dancers demonstrated traditional Choctaw dances.

Chief Batton presented Taoiseach Varadkar with a set of stickball sticks and a towa, or ball. Members of the stickball team Tvshka Homma demonstrated how to use the sticks and Taoiseach Varadkar caught the ball to thunderous applause.

Taoiseach Varadkar presented Chief Batton with a set of hurley sticks and a bodhrán.

Chief Batton encouraged Taoiseach Varadkar to try traditional Choctaw foods and visit the tables displaying traditional clothing, jewelry and pottery.

E E 2

Spring is a Busy Time of Year for Choctaw Nation



Chief Gary Batton

by a group of Choctaws who figuratively reached out to a country over 4,000 miles away in their time of need.

It was such an honor to host Prime Minister Varadkar and the delegation that came with him. Our nations have shared a similar history of tragedy, perseverance and strength.

We have a kindred spirit of caring for others and I hope and believe we can make a positive difference in our people and in the world.

The donation by the Choctaw people to Ireland was only \$170, some people might say. It was much more than that.

It was dollars and change gathered by a group of Chahta people who had been reduced by thousands as they were displaced from their homeland a mere 15 years before they heard of the Great Famine also killing hundreds of thousands of people.

The amount sent from the Choctaw Nation to Ireland in 1847 would be close to \$5,000 today. It was the difference in life and death to many. The Irish people, too—those who were still healthy enough—were having to leave their homeland to make new homes in countries strange to them; yet, they were countries that offered them hope.

We've been told by a young man from Ireland that he grew up hearing about the Choctaw people on his grandmother's knee.

The story of the donation is much more widely known in Ireland. It was very evident at the dedication of the *Kindred Spirits* monument in Middleton last year—a monument forged by the hands of a sculptor who wanted to commemorate the generosity of the Choctaw people.

Kindred Spirits was placed in a small, beautiful park in the town of Middleton, County Cork, Ireland. People there told of their ancestors who were recipients of the food provided by the donation.

Hunger, disease and death influenced the directions of the Choctaw and the Irish. I can't

imagine how they felt as they traveled under horrible weather conditions, barely any food, no one to help.

The Trail of Tears had to still be strong in the memories of the Choctaw people when they made the donation. They knew too well what the Great Famine was causing and wanted to help.

It is beyond my imagination to grasp how terrible the conditions were—so terrible that the \$170 from the Choctaw people meant so much it is legendary in Ireland.

The story isn't known here as well, and I imagine it is because the original people of this land are the only ones who can truly understand.

On May 19, we will hold our annual Trail of Tears Walk at Tvshka Homma to commemorate the relocation of our ancestors who traveled from Mississippi to Indian Territory. It is a time to focus on what they did for us with every step they took, every tear they shed, and every life mourned. We honor those who died during the removal and we honor those who survived. Chahta sia hoke!



by Stacy Hutto

During the visit by Ireland's Prime Minister, Choctaw Head Start students demonstrate Choctaw words they are learning as Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and Chief Gary Batton watch.

Spring is such a wonderful time of renewal. As the warmer days guide nature around us to awaken, the Choctaw Nation continues to celebrate faith, family and culture.

The fourth annual Easter Celebration was held March 10 at Tvshka Homma. It was a day filled with family activities.

The Choctaw Nation Royalty signed the Lord's Prayer for everyone on the Council House lawn, leading into Employee Chaplain Olin Williams' Easter message that is always a great reminder of what Easter is truly about.

There also were youth league stickball games, Easter egg hunts for the kids and the elders, photos with the Easter bunnies, which is definitely enjoyed by all ages, lunch, and fellowship everywhere on the Capitol grounds.

Another highlight during March was the visit by Ireland's Prime Minister Leo Varadkar. The link between our nations has withstood 171 years since a selfless act made

April Honors Choctaw Women



Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.

April ushers in Easter, rains and the first full month of spring. It signifies renewal and hope. Choctaw tradition also refers to April as Tek i Hvshi or "Month of the Woman."

Culturally we are a matriarchal society. Before European settlement in southeastern North America, women were held in high esteem and wielded positions of power among Choctaws.

Today, our mothers, grandmothers and great-grandmothers nurture us, teach us, and still have a strong influence in carrying on Choctaw traditions.

Even our language has grown with meaningful references because of the role of women. The Choctaw word *hollo* refers to the "feminine essence." From that comes *holitopa* or holy; *hullochi*, to sanctify; even *ihollo*, meaning to love.

Nvnihi Waiya, perhaps the most sacred place for early Choctaws, was *Holitopa Ishki*, which translates to Beloved Mother.

The concept of Mother Earth was integral in Choctaw belief. Women, like Earth, were viewed as the providers and sustainers of life itself.

Early Choctaw women held vital roles in their tribe, communities and their families. It is no different today. As we move into spring 2018, the Choctaw Nation employs 5,531 women, more than half of the tribe's total employees.

At Tvshka Homma, a permanent statue stands in honor of former tribal councilwoman, Charlotte Jackson. The full-size statue was the first female statue in the garden.

Charlotte, often described as a selfless woman, was well known for her dedication to others and to the Choctaw Nation. The statue shows Charlotte with a young female child, both honoring the spirit of women.

That spirit is strong in our young girls learning to compete on the stickball field. It is strong as they set goals to reach beyond what was expected for their mothers; and it is strong as they become a mother, holding their newborn for the first time and already planning a better future for their child.

The Choctaw Nation has programs that primarily focus on the needs of individual women and women with children, including Choctaw Nation Better Beginnings; Women, Infants and Children (WIC); Child Care Assistance; Head Start; Chi Hullo Li, a residential treatment facility; Support for Expectant and Parenting Teen Program; Project EMPOWER and EMPOWER 2; and Project SAFE.

Many more serve a large number of women: Adult Education; Higher Education scholarship program; Career Development; Nutrition Services; Behavioral Health; and Wind Horse Counseling Program; as well as health and wellness facilities throughout the Choctaw Nation.

A good place to find what may be available is your local Choctaw Nation Community Based Social Work Program. For a listing, check the website, www.ChoctawNation.com or call (580) 924-8280, or toll-free (800) 522-6170.

Yakoke to all the women who have helped shape us to be a caring, strong family of Chahta people.



A statue of former tribal councilwoman Charlotte Johnson with a young girl stands in the garden at Tvshka Homma.

BISKINIK

April TEK I HVSHI

2018

month of the women

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Irish Prime Minister, or Taoiseach Leo Varadkar stopped at Choctaw Nation during his first St. Partick's visit to the United States as Taoiseach. The visit strengthened the bonds between the Choctaw Nation and Ireland as Taoiseach Varadkar announced a scholarship for Choctaw students to study in Ireland.

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

Stay Connected. ChoctawNation.com features access to information about tribal history, culture, news, services, government, businesses, applications and contacts. The Choctaw Nation's official publication, the BISKINIK, is available to tribal members by mail and archived editions are on ChoctawNation.com.

www.facebook.com/ChoctawNationofOklahoma

www.twitter.com/ChoctawNationOK

www.instagram.com/ChoctawNationOK

www.youtube.com/ChoctawNationOK

If You're A Choctaw Veteran, We Want You.

Tell us your story for a video library. Send your information to the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Veterans Advocacy. veteransadvocacy@choctawnation.com

Contact Roger Hamill
Deputy Director
(800)522-6170 ext. 2160

Okla Chahta Clan of California, Inc.

presents

Twenty-Third Annual Choctaw Gathering

"Honoring Our Past"

May 5-6, 2018

Pyle's Boy Camp

13375 Lake Ming Road, Bakersfield, CA

- Saturday dinner provided
- Learn/play stickball
- Traditional dancing
- Traditional games

Choice Hotel:

Marriott Convention Center

801 Truxtun Ave., Bakersfield, CA

661-323-1900

Choctaw Rate: \$100 per night

www.Facebook.com/OklaChahtaClan • 661-319-6308 • tharrison@oklachahta.org

Choctaw Nation

Agriculture Outreach

presents a hands-on

PECAN GRAFTING WORKSHOP

APRIL 26, 2018

Choctaw Farms

Red River West

To RSVP, Contact Nikki Schuth-Mitchell
580.924.8280 Ext. 2987

Tomorrow's Hope Promotes Suicide Prevention

by WAYNE A. BURDEN

Welcome to the wonders of spring from the Tomorrow's Hope Program. What an awe-inspiring time of year it is. The darkness of winter with its dull grays and browns is giving way to vibrant greens and the beautiful blooms of flowers. However, for some people in our communities spring does not represent for them a newness of life. For these, perhaps trapped in either mental states or situations, the season can cause anxiety and may eventually lead to depression.

If the spring is not a time of hope for you please know that services are readily available at Choctaw Nation Behavioral Health. There are Licensed Professional Counselors at each of our eight clinics as well as Integrated Licensed Counselors located in the Choctaw Nation Hospital. If you find yourself not comfortable speaking to a counselor, seeking someone to talk to such as a family member, close friend or pastor would be a great place to start. Whomever you chose to speak with outside of the counseling field, make sure they have your best interest at heart and are able to keep your conversations private and confidential.

For those that chose to welcome the hope and challenges of spring, you also have an additional responsibility. In some instances, you might be the only light for some people to see. For others to witness your ability to be positive you are influencing and encouraging others around you. Faith is an important aspect of our Choctaw Culture. In the gospel of Matthew the author writes, "That those that have a candle you should light it and place it on a candle stick to give light to all who are in the house." Understanding that the light the author speaks of is the same concept as the light they witness in you. It is our responsibility as humans to bring the light to those around us. With this, we make the world a brighter place to live. Who knows maybe along the way you touched a person's life not knowing it but by simply being who you are.

Within Choctaw Nation, there is a strong sense of community. We understand the need for all of us to edify, or lift up each other from time to time. We are stronger together. It is our desire that no one feels alone. Inside our culture, there is help available to give one hope wherever they are in life. To that extent, if you see someone in need please extend to him or her a helping hand.

From all of us at Choctaw Nation Tomorrow's Hope Program our wish is that the New Year brings with it more than just hope for tomorrow but that it brings hope for 365 tomorrows.

Suicide can be preventable! If you or someone you know is at risk, call the national lifeline at 1 (800) 273-TALK (8255). With help comes hope.

"This newspaper article was developed, in part, under grant number 5H79SM062902-03 from SAMHSA. The views, opinions and content of this publication are those of the authors and contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or policies of CMHS, SAMHSA, or HHS, and should not be construed as such."

NURSERY NEWS

Jack Owen Boehm



Jack Owen Boehm was born Feb. 12, 2018. He weighed 6 pounds 9.8 ounces and was 19 inches long.

Jack is the son of Dallas Boehm and Abby Sides Boehm of Portland, Texas.

He is the first grandchild of Teddy Boehm and Carla Weide Boehm, Beth Synder Jones, and Patrick Sides and Nettie Cocek Sides. He is the great-grandson of Norma

Cook Haskins and Bo Haskins, and Cheryl Crenshaw Coronel and Tony Coronel. Jack is the great-great-grandson of Thomas Goins and Dona Pyle Goins.

Midland Jackson Strange



Midland Jackson Strange was born Jan. 4, 2018, at Choctaw Indian Hospital in Talihina at 11:07 a.m. He weighed 6 pounds 5 ounces and was 20 inches long.

Midland is the son of Trey Strange and Courtney Culley of Hugo, Oklahoma. He was greeted by his big sister Madeleine, 2.

He is the grandson of LaDonna Workman, Mike and Sheila Strange

of Talihina, and Portia and Chris Wickware of Arpela, Oklahoma. Midland is the great-grandson of Duane and Dorothy Strange of Yanush, Oklahoma, Sally and J.R. Denton of Clayton, Oklahoma, and the late Meredith Jackson of Clayton.

Alfred "Trey" Martinez III



Alfred Martinez III, lovingly called Trey, was born on Nov. 9, 2017, at the Chickasaw Hospital in Ada, Oklahoma. Trey weighed 8 pounds 6 ounces and was 20 inches long.

He was welcomed into the world by his parents, Alfred and Brandolyn Martinez.

Trey has three proud siblings brother, Braydon, sisters, Madysin and Alyxzandra who were

excited to welcome him to the family.

Trey is the grandson of Paula Talley. He is the great-great-grandson of William Isaac, who was an original enrollee in the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

Logan Kelly Anderson



Logan Kelly Anderson was born on St. Patrick's Day, March 17 at 11:53 p.m. He weighed 7 pounds 14 ounces and was 20 inches long.

Logan is the son of David Daniel Anderson (Choctaw), Bobbi Anderson (Chippewa) of Sarasota, Florida.

He is the grandson of Rev. Dr. David W. Anderson (Choctaw) and Colleen Bailey Anderson, Alan Digiovanni, and

Kimme Pope (Chippewa). Logan is the great-grandson of Hampton W Anderson Jr. (Choctaw) and the late Mary E. Anderson. He is the great-great-grandson of Original Choctaw enrollees, the late Rev Hampton W. Anderson and Tessie Arbuckle Anderson.

Recipe of the Month

Cheesy Broccoli & Potato Soup



Recipe by Carmen Robertson

Ingredients

- 3-pound bag potatoes peeled, diced
- 2 cups chopped broccoli
- ½ cup diced red onion
- ½ cup diced celery
- ½ cup diced carrots
- 2 cups milk
- ½ cup shredded cheese
- 2 tsp butter
- ½ - 1 cup instant potato flakes (to thicken)
- Salt & pepper to taste

Preparation

1. In large pot sauté butter, onions, carrots and celery.
2. Add potatoes, cover with water and bring to a boil.
3. Add broccoli, milk and cheese.
4. Use instant potato flakes to thicken soup.
5. Salt and pepper to taste

Nutrition Facts:

Servings 6
Serving size 226 grams

(per serving)
Calories 182, Total Fat 4 grams, Trans Fat 0 grams, Cholesterol 16 milligrams, Sodium 402 milligrams, Total Carbohydrates 26 grams, Dietary Fiber 3 gram, Sugars 6 grams, Protein 11 grams, Vitamin A, 30 percent, Vitamin C, 59 percent, Calcium, 28 percent and Iron 4percent.

For further information, you may contact Choctaw Nation Nutritionist Carmen Robertson (800) 522-6170 ext. 2733, email crobertyson@choctawnation.com, or go to a Cooking with Carmen demonstration.

Location	Days	Hours
Antlers 580-298-3161	Every Tue.	8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Atoka 580-889-5825	Mon. Wed., Thurs. & Fri.	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Battiest 580-241-5458	1st & 2nd Tue. Every Month	8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Boswell 580-380-2518	1st Thurs. Every Month	8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Broken Bow 580-584-2746	Daily Mon. - Fri.	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Coalgate 580-927-3641	1st Wed. of Every Month	8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Durant 580-920-2100 x 83517	Daily Mon - Fri.	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Hugo 580-326-5404	Daily Mon. - Fri.	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Idabel 580-286-2510	Daily Mon. - Fri.	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
McAlester 918-423-6335	Daily Mon. - Fri.	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Poteau 918-649-1106	Daily Mon. - Fri.	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Smithville 580-244-3289	1st Thurs. Every Month	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Spiro 918-962-5134	Wed., Thurs. & Fri.	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Stigler 918-867-4211	Mon. & Tue.	8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Talihina 918-567-7000 x-6792	Mon., Tue., Wed. & Fri.	8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Wilburton 918-465-5641	Every Thursday	8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

NATIONAL
SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE
1-800-273-TALK (8255)
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline toll-free number, 1 (800) 273-TALK(8255) connects the caller to a certified crisis center near where the call is placed. If you need or someone you know is at risk, do not hesitate to call.

3

Choctaw Nation partners with the Chickasaw Nation to bring the program: Summer EBT for Children Apply Now!

STUDENTS RECEIVING
FREE AND REDUCED SCHOOL MEALS
MAY QUALIFY FOR FREE FOOD THIS SUMMER!
APPLICATION DEADLINE IS JUNE 1, 2018.

To apply online, go to www.Chickasaw.net/SummerEBT.
To apply over the phone, call (580) 272-1178 or (844) 256-3467 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday-Friday).

This federally-funded program is open to both Native American and Non-Native students. Qualifying families will receive an EBT card (works like a debit card) that allows you to purchase healthy food for the summer.

- To qualify for Summer EBT for Children, your child must meet the following requirements:
- Be enrolled in a participating public school district in grades pre-K (4 year old program)-12th grade for the 2017-18 school year
 - Be eligible to receive free or reduced meals at school
 - Participation in this program will not impact any government assistance you and your child currently receive.
 - Information provided by you on the consent form, or any records obtained for this program, will be kept confidential as allowed by law, and will be used only for this project.
 - Once approved, Summer EBT cards will be mailed to the address you provided, along with a list of participating stores and a food card shopping list that will help you identify approved food items.

To learn more, call (580) 272-1178 or (844) 256-3467 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Summer EBT for Children is an initiative of the Chickasaw Nation. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. This material is based upon work that is supported by the Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR A CHILD

We support our foster resource families every step of the way with:

- Comprehensive training and support
- One-on-One relationship with your Foster Care worker
- Extensive resources through the Choctaw Nation

INTERESTED?
CONTACT KAT DECAIRE AT
KDECAIRE@CHOCTAWNATION.COM
OR (580) 924-8280 EXT. 2643

FOSTER CARE PROGRAM

CHOCTAW NATION FOOD DISTRIBUTION

WAREHOUSES & MARKETS
Open 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
Thursday: 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Antlers: 400 S.W. "O" St., (580) 298-6443
Broken Bow: 109 Chahta Road, (580) 584-2842
Durant: 2352 Big Lots Pkwy, (580) 924-7773
McAlester: 3244 Afullotta Hina, (918) 420-5716
Poteau: 100 Kerr Ave, (918) 649-0431

May 2018

ANTLERS
Market open weekdays May 1-31, except for:
Closed: May 28, 29, 30 & 31.
Cooking with Carmen: May 1 & 14, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

BROKEN BOW
Market open weekdays May 1-31, except for:
Closed: May 28, 29, 30 & 31.
Cooking with Carmen: May 11 & 21, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

DURANT
Market open weekdays May 1-31, except for:
Closed: May 28, 29, 30 & 31.
Cooking with Carmen: May 4 & 10, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

MCALESTER
Market open weekdays May 1-31, except for:
Closed: May 28, 29, 30 & 31.
Cooking with Carmen: May 3 & 18, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

POTEAU
Market open weekdays May 1-31, except for:
Closed: May 28, 29, 30 & 31.
Cooking with Carmen: May 7 & 17, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Spiro Hoop House Food Demo: May 9, 23 & 30, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

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This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Above: Senior Executive Officer Teresa Jackson assisted in the festivities. She is seen here serving (left to right) Jenaro Lujano, Danielle Enriquez and Jax Mendenhall.

Right: Jana Christian shows Gabriela Bernal how to properly use a fork and knife.

Below: Truvon Willis, Alexis Lyons and Cruz Ortiz learn the intricacies of buttering bread.



Jones Students Receive a Lesson in Dining Etiquette for Leaders

by David Sanchez

The author of the website UniversalClass begins an essay on proper manners and decorum with, "Some people argue that etiquette no longer matters, that the rules for good behavior are old-fashioned and outdated. However, good behavior and manners are never out of style."

Mid-February, students of Jones Academy celebrated Valentine's Day with a formal dinner and a lesson in etiquette. Guest speaker Jana Christian, president of the Etiquette School of Oklahoma, made the trek from Tulsa and gave a presentation on the guidelines of social graces and good manners.

She reminded students of the Jones Academy mission to "cultivate Native American leaders for the world." She conveyed to them that if Jones Academy students were indeed destined to go into the world, it is vital they know how to conduct themselves graciously in social settings, both formal and informal.

Politeness, propriety and appropriate dining form will be expected of them as productive

and influential individuals. The Valentine Dinner was a wonderful introduction to practicing good etiquette.

Christian guided the students through the intricacies of polite behavior and protocol during the dinner. She showed the young men how to stand when a lady approaches the table and how to assist her with her seating. She carefully explained the meaning of table settings, how to break and butter bread, the subtleties of sipping soup, the differences between American and Continental dining styles and the non-verbal communication of resting and finishing a meal.

Christian even clarified how a diner uses the napkin appropriately. The proper way to use a napkin is to dab the corners of the mouth and never wipe.

It was an old-fashioned, but timely lesson on the courtesies that often seem ambiguous or unimportant.

Christian presented a valuable message on the importance of thinking of others before meeting one's own needs. It was certainly food for thought as our young leaders prepare themselves for the wider sphere of their futures.

Code Talkers in France, Again

Tiajuana King Cochnauer will present, Telling Our Own Story: Choctaw Code Talkers, at an international conference in Reims, France, in April.

This location is near the World War I battlefields where the 19 young Choctaws from Oklahoma were tasked to communicate military messages in Choctaw. Their messages confounded the German army because they could not translate the Choctaw messages. As a result of their successful efforts in October 1918, they later became known as the original Code Talkers.

Tiajuana, a professional heritage and environmental interpreter, is a Certified Interpretive Guide through the National Association for Interpretation. She will leave Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma flags, provided by the Choctaw



Nation, at the battlefields where these Choctaws fought. Included in her presentation will be a video clip of young Luke Clay of Rattan, Oklahoma, who portrays his great-great-grandfather, Tobias Frazier, one of the original Code Talkers. Her international audience will also learn how the Code Talkers Association and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma are honoring and recognizing the contributions of these first Code Talkers.

Tiajuana is the Dyer, Labor, King and Cochnauer families' historian and is a registered Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma artist. She has a Special Collections of Choctaw and family material begun at the Oklahoma History Center in Oklahoma City.

She is donating a quilted wall hanging of the Code Talkers to their Association as a fundraiser. She resides in Aiken, South Carolina.



Talihina Elementary One of Ten Finalists for POE Excellence in Education Award

The Professional Oklahoma Educators Foundation announced recently that Talihina Elementary School under the leadership of Elementary Principal Kathy M. Anderson is one of ten state finalists for the 2017-2018 prestigious POE Foundation Excellence in Education School Character Award.

The Excellence in Education Award recognizes Oklahoma educators who demonstrate a commitment to their students in teaching strength of character and excellence in the classroom.

The prestigious award is bestowed on a school that purposefully encourages the development of character in students by teaching, recognizing and praising character development.

Elementary Principal Kathy Anderson commented, "We are so very proud that our students have been recognized for their outstanding character qualities and appreciate the dedication and commitment of our staff for instilling and encouraging these traits".

According to Anderson, this exemplary honor is also a reflection of the support of our administration, faculty, businesses, organizations, churches, and community that have helped support and promote our youth in their educational activities and endeavors.

Talihina is one of ten state finalists for the award. The other finalists are Western Heights High School, Eisenhower High School-Lawton, Webber Falls Elementary, Cleveland Elementary-Norman, Bennington High School, Deer Creek High School, Elgin Middle School, Madill Middle School, and Singleton Elementary-Arkoma.

A film crew visited the elementary school and also conducted an interview with Anderson as the final evaluation tool for the award. The winner will be announced at the Professional Oklahoma Educators Foundation Excellence in Education Banquet on April 13 in Oklahoma City.

Kathy is the daughter of former educators Ruthie Anderson and the late Kenneth G. Anderson. She is the maternal granddaughter of an original enrollee, full blood Alice (Billy) Bacon and paternal granddaughter of 5/8 Choctaw Bethel Anderson.



Antlers Head Start Conducts Clothes Study

The Antlers Choctaw Nation Head Start class is learning about a "Clothes Study." One of the weeks unit is studying about what uniforms firefighters wear at work. Antlers Fire Chief Delbert Gay talked to the students about the fire truck and ambulance. He let the students try on the protective uniform of the firefighters wear. Lastly, the children took pictures with Fido, the fire dog. The next week's study is about clothes around the world. Thank you, firefighters for the coloring book, tour and bracelet.



Left to Right: Liz Washburn, Ridge Rosenthal, Ryker Rosenthal, Trenton Merck, Kylee Langley, Kamdryn O'Neill, Armony Scrivner, Aspen Bishop, Rhett Brown, Case Fowler, Conner Merck, Audree Cole, Rifel Murray, Caylee Autry, Brooklyn Bates, Brooklyn Onstott, Ms. Ginger Sheaffer, Candida Shilling and Jaidance Vargus.

Pierce Recipient of Jerry Lockwood Endowed Scholarship

Cecilia Pierce, granddaughter of Carole and Don Ayers, was recently selected as a recipient of a Jerry Lockwood Endowed Scholarship for American Indian Studies by the College of Arts and Sciences Scholarship Committee at Oklahoma State University. Cecilia is a Junior at OSU pursuing a degree in Liberal Arts (Pre-Law) with a minor in American Indian Studies. Following graduation, Cecilia plans to go to law school with a focus on practicing tribal law. Her family would like to congratulate her on her achievement.



Choctaw Nation Ag Outreach Visits Poteau Head Start

Nikki Schuth-Mitchell and Lariann Chambers of Choctaw Nation Agriculture Outreach visited the Poteau Head Start on Feb. 27.

The children loved the visit. Students especially enjoyed getting to meet Lucy the lamb.

The students and teachers appreciated the Choctaw Nation Agricultural Outreach for traveling to Poteau Head Start.



Thornhill to Compete in Eastern Oklahoma State Spelling Bee April 6

Sadie Thornhill was recently crowned the Hodgen Elementary School Spelling Bee Runner-up.

Thornhill will compete in the Eastern State Spelling Bee Competition in Muskogee, Oklahoma on April 6.



Choctaw Nation HSE/GED Classes

HSE classes will meet each week for approximately 12 weeks. Books, supplies and testing fees are provided. You may print an application packet online at www.choctawnation.com (click the Tribal Services tab, then Postsecondary tab) before the first class or you may enroll the first night of class with the instructor. For further questions, please contact Lisa Bebout at the Durant Adult Education office at 800-522-6170, ext. 2122. (A Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) is required.)

Bryan County, Durant Beginning date and time Tuesday, April 3, 2018 Tuesday and Thursday 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM Choctaw Nation Tribal Complex South Bldg. 1st Floor 529 N. 16th, Durant	Haskell County, Stigler Beginning date and time Monday, April 2, 2018 Monday and Wednesday 9:00am - 12:00pm Choctaw Nation Community Center 515 Center Point Rd., Wilburton	Latimer County, Wilburton Beginning date and time Tuesday, April 3, 2018 Tuesday and Thursday 9:00am - 12:00pm Choctaw Nation Community Center 515 Center Point Rd., Wilburton
McCurtain County, Idabel Beginning date and time Tuesday, April 3, 2018 Tuesday and Thursday 1:00PM - 4:00PM Southeastern Oklahoma State University McCurtain County Campus 2805 NE Lincoln Rd, Idabel	DISTANT LEARNING HSE Beginning date March 5, 2018 Atoka County, Coal and Leflore Counties Atoka Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 1:00pm - 4:00pm Atoka Vocational Technology Center	McCurtain, Leflore and Pushmataha Counties Antlers Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 9:00am - 12:00pm Old Choctaw Nation Community Center
Distance Learning HSE (High School Equivalency), classes are available at the locations below. Distance Learning Technology is implemented in these classes which allows the student and teacher to see and hear each other on large monitors. Students are able to interact with the instructor as she prepares students for the HSE exam. Classes meet 3 days each week for approximately 9 weeks. Books, supplies and testing fees are provided. If you have questions about these classes, please contact Lisa Bebout at the Durant office, 800-522-6170, ext. 2122. A Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) is required. Enrollment for the new classes begins the first day of class and closes to new students on the fourth day of class.	Coalgate Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 1:00pm - 4:00pm Choctaw Nation Community Center	Bethel/Battiest Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 9:00am - 12:00pm Choctaw Nation Community Center
	Talihina Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 1:00pm - 4:00pm Choctaw Nation Community Center	Smithville Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 9:00am - 12:00pm Choctaw Nation Community Center
		Wright City Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 9:00am - 12:00pm Choctaw Nation Community Center

EVENTS

Choctaw Nation Community Center March Health Fairs

Antlers
Wednesday, April 4

Spiro
Wednesday, April 11

All Health Fairs begin at 10 a.m. at the Choctaw Nation Community Center unless otherwise noted.

Annual Gathering of Voices

Thursday, April 5
Choctaw Event Center, Durant, Oklahoma
1-3:30 p.m.

The Oklahoma Nation Alliance Against Violence and the Choctaw Nation Sexual Assault Response Team are co-hosting the Annual Gathering of Voices. Everyone is invited. District 6 Councilperson Jennifer Woods will give the opening prayer and Chief Gary Batton will be speaking.

Wilson Family Grave Cleaning

Saturday, April 28
9 a.m.

Choctaw Nation Community Center
Smithville

The family will gather at the Choctaw Community Center in Smithville prior to the annual grave cleaning. All family are encouraged to attend.

For more info, call Wilma Hendrickson at
(918) 413-2084.

Ritter Family Reunion

Saturday, May 19
Quarry Island in Wister

An invitation to any relatives of
Issac (Ike) & Georgia Ritter and Frank & Tennie Ritter.
Bring a covered dish & a drink. Donations appreciated.

Imogene (McCoy) Odell,
(918) 647-3791 or (918) 647-7596
507 Chickasaw, Poteau, Oklahoma 74953

Mothers Day Gospel Singing

Saturday, May 12
Black Jack Church East of Rattan

Black Jack Church is 11 miles east of Rattan on SH 3. The start time for the singing is 3 p.m. and supper begins at 5:30 p.m. Concessions will be available.

For more information, contact Mary Woody at (580) 372-5114.

Hampton Chapel Annual Gospel Singing

Saturday, May 19
East of Spencerville

The gospel singing will be held three miles east of Spencerville and 11 miles north of Fort Towson. The Wild Onion Supper will begin at 5 p.m., followed by the singing at 7 p.m. Floyd Peters will be the emcee. There is no charge for the supper.

For more info, call (580) 317-3320

Judicial Branch Seeking Peacemakers

The Choctaw Nation Judicial Branch is currently seeking Peacemakers to serve the Tribal District Court in an effort to resolve disputes in a fair, informal manner in accordance with the traditions of the Choctaw people. Applicants must be of good moral character, be familiar with the history and traditions of the Choctaw people, and proficient in oral and written communication.

Interested applicants should contact Donna Heflin by phone at 918-567-4134 or email: dheflin@choctawnation.com.

Gary Batton
Chief

Jack Austin Jr.
Assistant Chief

The Official
Monthly Publication
of the

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

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

If you are receiving more than one BISKINIK at your home or if your address needs to be changed, our Circulation Department would appreciate hearing from you.

The BISKINIK is a nonprofit publication of the Choctaw Nation.

Circulation is monthly. Deadline for articles and photographs to be submitted is the first day of each month to run the following month.

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



LETTERS

I want to thank the Choctaw Nation for assisting with the cost of my husband's cremation in July 2017. My husband, Leamon Bowen, was very honored to be a Choctaw. Again, thank you for blessing me in my time of need.

Jeannie Bowen

My mother was Willie Virginia Easter. I am looking to get in contact with my Hardaway relatives, the family of Claud Hardaway, in Red Oak, Oklahoma. I can be reached at (580) 279-6763. Yakoke.

Jerry Easter
Ada, Oklahoma

Thank you to Chief Gary Batton, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., District 7 Councilperson Jack Austin Sr., Yappalli, C.H.A.T., Youth Outreach, Karen Lyons from Project Safe, Dietician Erin Adams from Diabetes Wellness Center, Dance 2 Fit Instructor Telissa Ayers, the Choctaw Language Department, Antlers Girl Scout Troop #81 and Cathy Green for making the Healthy Me, Healthy We workshop a success. The District 7 girls said, "We learned how to make exercise fun, eat healthy and how to identify healthy, supportive relationships!"

Consuelo Splawn, C.H.A.T. Case Manager
Hugo, Oklahoma

I want to thank Chief Gary Batton and the Choctaw Cultural staff for their enjoyable presentation in Las Vegas, Nevada. The food, dancing and coffee was good. I met one of the Choctaw craftsmen named Lawrence Battiest. He presented me with a stickball and a Choctaw medallion. Being a veteran, my acceptance of this gift means very much to me. This Choctaw medallion hangs on my wall among the plaques of my dad, brother and uncles who were veterans of World War II, Korea and



Vietnam. This medallion honors all veterans who have worn and wears the uniform. Lawrence, I want to thank you very much for this gift and honor.

John Kenieutubbe
Las Vegas, Nevada

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Legal Assistance

A licensed attorney will be available by appointment ONLY to provide assistance with simple legal documents free to all Choctaw members. Examples of matters that the attorney may be able to assist with:

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

The office does not provide representation in court or assist in criminal matters. At this time the legal department is not providing assistance with wills and probate. To make an appointment, or for any questions, contact Samantha Guinn at (580) 380-8149.

April Community Center Schedule	May Community Center Schedule
4-5 Hugo: 10-1 & 1:30-3	5-3 Stigler: 10-1 & 1:30-3
4-12 Broken Bow: 10-1 & 1:30-3	5-10 Wilburton: 10-1 & 1:30-3
4-26 Talihina: 10-1 & 1:30-3	5-24 McAlester: 10-1 & 1:30-3
	5-31 Durant: 10-1 & 1:30-3

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 ½ 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 reside within the 10 ½ county area of the Choctaw Nation.

For more information, please contact
Susan Edwards at (580) 924-8280 ext. 2161 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:

Hugo Community Center
April 25
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Choctaw Nation Vocational Rehabilitation

May 2018

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

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

Tribal Council Holds Regular Session

The Choctaw Nation Tribal Council met in regular session Saturday, March 10, in their chambers at Tvshka Homma.

During the regular session committee reports were presented.

The minutes of the regular session held on Saturday, March 10, were approved.

New business included approval of the following items:

- FY2018 budgets for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma BIA, BIE and Day Care.
- To dispose of surplus capital assets.
- Appointed judiciaries to the judicial branch of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.
- Pipeline easement and right of way agreement on Choctaw Nation Tribal Fee land in favor of Arkansas Oklahoma Gas Corporation in LeFlore County, Oklahoma.
- Oil and Gas lease No. 4200066 in favor of BP America Production Company on land held by the United States of America in trust for the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations in McClain County, Oklahoma.
- Application for the Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitations Purpose Area #1-COPS Tribal Resources Hiring and Equipment/ Training Grant.
- Application for the Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitations Purpose Area #3-Tribal Justice Systems.
- Application for the Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitations Purpose Area #4-Tribal Justice System infrastructure program.
- Application for the Environmental Enhancement Grant.
- Application for the Social and Economic Development strategies.
- Amendment to CB-109-17 to authorize Chief Gary Batton to place property in Bryan County, Oklahoma in trust status with the United States of America as amended.

For detailed meeting information on these resolutions and Council bills, go to www.choctaw-nation.com/government/tribal-council/council-meetings-and-bills.

The next Tribal Council meeting will be held on Saturday, April 14, at 10 a.m. in Tvshka Homma.

The Housing Authority of the Choctaw Nation is now accepting applications for the Lease Purchase (LEAP) Program

The LEAP Program is a new homeownership program opportunity for Choctaw Tribal members who meet program income and credit guidelines. The goal of this program is to assist families with credit issues to become mortgage ready and lender qualified over time with credit counseling services available.

For additional program information or for an application, please contact Donna Courtwright at the Housing Authority of the Choctaw Nation at 1-800-235-3087

Biskinik Announcement Policy

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

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

We apologize for any inconvenience. This is a necessary adjustment due to rising production and mailing expenses.

Mail to: Biskinik
Attn: Notes to the Nation
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702

or email to: biskinik@ChoctawNation.com

The Lehigh Project Provides Hands-On Learning in Aquaponics

by LARRIANN CHAMBERS

Land: the easiest natural resource to find, yet one of the hardest to obtain. Each year Earth's population increases every day, in turn the food supply also has to increase in order to feed that growing population.

One of Choctaw Nation Agriculture Outreach's larger projects is demonstrating different ways in which producers can grow food with limited space.

The Lehigh Project is a hands-on learning center that is sure to have something for everyone, whether it is learning a new method of production or discovering a USDA program that can be implemented right in your backyard.

An approximate 2,000 square foot building with a full commercial kitchen, a supply shed, a demonstration aquaponics system and five acres all play a vital role in demonstrating what producers with limited space can accomplish.

The facility itself has already been used to host various workshops and outreach meetings put on by Choctaw Nation Agriculture Outreach.

From bringing USDA programs and resources to our tribal members to partnering with the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service to teach various workshops, the facility is versatile and ideal for various events.

The hands-on learning area is only a step away on the five acres of land. On it sits a demonstration aquaponics system. Aquaponics is the agricultural practice of growing plants and fish in a closed, recirculating ecosystem.

The Symbiotic Aquaponic method not only allows you to grow plants and fish at the same time, but it is also a great method to reduce the amount of water used throughout the growing process.

Aside from the aquaponics system, the five acres will also be used for various research plots.

Within these plots, Ag Outreach has partnered with the United States Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources Conservation Service to do a soil health project.

As world population and food production demands rise, keeping our soil healthy and productive is imperative.



Photos Provided by Choctaw Nation Agriculture Outreach

ABOVE: Choctaw Nation Agriculture Outreach partnered with Coal County Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service for a leafy greens project. LEFT: The Aquaponics System demonstration housed at the Choctaw Nation facility in Lehigh shows interested people how to grow plants and raise fish at the same. Aquaponics is a great method to reduce the amount of water used throughout the growing process.

By partnering with the NRCS, Ag Outreach hopes to bring soil health principles and systems to our producers and community members in the Choctaw Nation.

With the partnership of the NRCS, Ag Outreach also plans to plant a pollinator food plot to attract Monarch butterflies during their migrating season.

Ag Outreach has also partnered with the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service to implement raised-bed gardening by planting various crops in feed troughs as a demonstration of growing your own garden with limited land or space.

Raised-bed gardens are elevated a few inches or more above the soil level and just wide enough to reach across by hand. The soil does not get compacted, since the soil in which plants are grown is never walked on.

Planting in these feed troughs is not only a tool for our elderly population, but also a teaching method for our younger generation.

As one of Ag Outreach's largest projects, the Lehigh project is a way to demonstrate these new methods and resources. While these are just a few highlights of the Lehigh Project, the possibilities here are endless and we encourage you to stop in and explore what all the Lehigh project has to offer.

For more information about the Lehigh project and upcoming events, please contact Jeffrey Roebuck at (580) 380-3450 or jroebuck@choctawnation.com.

6



Seventh Annual Trail of Tears Bicycle Ride Scheduled for May 18-25

The Choctaw Nation Trail of Tears Bicycle Team will embark upon the Seventh Annual Trail of Tears bicycle ride May 18-25. Team members are slated to ride approximately 500 miles along portions of the route that marks the 1830s removal from Philadelphia, Mississippi to Durant, Oklahoma.

The purpose of the journey is to retrace the steps of our Choctaw ancestors on two wheels, honoring their perseverance and fortitude via spiritual, physical and mental means. The group also seeks out Choctaw heritage sites within the states of the removal.

"I feel much closer to my ancestors on my bicycle, than I do in a car for some reason," said Billy "LB" Eagle Road. "I guess because I can feel the wind on my face and the smell of the earth as I ride. It reminds me that my people are buried along this route."

The Choctaw Nation Bicycle Team is a group of individuals invested in honoring their ancestors' hardships on the Trail of Tears and many other struggles throughout history while maintaining a healthy lifestyle, staying active and balancing the mind, body and spirit.

Bicycle team members work throughout the year to raise funds to cover the costs of the seven-day ride for 20 people. Fundraisers include the sale of food items at Boom in the Valley and the Labor Day Festival, as well as hosting a Veteran's Day 15K and Youth Bike Ride annually. Various departments and individuals throughout the Choctaw Nation generously supply additional donations of food, drink and transportation that make up the difference.

Join the celebration as Chief Batton joins the team to conclude the journey in Durant on Friday May 25, at the new Tribal Complex Headquarters located at 1802 Chukka Hina, next to the Choctaw Nation Regional Medical Clinic.

Fundraiser Trail of Tears Bicycle Team Fan t-shirts can be purchased for \$15 by contacting Billy Eagle Road at (580) 924-8280 ext. 2410.



Photo By Choctaw Nation Video Production

Members of the Choctaw Nation Trail of Tears Bicycle Team ride along the route our ancestors took during the Trail of Tears. Team members ride approximately 500 miles along portions of the route that marks the 1830s removal from Mississippi to Oklahoma. During the ride the bicycle team seeks out Choctaw heritage sites within the states of the removal to pay homage to the ancestors who walked the Trail of Tears.

CHOCTAW COMMUNITY CENTERS ACTIVITIES



Poteau seniors gathered to celebrate St. Patrick's Day a little early March 14. The Poteau Seniors love to get together to celebrate and fellowship.



Coalgate Seniors Valentine's Day King and Queen Wilson and Sharon Roberts share a sweet kiss at the Coalgate Seniors Valentine's Day Celebration. The couple have been married for 50 years.



McAlester seniors take part in a Tai Chi class. According to various studies, Tai Chi improves symptoms of arthritis, reduces stress and improves flexibility.

Photos by Darlene Orr, Mike Wallace and Arie Young.



Antlers seniors pose for a group photo. The Antlers seniors get together each week for good food, fun and fellowship together.

Scammers Target Vulnerable Elders

by JIMMY SMITH

The fastest growing form of abuse against the elderly is financial fraud. Financial fraud/crimes occur when deceit is used to take money or property to gain benefit. The use of deception or the abuse of trust is what set these crimes apart from common theft or robbery.

Although everyone is susceptible to financial crimes, the elderly are particularly vulnerable. It is their vulnerability in which scammers prey. In fact, according to the AARP, 80 percent of telemarketing or mail fraud victims are 50 and over. Often the elderly are more trusting than younger people. Some may be isolated and lonely or incapable of making financial decisions which makes them perfect targets for scammers.

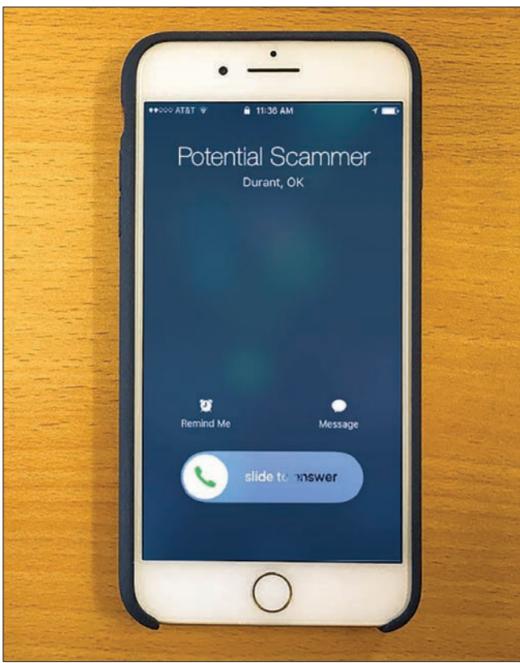
Scammers can be anyone. They can be strangers, caregivers, even family members or friends. The crime can range from mail fraud, unauthorized access to funds, fraudulent legal documents, offering fake prizes to charging money for unsolicited home repairs.

The Better Business Bureau has some suggestions to safeguard the elderly from scammers.

One is to be involved in their financial decisions. Also, make sure they understand the danger in giving out any account or personal information. Tell them to not make hasty decisions or purchases from a pushy salesperson. Have them ask for written information about the company. Instruct them to never hire anyone who shows up at their door wanting to help them. Stay away from investors who promise huge profits.

Also one of the most important things to do is to visit their home regularly. Be involved. Be aware. Not only could you notice that fraud may be occurring, but being present with your elderly loved one is worth it.

If you or someone you know are in a situation where you think that an elderly person is being abused or a victim of a crime, please call the Choctaw Nation Elder/Vulnerable Adult Program at (877) 285-6893 or (580) 326-8304.



According to the AARP, 80 percent of telemarketing or mail fraud victims are 50 and over. Elders are encouraged to take necessary steps to safeguard personal information.



SAVE THE DATE

NOVEMBER 7, 2018

Choctaw Nation Career Development

2018 Career EXPO

866.933.2260 www.choctawcareers.com
 Location: South East EXPO Center
 4500 W. Highway 270 McAlester, OK 74502

Do you need to change your address, or have not been receiving your Biskinik?

Please give the Direct Member Communications
Department a call.

We'll make sure your contact information is correct.

The Direct Member Communications Department can be
reached at:
(800) 522-6170
 Ext. 2116, 2409, or 2310

Homebuyers Education

*Are you interested
in becoming a
home owner?*

The Choctaw Nation Housing Authority offers FREE workshops for potential and new homeowners. All materials are furnished.

For more information on dates and course locations, or to preregister, contact Neile Vance at 580-579-7319 or nvance@choctawhousing.com

SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY ENGINEERING MATH

SUMMER CAMP

June 24-29

Students must:

- Be in 9th-12th grade
- Have a CDIB

Application deadline: May 11, 2018
See school counselor for application or send email to address below

STEM Camp

918-297-2518 ext. 1030
stemcamp@choctawnation.com
jtribbey@choctawnation.com

Spend part of your summer at the hands-on STEM camp! The camp includes workshops, challenges, field trips, and FUN. STEM camp is free to selected students who will spend five nights at Jones Academy.

Chahta Anumpa Aiihkvna

◆◆◆ Lesson of the Month ◆◆◆

Common expressions using the word "imponna"

imponna: he/she/it to be skilled/skillful, smart talented, good, capable, crafty, expert, workmanship, etc. (Sometimes written and pronounced "iponna.")

Change the prefix pronoun from "im" to "amponna" for "I am smart," etc.

Change the prefix pronoun from "im" to "chimponna" for "you are smart," etc.

This word can be used as a noun, adjective or verb.

1. Ohoyo mvt anumpuli kvit imponna. *That woman is a skillful speaker.*
2. Talowa kvit amponna. *I sing very well.*
3. Mike vt towa washoha imponna. *Mike is a really good ball player.*
4. Holabi kvit chimponna. *You are a skillful liar.*
5. Imatuksvli va imponna fehna kiyo. *He is not very good at his job.*
6. Chukka aiiska kvit amponna fehna hoke. *I am very good at house repairs.*
7. Chimponna ho! *You are excellent (at something)! (As in complimenting someone.)*
8. Chimponna chiyoyohmi! (Complimenting with a higher degree of intensity.) *You are superb! You are really, really good!*

www.choctawschool.com

CHOCTAW NATION ON~FARM FIELD TOUR

Please join us for a free lunch to learn about soil health options and how healthy soil can benefit you.

MAY 19, 2018 BRING~A~CHAIR

Choctaw Nation Community Center
 Travel to Tom Soil Health Site
 2408 East Lincoln
 Idabel, Oklahoma
 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

PLEASE RSVP BY MAY 16th
 Clay Pope at 405-699-2087
 Jack Hicks at 580-326-3201 (ext. 6019)
 Carol Crouch at 405-612-9331
claypope@gmail.com
carolcrouch@ok.usda.gov

PRESENTED BY:
 Choctaw Nation Agriculture Outreach
 USDA NRCS
 Southern Plains Climate Hub
 McCurtain Co. OSU Extension
 Oklahoma AgCredit

WHERE WILL YOUR TRIP TAKE YOU IN CHOCTAW COUNTRY

TELL US YOUR STORY

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We work to assist you in reaching the next step of financial freedom.

Contact one of our locations for more information

Antlers: (580) 298-6443 Broken McAlester: (918) 420-5716
 Bore: (580) 584-2842 Poteau: (918) 649-0431
 Durant: (800) 522-6170 Ext. 2920 nextstep@choctawnation.com

Possible Refund Due to Housing Authority Participants

The Housing Authority of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma may owe the following individuals a refund. If your name is listed below or you are an heir to any listed individual please contact us for additional information.

Shannon Billy	Ricky Ludlow	Winston Billy	Michael Lyons
Donny Jones	Earl Seagraves	David Maxwell	Katherine Ward
Janice Deaton	Lisa McGee	Kenneth Langston	Earnestine Beaver
Edward McCann	Dorothy Willie	Bennie Darnel	
Louisa Johnson	Thomas Fulson	Stacy Holbird	

Housing Authority of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
 207 Jim Monroe Road
 Hugo, OK 74743
 580-326-7521 ext. 6380

OBITUARIES

Irene Chubbee

Irene (Jackson) Chubbee, 97, passed away Aug. 31, 2017.

Irene was born on Aug. 20, 1920, in Panama, Oklahoma.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 64 years, Austin W. Chubbee; her parents; and daughter Vera James.

She is survived by her daughter Theresa Gay; grandchildren Crystle Coleman, Trena Rentfrow, April Partee and Michael James; 17 great-grandchildren; and 2 great-great grandchildren.

Irene was laid to rest at Fort Gibson National Cemetery in Fort Gibson, Oklahoma.

For the full obituary, please visit [Cornerstone Funeral Home Chapel](#).

Jefferson "Jay" Warden

Jefferson "Jay" Warden, 55, passed away Jan. 11.

Jay was born on Oct. 4, 1962.

Jay is survived by his son Billy Warden; grandchildren Terra, Ean and Cason; brother Fred Warden; sister Ann Etta Baskin and many nieces and nephews.

For the full obituary, please visit [Chaney Harkins Funeral Home](#).



Claudette Brown

Claudette (James) Brown, 77, passed away Feb. 23.

Claudette was born July 10, 1940 to Georgia Ann (Ware) James and Gilbert Edward James in Timber Hill, Oklahoma.

She was preceded in death by her parents, two sisters and two brothers.

Claudette is survived by her husband Darry Brown; sons Earl Williams and spouse Barbara, Jonathan Brown, Tony James and spouse Valentine, Steve James, Mack Henderson and spouse Jeannie, James Williams and spouse Cathy and Donald Williams and spouse Deanna; daughters Delicia and Claudine Williams, Georgia Balcazar and spouse Alfonso, Delivia Hadix and spouse Donald, Carol Gardner, Nita Jones and spouse Ralph, Jacquelyn Butler, Pearl Caldwell, Maxine Brewer and spouse Ron, Kathleen Walton and spouse Larry and Janetia Forbes; sisters Lela Peterson and Betty Maytubbie; nephew Charles "Scooter" Maytubbie; and 68 grandchildren.

Claudette was laid to rest at Williams Timber Hill Cemetery in Welch, Oklahoma.

For the full obituary, please visit [Brown's Funeral Service](#).



Ethel Ishcomer

Ethel Bell Ishcomer, 80, passed away Jan. 21.

Ethel was born Nov. 30, 1937, to John LaFlore and Suzanna Nehka Wickson in Corrine, Oklahoma.

Ethel was preceded in death by her parents; husband Leroy Ishcomer Sr.; step-father Dave Wickson Sr.; daughter Rita Ishcomer; granddaughter Marissa Ishcomer; sisters Gladys Moore, Marian Aaron, Elsie Wickson and Besselenia Wickson; brothers James LaFlore, Edmond, Fred, Ray, Dave Jr. and Baby Boy Wickson.

She is survived by sons Johnny, Julius, Neil, Robert and Leroy Jr. Ishcomer; daughters Linda Cannon and spouse Harold, Lena Priddy and spouse Jean, Mary Woody and spouse Turner and Sarah Kuykendall and spouse Donald; brother Holliston Wickson; sisters Annie Wickson and Judy Phillips; uncle Elum Wesley; 13 grandchildren; and 16 great-grandchildren.

Ethel was laid to rest at Black Jack Cemetery in Sobol, Oklahoma.

For the full obituary, please visit [Miller & Miller Funeral Home](#).



Calvin L. Johnson

Calvin L. Johnson, 78, passed away Jan. 5.

Calvin was born Feb. 15, 1939, to Frank and Lavene Johnson in Marietta, Oklahoma.

He is preceded in death by his wife of 27 years, Patsy Lavelle (Wilson) Johnson; his parents; brothers Jimmy "Tiny" Johnson and Ronald Johnson; and nephew Russell Johnson.

He is survived by daughter Susan Lynn Johnson-Armijo and spouse Steven; brothers Bill and Kenneth Johnson; sisters Shirley Thompson, Barbara Williams and Rita Scott; and grandchildren Seth and Symone.

Calvin was laid to rest at Leon Cemetery in Leon, Oklahoma with full military honors provided by the Choctaw Nation Honor Guard.

For the full obituary, please visit [Flanagan-Watts Funeral Home & Cremation Services](#).



David Washington

David Washington, 92, passed away Jan. 12.

David was born on March 1, 1925, to Levi and Minnie (Lillard) Washington in Wister, Oklahoma.

He was preceded in death by his parents; son David Washington; daughter Patsy Washington; and sisters Salina Heflin and Lavada Byous.

He is survived by his wife Jackie Lee Washington; step-son Alvin Black and spouse Annette; three step-grandchildren; four nieces; and one nephew.

David was laid to rest at Heavener Memorial Park in Heavener, Oklahoma.

For the full obituary, please visit [Dowden-Roberts Funeral Home](#).



Erma Lee Hegler

Erma Lee Hegler, 83, passed away Jan. 12.

Erma was born Oct. 20, 1934, to Valdona Bonaparte in Keota, Oklahoma.

Erma was preceded in death by her mother; step-father Charles Bonaparte, son Harold Lynn Hegler, Jr.; and grandchildren Rachel and Jacob Hegler.

She is survived by her husband of 62 years, Harold Lynn Hegler; sons Charles Lee Hegler, Troy Layne and spouse Candace Hegler; and Christopher Layne and spouse Katherine Hegler; sister Tina Mackey; 10 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren; and three nephews.

For the full obituary, please visit [Nail-Haggard Funeral Home](#).



Gary Moore

Gary Warren Moore, 53, passed away Jan. 4. Gary was born on June 1, 1964, to Phyllis and Jessie Moore in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Gary was preceded in death by his father; grandparents Claude Moore and spouse and Samuel Adams and spouse; and son Brandon Runnels.

He is survived by his mother; children Lindsey Griffin, Lana Hand, Chelsea Hobbs and Brad Moore; brother Sam Moore and spouse Lonnie; sister Gina Moore; and 9 grandchildren.

Gary was laid to rest at Elmwood Cemetery in Bowie, Texas.

For the full obituary, please visit [White Family Funeral Home](#).



Jerry C. Fuller

Jerry C. Fuller, 78, passed away Nov. 1, 2017.

Jerry was born Jan. 17, 1939, to Jennings Bryan Fuller and Alice Ray (Harrell) Fuller in Stigler, Oklahoma.

Jerry was preceded in death by his parents; and son Joe Fuller.

He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Norma; sons Gary Fuller and spouse Lana and David Fuller and spouse Tamara; daughter-in-law Lea Ann Friend; brother Muriel Fuller; sisters Linda Burgess, Melba Dennis, Donna Morris and spouse Ed and Judy Herald and spouse Pat; grandchildren; Rachel, Cassie, Tara, Preston, Tiffany and Chelsea; great-grandchildren Josie, Emma, Kyah, Lucas, Zyla, Maverick; and great-grandchild Henry. For the full obituary, please visit [Shipman Funeral Home](#).



Margaret Vaughn

Margaret Ella (Steel) Vaughn, 74, passed away Jan. 7.

Margaret was born on Aug. 21, 1943, to Charlie and Mildred Burnett Steel in Sweetwater, Oklahoma.

Margaret passed on the same day as her husband of 21 years, Robert Edgar Vaughn.

She was preceded in death by her parents; sisters Charlotte, Mary and Sheila; and grandchild Daymian.

She is survived by her children Kenneth Vaughn, Charla Montgomery, Charlie Vaughn and spouse Tina, Qulima Knapp, Arnold Cortez, Clovis Vaughn and spouse Penny and Toyce Lynn Driskell and spouse Benjamin; siblings Kenneth Steel and spouse Willi, Sandra Steel, Barbara McGee and Teresa Redford; 20 grandchildren; and 25 great-grandchildren.

For the full obituary, please visit [Crosier-Pearson Cleburne Funeral Home](#).



Earlene Willis

Earlene Willis, 67, passed away Dec. 25, 2017. She was born on Oct. 5, 1950, to Leo Raymond Caldwell and Eleanor (Cooper) Caldwell.

Earlene was preceded in death by her father; brother Ernie Lee Caldwell; grandmother Ina Caldwell; former husband Roy A. Willis and daughter-in-law Christina Willis.

She is survived by her mother; children Racquel, Kristy, Kerry and Gerald Willis; siblings Judy Davis, Anthony Thompson, Mike, A. L. Caldwell and spouse Loretha, Pamela Wilson and Ruth Frazier; 14 grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Earlene was laid to rest at Nanih Chito Cemetery in Wright City, Oklahoma.

For the full obituary, please visit [Brumley Funeral Home](#).



Donald Patrick "Pat" Hutton

Donald Patrick "Pat" Hutton, 62, passed away Jan. 8.

Pat was born on May 9, 1955, to Milford K. and Frieda Jo (Davis) Hutton in Muskogee, Oklahoma.

Pat was preceded in death by his father.

He is survived by his mother; daughters Jessica Finkenbinder, Kellye Altendorf, Shelbie Frye and Aiyana Hutton; son Michael Hutton; sister Shara Sargent; brother Mike Hutton; nine grandchildren and numerous other family and friends.

Pat was laid to rest at Dog Creek Cemetery at Shady Point, Oklahoma.

For the full obituary, please visit [Evans and Miller Funeral Home](#).



Janice Feigel

Janice Raye (Brand) Feigel, 75, passed away Jan. 18.

Janice was born Dec. 2, 1942, to E. Ray Brand and Jacqueline (Ashworth) Brand in Sand Springs, Oklahoma.

Janice was preceded in death by her parents.

She is survived by her husband of 55 years, James P. Feigel; daughters Steffanie Bonner and spouse David Bonner and Natalie Clark and spouse Greg Clark; sister Joyce Perdue and spouse Phil Perdue; granddaughter Sheridan Bonner; and numerous friends and extended family.

For the full obituary, please visit [Moore Funeral Home](#).



Helda Fay Crawley

Helda Fay Crawley, 68, passed away Jan. 15.

Helda was born on June 1, 1949, to Nelson James and Agnes (Sampson) Morris in Talihina, Oklahoma.

Helda was preceded in death by her husband of 30 years, Marvin Crawley; her parents; and brothers Joepie Morris and Timothy Jeffus.

She is survived by daughter Michelle Shoemaker; sons Danny Morris and spouse Lori and Tim Crawley and spouse Emily; sisters Toni Cody and Sue Davis; grandchildren Savannah, Grady, Dillon, Logan, Seth, Mary and Trae; and great-grandchildren Mahaley, Paisley, River and Piper.

For the full obituary, please visit [Criswell Funeral Home](#).



Linda Dean

Linda Carroll Dean, 68, passed away, Jan. 30.

Linda was born on Sept. 11, 1949, to Easton and Amelia (Shoemaker) Campos in Leon, Oklahoma.

Linda was preceded in death by her parents; grandmother Sallie Tom James; step-father Johnny Campos; sister Minnie Stapleton; and brother Joe Brown.

Linda is survived by her husband of 43 years, Rahman Dean; sons Babak Tahermandarjani and Darrick Eades; daughter Sherri Eades; grandchildren Dakota, Savannah, Austin, Audrey, Cooper, Spencer and Zarah; great-grandchildren Braylee, Aubree and Aedyn; sister Betty Baptiste; and brothers Gary, Charles and Arnold.

For the full obituary, please visit [Griffin - Hillcrest Funeral Home](#).



Neldean Gallaher

Neldean T. (Folsom) Gallaher, 85, passed away Nov. 19, 2017.

Neldean was born on Feb. 18, 1932, to Esther and Sampson Folsom in Atoka, Oklahoma.

Neldean was preceded in death by her husband of 63 years, Willard Gallaher; and brothers Jerry and Bill Folsom;

She is survived by brother Sam Folsom; son Clark Gallaher and spouse Jin Sun; daughters Katherine Curley and spouse Randal and Andrea Sherwood; grandchildren Apryl Skipper and spouse Brandon Skipper, Austyn Scudder, James and Jennifer Gallaher and Nathan Marmaduke; and great-grandchildren Shealynn, Jadon and Pierce Skipper and Heavenly Sneathen.

Neldean was laid to rest at Sunset Memorial Park in Norman, Oklahoma.

For the full obituary, please visit [HavenBrook Funeral Home](#).



Obituary Policy

Obituary submissions are for Choctaw Nation tribal members only and are free of charge. The Biskinik will only accept obituary notices from funeral homes. Family members/individuals may submit funeral notices as long as the notice is from the funeral home or printed in their local newspaper through a funeral home service. Full-length handwritten notices will not be accepted. The Biskinik strives to serve all Choctaws, therefore, any handwritten notices received will be searched online for official funeral home notices. If none are found, efforts will be made to contact the family and make arrangements for an official notice. Due to space limitations, there is a 150 word limit for obituaries. The online issue of the Biskinik will contain links to the full obituaries.

Send official obituary notices to:

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

OBITUARIES

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Richard Adams



Richard Adams, 75, passed away Jan. 3.
Richard was born on Dec. 15, 1942, to Leo and Myrtle (Jack) Adams in Le Flore, Oklahoma.
Richard was preceded in death by his parents; and wives Yvonne Sue and Mary Lou Adams.
Richard is survived by his daughters Karen and Katie Adams; grandson Matthew Brandenburger; sisters Marie Jackson and Laura Mackey; and brother Daniel Adams and spouse Rotha.
Richard was laid to rest at the Choctaw Nation Veteran Cemetery in Tvshka Homma, Oklahoma.
For the full obituary, please visit [Holmes~ Coffey~ Murray Funeral Home](#).

Reginald Holder



Reginald Lee Holder, 71, passed away Nov. 5, 2017.
Reginald was born on Nov. 1, 1946, to Ora Lois (Gideon) and Rolf Reginald Holder in Hoyt, Oklahoma.
Reginald was preceded in death by his parents; brothers Wendell and James Holder; sisters Helen Wyatt and spouse Loyd, Ramona Allen and spouse Ronnie; sister-in-law Jeanette Holder; nephew Gordon Read; and niece Michelle Holder.
He is survived by sisters Elaine Bigger and spouse Donald and Nadine Read; sister-in-law Mary Holder; aunt Wanda Cariker; five nieces; and eight nephews.
Reginald was laid to rest at Hoyt Cemetery in Hoyt, Oklahoma.
For the full obituary, please visit [Mallory-Martin Funeral Home & Crematory](#).

Martha Jones



Martha Mae Jones, 92, passed away Feb. 16.
Martha was born on Feb. 6, 1926, to Wilton and Flora (Tonihka) Wilson in Broken Bow, Oklahoma.
Martha was preceded in death by her husband Willie Jones; parents; son Kenneth Jones; brothers and sisters George, Wilton Jr., and Edward Wilson, Herbert and Laura James and Delores Battiest; grandsons John Spinks Jr. and Harold Jones; nephew Bobby Jones; and special friend Marilyn Colbert.
She is survived by her children Pat Spinks, Jane Samuel and spouse Edgel, Faye Gentry and spouse Benny, Harry Jones, Billy Jones and spouse Marcella, Gary Jones and spouse Cheryl and Poncho Jones and spouse Angela; 22 grandchildren; 50 great-grandchildren; and 14 great-great-grandchildren.
Martha was laid to rest at Kulli Chito Cemetery in Broken Bow, Oklahoma. For the full obituary, please visit [Bunch-Singleton Funeral Home](#).

Carlo Wilson



Carlo Austin Wilson, 83, Passed away March 6.
Carlo was born on July 20, 1934, to Alexander Carlo Wilson and Rhoda (Jefferson) Wilson in Ringold, Oklahoma.
Carlo was preceded in death by his parents; son Gregory Wilson; grandson Carlo Wilson; sister Ruby Whitetailfeather; and brothers Roy, Ray and Nathan Wilson.
He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Lottie Wilson; sons Charles Wilson and spouse Linda, Jeff and Eric Wilson; daughter Karen Robberson and spouse Dennis; brother Johnny Wilson; sisters Cora Kohrt and Theresa Wilson; eight grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.
Carlo was laid to rest at Wilson Family Cemetery in Ringold, Oklahoma. For the full obituary, please visit [Miller & Miller Funeral Home](#).

Ralph White



Ralph Lee White of, 54, passed away Jan. 25.
Ralph was born on July 16, 1963, to Evelyn (Frazier) and Benjamin White Sr. in Ft. Defiance, Arizona.
Ralph was preceded in death by his parents Evelyn and Benjamin White Sr.; and sisters Ruth Arlene Hudson-Owens and Bernice Ann Wauneka.
He is survived by his sister Susan Manuelito and spouse Ben Manuelito; and brothers Meryle White and Ben White Jr. and spouse Debbie White.
For the full obituary, please visit [Burkhart Funeral Home](#).

Nora Walker



Nora Walker, 89, passed away Feb. 19.
Nora was born on Jan. 16, 1929, to Phillix Claud and Addie (Colbert) Shomoh in Idabel, Oklahoma.
She was preceded in death by her parents; sons Danny Tushka, Bertram Shomoh and Sheldon Tushka; daughters Eileen Shomoh, Paula Tushka and Virginia Tushka; step-brothers Joel and Julius Colbert; sister Florence Hopper; and brother Claud Shomoh.
Nora is survived by her children Audrey and Loyd Vandygriff, Joyce Bailey, Donna Tushka, Andrew Tushka Jr., Michelle Tushka and Sherrie and Arturo Aldana; 22 grandchildren; 34 great-grandchildren and 18 great-great-grandchildren.
For the full obituary, please visit [Brumley Funeral Home](#).

Shannon Mendez



Shannon Mendez, 38, passed away Jan. 28.
Shannon was born on March 30, 1979, to Johnny and Theresa (Wickson) Shomo in Talihina, Oklahoma.
Shannon was preceded in death by her parents; and daughter Mina Roselin Miquel-Alexander.
She is survived by her husband Jaime Chico; sons Miguel Mendez and Julian Miguel-Alexander; and daughters Samantha Mendez, Felisia Alexander and Yesenia Reyes-Alexander.
Shannon was laid to rest at Black River Cemetery in Golden, Oklahoma. For the full obituary, please visit [Brumley Funeral Home](#).

Rocky "Robbie" Shirley



Rocky Rob "Robbie" Shirley, Jr., 38, passed away Jan. 19.
Robbie was born on March 25, 1979, to Rocky and Annette Shireley in Ardmore, Oklahoma.
Robbie was preceded in death by grandmother Marjorie Shirley; aunt Nancy Love; and uncles Shaun Saylor and Richy Shirley.
He is survived by his wife of 2 years, Lindsay Shirley; daughters Saylor Apple and Stevie Jae Moon Shirley; parents; brothers Ricky Shirley and Jamie Shirley and spouse Jennifer; sisters Stephanie Hammon and spouse Kenny and Taylor Shirley; nieces and nephews Riley Jacelyn, Jaxo, Jourden and Violet; and grandparents Clarence Saylor and Elizabeth Saylor and Truett Shirley and Shirley Ann Shirley.
For the full obituary, please visit [Craddock Funeral Home](#).

Bobbie Fox



Bobbie Beasley Fox, 80, passed away Feb. 6.
Bobbie was born on Sept. 25, 1937, to Jack and Charlotte Sanderson in Talihina, Oklahoma.
Bobbie was preceded in death by her husbands Buddy Beasley and Jerry Fox; parents; sister Virginia Kennedy; and brother Ed Barrett.
She is survived by daughters Elea Feltham and Tonja Kennedy and spouse Leslie; step-sons Terry Fox and spouse Diane and Michael Fox and spouse Kim; sister Wanda Crow; brother Buddy Lee Barrett; grandchildren Athena and Joshua West and Harmony McCray; great-grandchildren Ivy, Savannah, Lilly, Nathan and Matthew; step-grandsons Caleb, Justin and Brent; and brothers and sisters-in-law Butch Fox and spouse Pat, Betty Barrett, Carl Wilson and spouse Joyce, Dorothy Martin and Mary Moss.
Bobbie was laid to rest at Muse Cemetery in Muse, Oklahoma. For the full obituary, please visit [Wilson-Little Funeral Home](#).

Oscar Coy



Oscar William Coy, 80, passed away Feb. 8.
Oscar was born on Dec. 18, 1937, to Alton and Anna (Swinford) coy in Temple, Oklahoma.
Oscar was preceded in death by his wife of 30 years, Elaine; daughter Carolyn DeFate; parents; brother Tracy Coy; sister Ellenorton; and step-sons Cornel DeFate and Tommy Gorbett.
He is survived by son Glen "Hoss" DeFate; brother Jerry Coy; grandchildren Jennifer Davis, Cherry Davidson and Brooklyn DeFate; great-grandchildren Jayden, Julia, Julaine, Alexa, Camden and Lynden; and step-sons Paul, J.W. and Tony DeFate;
Oscar was laid to rest with full military honors at the Walters Cemetery in Walters, Oklahoma. For the full obituary, please visit [Hart-Wyatt Funeral Home](#).

Jerry Pierce



Jerry Marshall Pierce, 83, passed away Jan. 3.
Jerry was born Nov. 6, 1934, to Mack and Edythe Pierce in Fresno, California.
Jerry was preceded in death by his parents; and brother Guy Ricky.
He is survived by his wife of 63 years June; daughters Deborah Clifton and spouse Kent, Cynthia Shepard and spouse Scott and Karen Bowlware and spouse Ken; son Jerry B. Pierce and spouse Melissa; 12 grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren. Jerry was laid to rest at Jones IOOF Cemetery in Jones, Oklahoma For the full obituary, please visit [Dignity Memorial](#).

Laura Durant



Laura Ann (James) Durant, 58, passed away Jan. 28. Laura was born on Oct. 1, 1959, to Harry and Carol (Cross) James in Talihina, Oklahoma.
Laura was preceded in death by her father; sisters Rainella Boren and Sarah Chandler; brother Scott James; and niece Kimberly Jackson.
Laura is survived by her daughters, Teola Maytubby and spouse Chris and Kristi Durant; son Will Durant; grandchildren Kariim, Michael, Maiya , Auhnesty, Kalen and Quintas; siblings Mary Himes and spouse Vernon, Terry Ragland, Marie Clark, Hope Primeaux, Theresa Chiago, Harry James Jr., Michael James and spouse Nancy and Anthony James; and her partner Charlie Wickham.
For the full obituary, please visit [Burkhart Funeral Service](#).

Helen Dees

Helen Jean Dees, 77, passed away Jan. 14.
Helen born on Nov.13, 1940, to Willie and Opal (Pettit) Krebbs in Boswell, Oklahoma.
Helen was preceded in death by her husband of 48 years, Billy Edward Dees, parents; and sisters Lenore Ann Grace and Willa Mae Caudill.
Helen is survived by her daughter Karen Dees; son William Dees and spouse Leigh ; brothers Charles, Leland and J.B. Krebbs; sisters Ruthie Longsine, Klara Coates and Judy Caldwell; and three grandchildren.
Helen was laid to rest at the Fort Sill National Cemetery Columbarium in Elgin, Oklahoma.
For the full obituary, please visit [Becker-Rabon Funeral Home](#).

Earl J. Tupper

Earl J. Tupper, 85, passed away Jan. 28.
Earl was born on Feb. 13, 1932, to Bartmus and Mary Bell (Hooker) Tupper in Finley, Oklahoma. For the full obituary, please visit [Serenity Funeral Service](#).

Reuben "Johnny" Johnson



Reuben "Johnny" Johnson, 86, passed away Jan. 31.
Johnny was born on April 19, 1931, to John and Pearl (Moseby) Johnson in Stigler, Oklahoma.
Johnny was preceded in death by his wife Geneva (Parsons) Johnson; parents; brothers John Jr., Ray and Jerry Johnson; sister Louise Lafave; niece Olivia Johnson; and granddaughter Adalynne Cheze.
He is survived by his son Ron Branscum; sisters Juanita Mitchum, Alene Campbell and Yvonne Clark; brothers Alec, Herman and Larry Johnson; grandchildren Ashley, Monica and Jodie; great-grandchildren Aerionna, Joshua, Rhyker, Jase, Tenley, Jayden and Olivia; nephews Shane, Aaron, Otis, David, Michael, Chris, Marcus, Marie, Todd and Shannon; and nieces Towanna, Wynema, Amy and Theresa.
Johnny was laid to rest at Garland Cemetery in Stigler, Oklahoma.
For the full obituary, please visit [Mallory Martin Funeral Home](#).

John Anderson



John Gilbert Anderson, Jr., 86, passed away Feb. 1.
John was born on March 26, 1931, to John Gilbert and Ruth (Rambo) Anderson in Durant, Oklahoma.
John was preceded in death by his parents; and wives Emma Sanders, Barbara Anderson and Sharon Anderson.
John is survived by sons Dr. Michael Anderson and spouse Donna, Dr. Mitchell Anderson and spouse Becky, David Anderson and partner Marsha Hampton and Donald Anderson and partner Perry Daugherty; step-son Guy Kerley and spouse Dawn; sister Doris Birkey and spouse Dr. Tom Birkey; five grandsons; and two great-granddaughters.
For the full obituary, please visit [Christian-Gavlik Funeral Home](#).

Terry Hickman



Terry Lynn Hickman, 69, passed away Dec. 25, 2017.
Terry was born March 21, 1948, to James Franklin and Ioma Mae (Butcher) Hickman in Panama, Oklahoma.
Terry was preceded in death by his parents; daughter Teri Marie; granddaughter Brooke Lauren Baker; and brother James.
He is survived by daughter Shannon Baker; sons Justin and Shane Hickman; brother Hercul Hickman; and five grandchildren;
Terry was laid to rest at Fairview Cemetery in Panama, Oklahoma. For the full obituary, please visit [Evans & Miller Funeral Home](#).

Russell Lawrence



Russell Jay Lawrence, 67, passed away March. 5.
Russell was born on June 13, 1950, to Leroy and Jessie Mae (Lung) Lawrence in Soper, Oklahoma.
Russell is survived by his wife of 42 years Joyce Faye Lawrence; sons Wayne Lawrence and spouse Kelly and Clifton Dale Griffin; daughter Carla Joy Carroll and spouse Jeff; sisters Charlotte Heady, Dora Carlile and spouse Jimmy, Betsie Hunter, Loretta Manasco and spouse David; brothers Leroy and David Lawrence; grandchildren April, Joel, Garrett, Kadie, Courtney, Lorin, Megan and Austin; great-grandchildren Avery, Trinity and Mya.
Russell was laid to rest at Goodland Cemetery in Goodland, Oklahoma.
For the full obituary, please visit [Miller & Miller Funeral Home](#).

Iti Fabussa

1918 Spanish Flu Hits Choctaw Nation

Exactly 100 years ago, April 1918, a deadly and unseen enemy entered the Choctaw Nation.

We have all had the unpleasant experience of struggling through the flu, but the, erroneously named, Spanish flu strain that hit in 1918 was particularly cruel.

Accounts from the Choctaw Nation talk about so many people passing away so quickly from this strain of flu that there were not

Once soldiers began to return to the United States they quickly spread the deadly strain virus to their friends and family.

The first of these cases was reported near the Boston harbor in the summer of 1918. The flu virus was so rampant that at one point over 1,500 soldiers were diagnosed within a single day.

This would become the norm for the next two months across the nation. The difference between the first and second waves was the acceleration of symptoms with many individuals experiencing symptoms in the morning, only to pass away that evening.

The disease was particularly lethal to young, healthy people.

Entire cities shut down. "The most basic public services were crippled or even closed," including emergency rooms, hospitals, pharmacies, grocery stores, police stations, waste management, transportation and government offices of any kind (Smith-Morris 2018).

Historical reports have helped to piece together the spread of the second wave across the nation (see illustrated map above).

From this, we know the flu arrived in Oklahoma in September of 1918 with a vengeance, roughly between Sept. 21 and Sept. 26.

After first contact in the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma the virus spread to adjacent counties and cities, including Tulsa and Clinton (Keeping 2015). By Oct. 4, 1918, over 1,249 cases of influenza were reported in 24 counties in the State of Oklahoma.

By this date, there were at least 291 deaths reported in Pittsburg County, 100 in Pushmataha County and 250 in Antlers. The final death toll was calculated at nearly 7,500 people across the state by the spring of 1919 (Keeping 2015).

In an effort to contain the flu, on Oct. 10, 1918, Dr. J. D. Duke, the State Health Commissioner, issued an order to close all schools, theaters, church services and other public gatherings across the entire state to avoid further spread. This struck fear across Oklahoma.

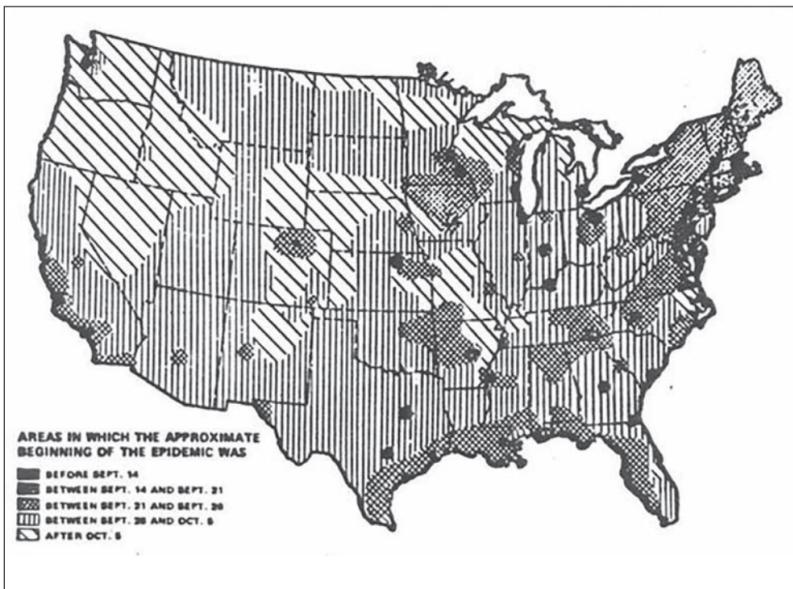
Despite fear of catching the flu Choctaw communities attempted to offer the most basic of needs and comforts to their families and friends in the form of warm blankets, adequate nutrition and home remedies. Often times, this meant Choctaw families remained isolated for weeks at a time.

As the death toll climbed in the state, communities in the Choctaw Nation felt the loss. Peter Conser converted his sawmill into producing coffins for tribal members, but even he could not keep up with the demand.

At the peak of the pandemic, Choctaw communities made the hard choice to bury their friends and family in sheets in unmarked mass graves.

The Spanish flu also struck Choctaw communities living in other areas. When it hit Mississippi it quickly killed 25 percent of the Mississippi Choctaw community (Carleton 2002:2).

Today, two large cedar trees serve as markers for the nearly 1,000 Mississippi Choctaw buried in the center section of the Holy



Provided by www.historyshoop.com

The map illustrates when different areas of the United States felt the beginning of the 1918 Flu Epidemic. The misnamed "Spanish" Flu struck quickly. A sawmill owner, Peter Conser, converted his sawmill to be able to produce coffins for tribal members, but could not keep up with demand. In some cases people in Choctaw communities were buried in sheets in mass graves. Choctaws used strategies developed by their ancestors to help survive the epidemic sweeping through the nation.

10

enough coffins for burial.

This disease would go down as the worst natural disaster in human history, yet it wasn't the first time that the Choctaw people had faced something like this.

Overcoming past epidemics had taught the Choctaw people ways to be resilient. This month's *Iti Fabussa* will explore the history of the Spanish flu pandemic, how Choctaw people fared during the three waves of this illness and demonstrate how the Choctaw community had learned to battle disease in the years before Tamiflu.

When the Spanish first entered what is now the Southeastern United States, they brought diseases that had never been seen in the region before.

Ranging from smallpox to the flu, the effects on Native American communities who had never built up resistance to them were devastating.

From the 1500s through the 1700s it's estimated that 90 percent of the Native population in North America died from European disease. Choctaw people were not able to avoid this.

Many tribes in the southeast were lost; however, Choctaw ancestors developed strategies that helped them to survive the onslaught of disease.

Family and community members would care for the sick and ensure they were provided for with proper food, water and other comfort, which gave them better odds of survival.

Choctaw communities soon recognized that the rivers, which brought people to and from their villages, were corridors for the spread of European diseases.

In response, many of them relocated from areas like Mobile Bay and the Alabama River to the core of the old Choctaw homeland, around Nvnih Waiya, a region that is not easily accessible by boat.

Finally, Choctaw communities often adopted and integrated other tribal people that came from other devastated communities.

This practice helped Choctaw people recover population loss during the waves of illness and also helped disease-weakened communities to protect themselves from having their fields burned by enemies, which would have made recovery from disease even more difficult.

All of these strategies, isolation, adoption and particularly directly caring for the sick, helped Choctaw people face the Spanish flu when it hit in 1918.

The "Spanish" flu was not Spanish, nor did it originate in Spain. During World War I, the government censored all media coverage from the United States, including the seriousness of the impending flu pandemic to avoid affecting morale within the troops stationed abroad.

Since Spain was neutral during the war, Spanish media covered the spread of the flu, its aggressive nature and the rising death toll in full detail.

The entire world assumed it was the country of origin, but it actually may have started not too far from our Oklahoma border.

The first reported case in the United States came in April 1918, in Haskell County, Kansas (Gunderman 2017).

Service men from Haskell County reported to Fort Riley and the disease quickly spread through the entire camp.

The first wave waned with the deaths of several dozen soldiers in Kansas. It was the second wave, during the fall of 1918, which proved to be the deadliest.

Crowded military bases, encampments and hospitals during World War I provided the ideal location for the development of the aggressive flu strain.

Rosary Mission cemetery (Neshoba Democrat 2014).

After the news of the initial impact to the Mississippi Choctaw community reached Washington D.C., the federal government stepped in to offer aid and support to prevent the complete loss of the entire community (Carleton 2002:2).

The Spanish flu also hit Choctaw communities in Louisiana.

Survivors talked about entire households passing away from the disease.

For Choctaw people, the loss was not only in human terms, but also in terms of knowledge.

In a culture that had already been marginalized through colonization, the loss of a few key people could destroy important pieces of traditional knowledge and skill.

For example, some traditional Choctaw basketry techniques seem to have died out when highly skilled basket-makers succumbed to the Spanish flu.

The Spanish flu hit as a third wave in 1919, then subsided almost as quickly as it had come. Government research across the country sought to identify what medicines or treatments were most successful against the Spanish flu.

What they found was that it was not any particular medicine that gave people the best chance of survival, but rather it was simply having someone there to care for them, making sure they had access to water, providing a blanket to them, giving them lemon juice, etc.

Most of the Choctaw family stories that have come down to us about the flu of 1918 talk about Choctaw people doing just that, carefully tending the sick, then cooperatively working to help their communities rebuild.

To them such behavior, learned through past experience with disease, was an important part of our Choctaw faith, family and culture. It continues to be today.

Need money for school clothing?

Student School and Activity Fund

- \$100 VISA gift card available nationwide for Choctaw Tribal Members who are attending 3 year old daycare to 12th grade.
- Each student with a tribal membership can receive funding one time per school year.
- Apply online at ssafapplication.choctawnation.com

Applications for 2017-2018 School Year Available July 1, 2017- May 1, 2018

For more information contact Jessica Huffman or Patricia Gibson (800) 522-6170 ext. 2175 or 2463

Now Hiring

Chahta Himmak Pila Pehlichi
"Choctaw Future Leaders"
Summer Leadership Internship

Applicants must fit in following guidelines:

- ⇒ Must possess a Choctaw Tribal Membership and/or CDIB
- ⇒ Be between 14-24 years of age
- ⇒ Be able to attend classes at Battiest, Rattan or Wright City
- ⇒ Classes will begin June 4th
- ⇒ Applicants are encouraged to be eager to learn, highly motivated, hardworking and willing to work as a team

For More Information:
Hannah Wood
hwood@choctawnation.com
580-326-8304 ext. 6073

Submit a Resume and Cover Letter to:
<http://careers.choctawnation.com>

Scholarships Available

TRAIL OF TEARS WALK 2018

Join Us for the Commemorative Walk

May 19, 2018
10 AM
Tvshka Homma, OK
Walk Starts at the Choctaw Village

Choctaw Nation Division of Tribal Services
Cultural Services
Ext. 2332 and 2517

1-800-522-6170 Living Out the Chahta Spirit

CHOCTAW NATION CULTURAL SERVICES
TRAIL OF TEARS WALK 2018
PO BOX 1210
DURANT, OK 74702
1-800-522-6170, EXT. 2517 AND 2332

Unclaimed Funds Notice

The Accounting Department of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is trying to contact the individuals listed below. Choctaw Nation is in possession of unclaimed funds (uncashed payroll checks) that may be due to these individuals. If you are an employee or former employee of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and your name is listed below, please contact:

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702

Attn: Jessica Pickens, Payroll and Employee Services Accountant
Or phone (580) 924-8280 ext. 2408

Allie Marie James
Kathryn Nicole Miller
Donald Stevens
Samantha Duncan
Charlea Michaels

Don't have anyone to give your box tops to?
Here's how you can help!

Each year, the Choctaw Nation will select a school district within the Nation to be the recipient of the Box Tops Program.

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



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

Yakoke to all of the Biskinik Readers for all of your Box Top contributions!

You are making a difference!

For further information, contact Jerry Tomlinson at 800-522-6170

Living out the Chahta Spirit

Choctaw Asset Building Financial Education Classes*

April 7th - Wilburton
OSU Extension Service
163 SW Hwy 2
Class begins at 8:00am

May 12th - Oklahoma City
Oklahoma Choctaw Alliance Bldg.
5320 S. Youngs Blvd.
Class begins at 8:00am

To register, go to the following URL:
www.surveymonkey.com/r/CAB_FinEd

For more information, Email:
dhix@choctawnation.com

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APRIL IS SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

DISCOVER THE ROAD TO SUPPORT

It can be hard to reach out after a sexual assault, but it is harder to go through it alone. Choctaw Nation Sexual Assault Response Team can help.

Choctaw Nation Sexual Assault Response Team (S.A.R.T.) works with individuals whose lives have been impacted by sexual assault and strives to help victims feel safe and supported.

Immediate crisis intervention and emotional support is available for sexual assault victims, Native and non-Native American, ages 18 and older.

For more information about S.A.R.T., please call Project Strong at (918) 302-0052. All calls are handled by specially trained professionals and completely confidential.

Choctaw Nation Online Academy Do you have access to wifi and a computer? Are you interested in earning your high school equivalency diploma?

The Choctaw Nation Online Academy is open to students in all counties within the United States who have a Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB).

To enroll in the academy, please call our Adult Education office and request an application packet.

You may also print an application packet from our website at www.choctawnation.com (Click on Tribal Services tab, then Postsecondary tab.) Once you have completed an application packet, please mail to Choctaw Nation, Adult Education, P.O. Box 1210 Durant, OK 74702. You may also fax to 580-920-3161.

You may contact Lisa Bebout at 800-522-6270 ext. 2122 for further questions.

Attention CHOCTAW ARTISTS

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN A JURIED AND JUDGED CHOCTAW INDIAN ART SHOW, LET US HEAR FROM YOU!

Choctaw Nation Division of Tribal Services

Cultural Services
Labor Day Art Show
Ext. 2377

Please complete the following interest form in order to receive more information regarding the 2018 Choctaw Indian Arts Show held Labor Day weekend at Tvshka Homma, OK. **Must be 18 years of age & a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma to participate.** Categories include: Painting, graphics, cultural, sculpture, pottery, jewelry, & basketry. **Please complete the form and mail to the address below.**

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Mail to: **Shelley Garner - CNO Cultural Services
PO Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702**

1-800-522-6170 FAITH ♦ FAMILY ♦ CULTURE

RIBBON RUN
5K and 1 mile fun run
against
Child Abuse
Sexual Assault

April 14
8:00 a.m.
Market Square
Downtown Durant
Pre-packet pick-up at Market Square
April 13 • 5:30-7:30 pm

Registration..... 8:00 a.m.
Welcome..... 8:30 a.m.
5K Race Begins..... 9:00 a.m.
Fun Run Begins..... 9:15 a.m.
Awards Ceremony..... 10:15 a.m.

580-380-9050
brooke.elliott@choctawnation.com

Choctaw Nation Children and Family Services

**FREE Tshirt to
first 300 registrations!
No Entry Fee.**

The 5K Ribbon Run and Fun Run is to bring awareness to the issues of child abuse and sexual assault within our community. Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and other partners will have informational booths providing valuable resources available in the area.

Register at:
signmeup.com/124380



10% OFF

FOR CHOCTAW TRIBAL MEMBERS
& CHOCTAW NATION EMPLOYEES



10% off any purchase, no minimum, for all food or drinks. Must show employee badge or CDIB card to receive. Offer valid through August 31, 2018. Valid only at Chili's Grant, Atoka, and Poteau. Cannot be applied to gift card purchases.

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma FAITH ♦ FAMILY ♦ CULTURE

Post Purchase Education Workshop

How to Love Your Home

March 20th
Coalgate

April 5th
Stigler

May 3rd
Smithville

May 15th
McAlester

Our free course for homeowners provides cost saving and helpful repair information for the sustainment of your greatest investment, your home!

Please contact Neile Vance for more information or to preregister 580-579-7319 | nvance@choctawhousing.com

CHOCTAW | CASINOS & RESORTS

JOB FAIR | Durant
Monday, May 7th
10:00AM - 6:00PM
Choctaw Event Center

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MORE THAN JUST A JOB**

careers.choctawnation.com
Together, we're more

TORNADO SAFETY

CHOCTAW NATION EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

MYTH	FACT
Opening windows in a home or building during a tornado will help equalize pressure.	Opening windows will have no effect. Stay away from windows and exterior walls. Take shelter in the basement, storm cellar, or an interior room without windows on the lowest floor.
If you are caught driving during a tornado, you should always get out of your car and seek shelter under an overpass or in a ditch.	Try to drive to the closest sturdy shelter. If there is flying debris, pull over and park. Stay in the car with the seat belt on and the engine running. Put your head below the windows, covering your head with your hands and a blanket.
Cities are protected from tornadoes because of the tall buildings.	Tall buildings do not protect from tornadoes. Cities cover a small geographical area so the chances of being directly hit are small. However, tornadoes can strike anywhere.
Taking shelter in the northeast corner of your home will protect you.	This is based on an outdated theory that all tornadoes come from the southwest. Tornadoes can move from any direction and no one corner of your home is always safe.

For more tornado safety tips visit ready.gov/tornadoes

Ready **CHOCTAW NATION'S
PrepareAthon!**
Prepare. Plan. Stay Informed. for Tornado Safety

Choctaw Nation, Royal Air Force Honor Fallen Airmen

BY APRYL MOCK

Four young cadets of the British Royal Air Force set out on a cross-country training flight the morning of Feb. 20 1943.

They would never be seen again.

Members of the Royal Air Force, the Choctaw Nation and members of the community gathered on Feb. 18 to ensure their sacrifice would not be forgotten.

Seventy-five years ago, the cadets took off from the No. 1 British Flying Training School in Terrell, Texas.

They were destined for the No. 3

BFTS in Miami, Oklahoma.

Thanks to the research of Rattan Elementary school teacher, Beth Lawless and her students, we know the fates of pilots Vincent Henry Cockman and Michael John Minty Hosier and navigators Frank R. Frostick and Maurice Leslie Jenson.

The cadets were flying AT6 aircrafts, which were the "basic training" crafts of the time.

The AT6's encountered severe weather near the Red River. While several other pilots who were on the same course were able to turn back or press forward, two were tragically lost.

The airplane carrying Cockman and Frostick crash landed into a tree and the craft carrying Hosier and Jenson nose-dived on Big Mountain, near Moyers, Oklahoma. The impact pushed up a boulder, creating what locals call a "natural tombstone."

A monument, prepared by local artisan Allen Parsons, and designed by Lawless, her students

and the Canadian Commonwealth War Graves Commission, was placed near the "natural tombstone."

During the 75th anniversary ceremony, the Choctaw Nation Honor Guard and Royal Air Force Airmen presented the colors of the Choctaw Nation, the United States of America and the United Kingdom.

Flags from the three nations flew together, symbolizing their unity and fellowship.

Members of the RAF, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Chief Gary Batton and Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. placed wreaths at the memorial stone in honor of the fallen cadets. Red roses were also placed at the "natural tombstone" by students from Rattan Public School and #1 and #3 BFTS museum representatives.

Phillip Abbott, whose father served in the 135th squadron of the RAF, said his father used to tell him stories about the Terrell base. "Cadets always remember the hospitality. They were always treated well and were very grateful for it," he said.

Abbott was also thankful for the 75th anniversary ceremony. He said, "The British could learn a bit from America when it comes to honoring their fallen. The ceremony

was just beautiful. I am extraordinarily impressed by the support from the staff and the community. The Choctaw people did a wonderful job."

Abbott, who shared artifacts and information with Lawless, as well as the BFTS museums, still exchanges Christmas cards with Lawless each year.

Following the ceremony the Antlers Choctaw Nation Community Center hosted a reception. Guests were treated to refreshments including "hot tea" prepared especially for the British guests. Valarie Robison and Karen Jacob took the time to research how the British take their tea so it would be just

right; Tracy Turner even ran out for milk.

BFTS Museum President Rudy Bowling stated, "We want to continue telling the story. It's an honor to be here to remember their sacrifice."

RAF Squadron Leader Tom Barres, shared a history of the RAF and said, "It will be the 100th anniversary of the RAF on April 1. I think we can look toward another 100 years."

Emcee Jerry Tomlinson thanked the members of the RAF for making their long journey and remarked, "I believe the spirits of those four young men were there with us today. Shall we never forget their sacrifice."

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The airplane carrying Cockman and Frostick crash landed into a tree and the craft carrying Hosier and Jenson nose-dived on Big Mountain, near Moyers, Oklahoma. The impact pushed up a boulder, creating what locals call a "natural tombstone."

A monument, prepared by local artisan Allen Parsons, and designed by Lawless, her students



Royal Airforce Squadron Leader Craig O'Donnell presents a rose to Rattan Public School students to place on the "natural tombstone" created when the aircraft carrying Leslie Jenson and Vincent Cockman crash-landed in 1943.



The Choctaw Nation Honor Guard fires a 21-gun salute to honor the fallen airmen of the British Royal Air Force.



Chief Gary Batton, Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr. and members of the British Royal Air Force gathered to honor the four fallen AT6 Cadets.



Wreaths were placed on the AT6 monument to honor the sacrifice of four young British Royal Air Force Cadets.

Choctaw Nation Community Meetings Enjoyable for Choctaws of All Ages

Henderson



Lawrence Battiest discusses the process of creating pottery with Sarah McCrea and Emma Zeigler.



The oldest Choctaw at the Henderson meeting, Joe Folsom, shows his grandfather's law books to Chief Gary Batton. He said his grandfather, Albert Peter Folsom, gave them to him when he was 10 years old.

Scottsdale



Chief Gary Batton presents a medal to Mary Wright Lomahaftewa, 93, who is originally from Duncan, Oklahoma for being the eldest Choctaw present at the Scottsdale community meeting.



Ross Green of Cultural Services discusses traditional Chahta hunting skills with a young Choctaw boy.

Wright City 2018 Oklahoma Class 2A State Champions

Lumberjax Make History by Bringing Home the School's First Gold Ball

by STACY HUTTO

When the final buzzer sounded at the 2A Oklahoma State Championship game on Saturday, March 10, the Wright City Lumberjax were crowned champions with a 61-49 win against the Latta Panthers.

The historic win against the defending state champions gave Wright City its first ever State Championship.

Of the 12 players, four of them are Choctaw tribal members, including Robert Briley, who was named MVP.

The Choctaw tribal members on the Championship team are Robert Briley, No. 3; Kaleb Trusty, No. 11; Kaden Crosby, No. 12; and C.J. Briley, No. 34.

C.J. Briley was the high scorer of the game with 17 points, 3 three-pointers, 0/1 free throws, 2 assists, 2 offensive rebounds, 2 defensive rebounds and 1 steal.

Robert Briley scored 14 points, 6/10 free throws, 4 assists, 2 offensive rebounds, 9 defensive rebounds and 3 steals.

Kaden Crosby had a defensive rebound.

Dalyn Burrell, No. 30, scored 13 points, 3 three-pointers, 2/3 free throws, 1 offensive rebound, 1 defensive rebound and 1 steal.

Justin Lecrone, No. 1, scored 9 points, 3 three-pointers, 1 offensive



The Wright City Lumberjax are the 2018 2A Oklahoma State Champions. This was the first State Championship win in Wright City history. Players on the Championship team in no particular order are Robert Briley, No. 3; Kaleb Trusty, No. 11; Keden Crosby, No. 12; C.J. Briley, No. 34; Justin Lecrone, No. 1; Chris Trusty, No. 2; Koleman Wesley, No. 10; Scott Hawthorne, No. 20; Dalyn Burrell, No. 30; Kohl Dickerson, No. 32; Bryden Walker, No. 33 and Ashton Willis, No. 41. The Jax Head Coach is Joel Dickerson.

rebound, 1 defensive rebound and 1 steal.

Chris Trusty, No. 2, scored 8 points, 1 three-pointer, 1/1 free throws, 2 assists and 2 offensive rebounds.

Kohl Dickerson had 1 assist.

To get to the State Championship game the Jax went up against the Tushka Tigers in Districts.

Wright City continued their win streak with a 74-17 win over Tushka.

With a District win under their belt they advanced to Regionals where they beat their first opponent, the Quinton Savages.

After winning the game against Quinton with a final score of 70-50 the Jax went to face off against the Rock Creek Mustangs.

Wright City moved on to the Area game with a 62-44 win against the Mustangs.

In the Area game the Wright City Lumberjax met the Talihina Golden Tigers on the court.

The Jax moved past the Golden Tigers with a final score of 59-42 to punch their ticket to the Big House.

They squared off against the Christian Heritage Crusaders in the first round of the State Championship Tournament.

ment.

After their 49-39 win they advanced to the second round where they met up against the Luther Lions.

Wright City was on a roll as they advanced to the Championship game with a 48-41 win over the Lions and would go on to become the State Champions.

The State Championship game was the last game as a Wright City Lumberjax for senior Robert Briley.

In a fitting end to an outstanding season with 1:42 left in the fourth quarter C.J. Briley, a junior, made a perfect pass

to his brother, Robert, who went high with a dunk that added to Wright City's lead.

In addition to a championship ring, he also earned tournament MVP honors.

His season totals were 32 games played and he averaged 17.8 points per game; 3.9 assists per game, 10.9 rebounds per game, 2.8 blocks per game and 3.3 steals per game, according to MaxPreps.

According to the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association, or OSSAA, the Wright City Lumberjax ended their season with a record of 30-2.

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At the end of the Championship Tournament the Lumberjax, lead by Head Coach Joel Dickerson, was ranked No. 5 in Oklahoma and had a National rank of No. 381.

They were undefeated in their district with a district record of 7-0 and ranked No. 1.

After the three hour bus ride from Oklahoma City the Lumberjax were led into town with lights and sirens thanks to local fire departments and law enforcement.

A video on the Wright City Basketball Facebook page shows the overwhelming support the team received as they came home with the town's first Gold Ball.

Vehicles and people lined the streets to welcome the team home as, appropriately, Queens "We Are the Champions" played followed by "Celebration."

2018 Oklahoma Native All-State Games to Take Place at Bacone College in June



The board of directors for the Oklahoma Native All-State Association announces the presentation of the Annual Oklahoma All-State Games, June 15 and 16, at Bacone College in Muskogee, Oklahoma.

Senior high school American Indian boy and girl athletes in softball, baseball, basketball, golf and cross-country from Oklahoma public schools will be identified and selected to represent their respective high school and tribal affiliation in this popular gathering of sports competition and recognition.

The two-day activity begins with a Friday check-in and the All-State Golf Tournament. A recognition/award banquet featuring cross-country Coach Rick Baker of Hopi High School, winner of 26 straight State Championships, as keynote speaker will be held Friday evening. The following Saturday will feature competitive cross-country meet,

softball, baseball and basketball games.

"This is our way of encouraging our American Indian student-athletes to continue their dream of furthering their athletic positions and giving them recognition for their accomplishments in athletics and academics. Tribal governments, Oklahoma public schools, parents, Bacone staff and coaches have all been more than supportive and we are very appreciative for the benefit of our Oklahoma public school American Indian students," stated Dwight Pickering, chair of the association's board of directors.

Oklahoma Native All-State Association Planning Committee members, coaches and tribal officials have volunteered their time and energy in making this opportunity a unique experience for all involved.

The public is invited to come and enjoy the competitions, recognition and fellowship at Bacone College, a historic college for Indian people, and the host institution. For ticket information, programs and donations, please call Josh Nichols, committee member, at 918-360-8619 or email him at nichols@bacone.edu at Bacone College.

French Back-to-Back State Champion in Powerlifting

Alissa French of Durant became a back-to-back state champion at the 2018 Oklahoma State Girls Powerlifting meet March 5.

She won the 123-pound weight class, winning each of her three events: Back Squat, Bench Press and Deadlift. French won with a total weight of 665 pounds. She also won the 132-pound weight class last year with a total weight of 680 pounds.

French also maintains a 4.0 GPA, while taking concurrent college classes and participates in softball and soccer.



Overpeck Twins Sign with Lyon College Football

Choctaw twins Anthony and David Overpeck signed their letters of intent to accept college football scholarships at Lyon College in Batesville, Arkansas.

The duo are captains of their high school football team in New Braunfels, Texas. The brothers have been FBU Top Guns, DMaxx All Americans and All-Americans during their high school careers.

Anthony will be playing football and studying business management. David will be playing football and studying Pre-Law.

Anthony and David are the sons of Bonnie and Tony Overpeck.



Choctaw Junior High Students Attend OU Game

The Choctaw Nation Youth Events and Special Projects Department took 23 Choctaw youth to watch the University of Oklahoma women's and men's basketball teams play in Norman Feb. 24.

The OU women's team took on Texas Tech, while the men's team took on the Kansas Jayhawks.

The students also attended an FCA game day rally in between games, where current OU student-athletes interacted with the children and gave their testimonies. The games were free of charge to the first 30 junior high Choctaw students who signed up.

Sells Wins Big at Prestigious Texas Livestock Shows

Cody Sells of Taylor, Texas has had a successful show season with his goat named Elvis.

Sells is a 15-year-old freshman at Thrall High School.

In March, Sells and Elvis won Reserve Heavyweight Champion at the Houston Livestock Show. The duo had previously placed third in their class at the San Antonio Livestock Show in February.

Cody is the son of Richard and Nanette Sells of Taylor, Texas.



Send Us Your Sports and Education Stories!

We want to share your successes with all of our tribal members. Please send sports and education success stories.

Submissions are printed in the order received.

biskinik@choctawnation.com

OR

P.O. Box 1210 Durant, Oklahoma 74702

Crowder, McAlester Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board Members named 2017 Volunteers of the Year



(Left to right) Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr., Anna Kenieutubbe Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board Counselor Ray Sockey, Maryland Hall, Tyler Sennett and Kaytlen Sennett.

Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board counselor, Ray Sockey and the members his Pittsburg County Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board chapters, located in Crowder and McAlester, Oklahoma were named the 2017 Pride in McAlester's Volunteers of the Year.

Members were invited to attend the 9th Annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet on Feb. 8. The Pittsburg County YAB Officers are Maryland Hall, Anna Kenieutubbe and Kaytlen and Tyler Sennett.



Members of the McAlester and Crowder Chapters of the Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board we welcomed at the 9th Annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet on Feb. 8.

Hamill Sisters Bound for Successful Futures

Marietta Hamill won the Texas State High School BETA Science Championship in February.

Marietta will now travel to Savannah, Georgia in June to compete for the National Science Championship.

This will be Marietta's third consecutive year to compete for the National Science Championship in her respective division.

Marietta also played piano for the State Championship Group Talent Team.

The Group Talent Team will also compete for the National Championship in Georgia.

Marietta is a freshman in the Prairiland Texas School district.

She hopes to attend Dartmouth or Johns Hopkins to study Neuroscience and Biophysical Chemistry.

Julianna Hamill played piano at Texas State Junior High BETA Convention in the special talent division.

Julianna advanced to the finals but narrowly missed out on a trip to the national competition.

Julianna was picked to play her trumpet in the All Region Jr. High Band Concert on Feb. 24.

Julianna is in the 7th grade in the Prairiland Texas School district.

Marietta and Julianna are in their 9th year of piano lessons and are in their 5th year at the Piano Academy of Texas A&M University - Commerce under the direction of Steinway artist Dr. Louis Sanchez.

Marietta and Julianna are the great-granddaughters of original enrollees, the late Simon and Frances Pisachubbe Thompson.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU



Patrick O'Keefe, Choctaw Veteran and resident of Henderson, Nevada recently turned 91 years old. He is the son of Cyril and Manie (Hickman) O'Keefe. Happy Birthday Patrick, from Kevin and the rest of your family!

AND YOU

The family of Sunny and Stormy Williston would like to wish them both a Happy Birthday. Sunny celebrated her 40th birthday on March 5 and Stormy celebrated her 5th birthday on March 12. Happy Birthday to you both! Love Bettie, Auntie and Uncle Tom.



AND YOU

Nadine (Williams) McDonald recently celebrated her birthday on Feb. 16.

Nadine's children send her all their love.

Happy Birthday Nadine!

May you have many more to come.



Avery Swearingen Crowned Miss Oklahoma Pre-teen 2018

As a little girl, Avery Swearingen dreamed of being a role model for other girls in her community.

Winning Miss Oklahoma Pre-Teen 2018 on Oct. 7 allowed her to do just that.

Avery began her pageant journey by competing in the 2017 National American Miss pageant in Wichita, Kansas, where she placed in the top 10 out of 50 girls. She went on to win the Royal International Miss Pageant in Chickasha, Oklahoma.

To prepare for the pageant, Avery spent hours rehearsing with her parents and coach Heather.

As Miss Oklahoma Pre-Teen, Avery spends the year traveling to communities and events in Oklahoma. She also volunteered to wrap Christmas presents for the Ally house of Norman, Oklahoma and goes Christmas caroling at assisted living centers.

In the future, Avery plans to compete in the Miss Oklahoma pageant, Miss USA pageant and Miss Universe pageant. She would like to attend the University of Oklahoma to become an emergency room doctor.

Avery currently attends Moore Public School where she is on the National Junior Honor Society and a member of the Student Council. Some of her hobbies include, primitive bow shooting, singing and dancing, riding four-wheelers and shopping.

Later this year, Avery will compete for the title of International Miss Pre-Teen in Orlando, Florida.



Dakota Tatum Elected to Oklahoma Business Professionals of America



On March 14, Dakota Tatum was elected to the Oklahoma Business Professionals of America council. He is the first person from Konawa High School to serve on the state council team.

Dakota has maintained a 3.75 Grade Point Average and is ranked 10th in his class.

Dakota is a member of the baseball team and an active member of his church.

After graduation he plans to pursue a Master of Business Administration.

Willow Duncan Begins Acting, Singing Career



Willow Duncan performed the National Anthem at the Big V Feeds PRCA Rodeo in McAlester, Oklahoma on Feb. 2, 3.

She is pursuing acting and singing and also performed a one act play and Coffee House during March.

She is the daughter of Ronald Duncan and Leslie and John Brosnan, granddaughter of Robert and Gloria Duncan, and the late Harold Merryman and Rhonda Grubbs. Her brothers are Tanner and Hunter Duncan, and Blake and Cody Brosnan.

The Housing Authority of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma is now accepting applications for Mutual Help Homes in Atoka.

There are currently two vacant and recently remodeled Mutual Help Homes available in the Atoka, Oklahoma area. If you are interested in becoming a homeowner and would like additional information or for an application please contact:

Donna Courtwright
at the Housing Authority of
the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
at (800) 235-3087 Ext. 6328.

We Want Your Good News!

Send your accomplishments, anniversary announcements and birthday wishes to the Biskinik. Announcements must meet announcement policy requirements and are ran in order received.

biskinik@choctawnation.com
or
P.O. Box 1210 Durant, Oklahoma 74702

Fort Worth Community Meeting



David McCarty of Morgan, Texas, wore his 1995 Choctaw Labor Day T-shirt to the Choctaw Cultural Meeting in Fort Worth, Texas.

TRAIL OF TEARS WALK

MAY 19, 2018

**Choctaw Nation
Division of Tribal Services**

Cultural Services
Ext. 2517 and 2332

NOTICE:

Trail of Tears Walk T-Shirts & Caps Available at Event ONLY this Year...

Purchase Day of Event at the Trail of Tears Walk T-Shirt Booth

Shirts can be purchased AFTER the event at the Choctaw Store On-line...
(See June Advertisement for More Information)

Fourth Annual Easter Celebration gets Choctaws Hopping



Children hunt eggs at the Fourth Annual Chief Gary Batton Easter Celebration.



Eager elders hunt Easter eggs on the Tvshka Homma Museum Lawn.



Michael Jones takes a ride on the bison statue at Tvshka Homma.



Choctaw Nation employees "make it rain" Easter eggs.



Angeline, 3, and Jaxson Mowdy, 1, discuss their agenda for the Fourth Annual Easter Celebration.



Council Chaplain Jennifer Woods gave the benediction over the Fourth Annual Easter Celebration lunch.



Assistant Coach Ross Green re-strings his sticks in between stickball games.



Chief Gary Batton visits with elders during the Easter Celebration.



Bentley, 1, and Layla Prock, 3, enjoy some chocolate cake.



A Tvshka Waya player attempts to steal the ball from Thunder players.



Tvshka Waya players attempt to block out an Osage player.



The Tvshka Waya score during the Easter stickball tournament.

2018 Golden Egg Winners



Choctaw Nation Moving to New Headquarters

by STACY HUTTO

The end of an era and a new beginning is fast approaching. Soon tribal members needing services will be able to take care of everything in one stop.

Currently, services for Choctaw Nation are spread throughout Durant.

By June 18, services will be under one roof at the new Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Headquarters.

The new headquarters is a five-story, 500,000 square-foot facility and will provide a centralized area dedicated to serving Choctaw tribal members.

Currently, Choctaw Nation programs are spread throughout many different buildings in Durant and the current headquarters is bursting at the seams.

Groups will be moved in phases starting April 5 and all groups should be moved by June 19.

After April 5 it is recommended if a tribal member needs to visit a service program they call (580) 924-8280 or (800) 522-6170 to find out if the program has moved to the new headquarters.

The new headquarters will be located at 1802 Chukka Hina, Durant, Oklahoma, next to the Choctaw Nation Regional Medical Clinic.

Chukka Hina can be accessed from Highway 69/75, or S. Ninth Street.

The campus will include a pond, amphitheater and walking track. The new Choctaw Wellness Center is also located within walking distance.

The new headquarters is close to the Choctaw Nation Child Development Center.

Due to the proximity to the new headquarters, it will make it easier for parents and guardians picking up children to visit needed services, take a walk on the walking trail or enjoy a beautiful day next to the pond.

On Jan. 30, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for the new Choctaw Nation Judicial Center, which will also be located on the campus.

The new courthouse is slated to be completed by the end of the year.

It will be designed of red brick and sandstone, similar to the Capitol building in Tvshka Homma, where the Choctaw Nation began holding tribal court in 1883.

The judicial building will feature three courtrooms, several offices and state-of-the-art technology.

The judicial center will be partnering with other tribal programs to identify resources so non-violent offenders might be able to be provided options such as probation, community service or work to pay back court costs and fines by completing various tasks for the nation.

The Ribboncutting Ceremony for the new Choctaw Nation Headquarters and the new Durant Wellness Center will be held Tuesday, May 22.

Several other facilities are under construction throughout the Choctaw Nation.

New construction includes a new community center in Broken Bow and independent living communities in Coalgate, Antlers and Broken Bow. Sometime this year a groundbreaking ceremony will be held to begin construction for the second Choctaw Nation Country Mart in Coalgate.

The market will provide a variety of good quality, fresh food in a location considered a food desert.

This spring a groundbreaking is planned to begin construction on the long-awaited Choctaw Nation Cultural Center in Durant.

The cultural center will showcase and preserve Choctaw history.

While it is not new construction, the Oklahoma House and Senate both passed a bill to name 23 county bridges in Southeastern Oklahoma after the Choctaw Code Talkers.

Through a partnership between the Choctaw Nation and the State of Oklahoma, Joseph Oklahombi, one of the original Code Talkers, will have the first bridge dedicated in his name April 19.



by Choctaw Nation Video Production

From the aerial shot of the new headquarters Durant can be seen in the distance. The overhead view also shows part of the extensive walking trails and ample parking for tribal members.

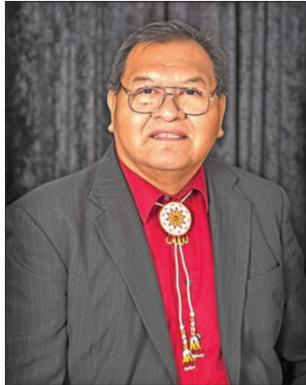
Below is the timeline for departments to move into the new headquarters. **It is subject to change at any time.** If you need to visit someone at the headquarters call (580) 924-8280, or (800) 522-6170 to verify if they have moved to the new headquarters at 1802 Chukka Hina.

Services Move Dates

April 5 Land and Title	May 3 Natural Resources
April 9 Language and Education Administration	May 4 Special Services
April 10 Career Development and Vocational Rehabilitation	May 7 Special Services
April 11 Burial and CBSW	May 8 Special Services
April 12 Human Resources and Organization Development	May 9 Special Services
April 13 Learning and Development	May 10 Special Services
April 16 Commerce Rec. and Payroll	May 11 Education
April 17 Human Resources Recruiting; Workforce Development; Rapid Results; and Credit	May 14 Education
April 18 Finance	May 15 Education
April 19 Finance	May 16 Education
April 20 Finance and Payroll	May 17 Education
April 23 Human Resources Staff	May 18 IT
April 24 Finance	May 21 IT
April 25 Finance and Purchasing	May 22 IT
April 26 Purchasing; Program Development; and Grants	May 23 IT
April 27 Tribal Services Administration	May 24 IT
April 30 Communications	May 25 Risk Management
May 1 Communications	May 29 Risk Management
May 2 Legal & Compliance and	May 30 Risk Management; Self Government; and Tribal Historian
	June 1 Language
	June 4 Language
	June 5 Commerce
	June 6 Commerce
	June 7 Commerce
	June 8 Commerce
	June 11 Commerce
	June 12 Commerce
	June 13 Commerce
	June 14 Commerce
	June 15 Commerce
	June 18 Commerce

Pastor Olin Williams

Why Christians Have Troubles



Pastor Olin Williams
Employee Chaplain

Nicodemus asked Jesus, "How can a man be born when he is old?" How can a man be born again or born twice?

Nicodemus was a very religious man. He lived a clean life and was a successful leader in his day.

However, his religion did not satisfy his longing for fulfillment in his soul. Therefore, he approached Jesus by night and inquired about the new birth. In John 3:3, "Jesus answered and said unto him, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of Heaven."

Nicodemus being of the natural understanding did not grasp the spiritual discernment of what Jesus was telling him. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14)

John 1:12-13 tells us the new birth occurs when we receive Jesus and believe on His name. God does the "borning" when an individual believes and receives Jesus.

In physical birth we are conceived through a seed. All life springs from a seed. This is also true of the spiritual birth. The spiritual birth begins with conception through living seed.

The seed is the WORD OF GOD. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the WORD of God, which liveth and abideth forever." (1 Peter 1:23) "It is the Spirit that quickeneth (made alive); the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." (John 6:63)

Salvation begins in the will of God. God's will brought the WORD down to us in flesh. (Jesus)

The WORD is the sword that opens the eyes of the blinded soul. The WORD shows the unbeliever of his lost condition. The WORD puts the desire in the individual's heart to know Jesus as Savior. The WORD makes possible the faith to receive Jesus as salvation. "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord." (Psalm 3:8) "Salvation is of the Lord." (Jonah 2:9)

Nicodemus must have received this new birth Jesus was teaching him because in John 7:40-53, we read how he spoke up in defense of Jesus when the Jewish rulers condemned him. In John 19: 38-42, we see Nicodemus asking Pilate for the body of Jesus after the crucifixion. His question had been answered.



by Choctaw Nation

One of the features of the new Choctaw Nation Headquarters campus is a pond and amphitheater. There is also a walking track that goes around the pond and connects the different buildings on the campus. The campus features the Choctaw Nation Regional Medical Clinic, the new Durant Wellness Center and at the end of the year construction of the new Choctaw Nation Judicial building will be completed. The new headquarters is located on Chukka Hina and can be accessed from Highway 69/75 or S. Ninth Street.

Enrolling NOW for the 2018-19 school year at your local Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Head Start!

CNO Head Start provides a fun, safe learning environment for children where they will feel love, acceptance and understanding. The goal is to prepare each child for kindergarten and to excite them about learning.



- We Offer**
- For Children:**
 - Social Interaction
 - Health & Nutrition
 - Quality Child Development Practices & Activities
 - Vision & Dental Screening
 - For Families:**
 - Referrals to Community Resources
 - Parenting Classes & Other Education

To enroll or for more information, stop by your local CNO Head Start or call: (800) 522-6170 Extension 2219

Head Start focuses on the whole child intellectually, emotionally, physically, and socially, with respect for the family as partners in education. Head Start provides language and literacy, school readiness and age appropriate activities. We also serve children with disabilities and/or special needs.



Choctaw Nation Preferred Supplier Program

Your Support for Success

Providing opportunities for the development and expansion of Choctaw Nation tribal members and federally recognized minority owned businesses.

Register today at
preferredsuppliers.choctawnation.com

For more information contact
(800) 522-6170 ext. 2889